



UNIVERSITY OF  
OXFORD

# African Studies Centre

2013 Newsletter





# Director's report 2012–13

Dr David Pratten

## 2012–13 Academic Year

This year has been a particularly eventful one for the African Studies Centre in terms of personnel. With the departure of two of the founding members of the centre it has been something of an end of an era. In December Professor Dave Anderson left after a decade at Oxford. Dave had been a key figure in the development of African Studies at Oxford first as a research fellow at St Antony's College and then as Professor in African Politics at St Cross College. During that time Dave directed the centre (2006–9) and supervised a large number of graduate and doctoral students. In research terms Dave ran a major AHRC-funded research project on the Omo Valley in Ethiopia, and his book *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (2005) was the basis for his role as an expert witness in the High Court case brought by Kenyan detainees tortured during the Mau Mau rebellion of the 1950s. Dave has taken up a Professorship in African History at the University of Warwick and we all wish him well for the future.

We were also sorry to say goodbye to both members of our administration team this year, Wanja Knighton and Marita Gillespie. Wanja was the centre's administrator from the inception of the MSc in African Studies in 2005. Since then she has supported the phenomenal growth of the centre and its activities and has steered us through the administrative maze of our medieval university. Wanja's commitment and warmth will be much missed and we wish her well in her new business initiatives. Marita had been with us for two years and we are enormously grateful for her sterling work during that time. She is leaving us for a teaching position at a school in Switzerland and we wish her the very best.

This year we welcomed the eighth cohort of students to the MSc in African Studies. Our 33 students came from 18 different countries and included 11 from Africa. The 2012–13 cohort produced excellent dissertations on a fantastic breadth of topics. Clusters of research emerged around colonial education, intellectual histories, political transitions, conflicts and detention, and the politics of natural resources. As ever this research proved innovative, ambitious and critically interdisciplinary. As they graduate we wish our alumni well in their further study and new careers.

Some of our recent graduates, perhaps, will engage with the world of business and entrepreneurialism. This is an issue that we are highlighting in this year's newsletter with several pieces by alumni who run their own businesses, or are helping others to start small enterprises. We were delighted to welcome Andrew Rugasira back to Oxford in the spring to launch his book celebrating his stewardship of the Good African Coffee Company. Jake McKnight and Yusuf Randera-Rees also highlight the fascinating ways in which our alumni are involved in start-ups. The MSc, it seems, is a spring-board for entrepreneurs of the future!

The MSc African Studies was the subject of an academic review this year and you'll be pleased to know that we passed with flying colours! We were all particularly pleased by the review panels' conclusion:

*... the MSc programme is of very high quality, providing students with a thorough and intellectually challenging grounding in African studies, with excellent teaching and supervision, and high standards of assessment, as attested to by the comments of students and successive external examiners. The programme combines aspects of politics, history and anthropology with excellent research training specifically designed within the context of African studies.*

Front cover

Winner of the 2013 African Studies photo competition

Emily Crane for 'Supporters of the ruling party TGV at their presidential nominating conference, Madagascar, 2013'



This is a wonderful endorsement for our programme and of course points to the ways in which the masters programme has become an important pathway to research. Several of our alumni who have gone on to complete their doctorates are profiled in this newsletter.



*ENI scholars Samuel Iwilade, Edith Vita and Nelson Oppong with ENI CEO Paolo Scaroni at a reception at St Antony's College*

This newsletter includes write-ups of many of the workshops and conferences we have supported throughout the year. Notable highlights included our annual lecture by Professor Wale Adebaniwo who introduced the idea of studying African politics through the lens of friendship, and Navi Pillay, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, who gave the Bram Fisher Lecture in Rhodes House. The Oxford University Africa Society's (AFRISOC) annual Pan-Africa Conference was also a great success and was addressed by His Majesty King Letsie III of Lesotho and His Honour Dr. Guy Scott, Vice President of the Republic of Zambia.

What makes the centre thrive, of course, is in large measure down to the dynamism of our students, and as you will see in the pages below the graduate discussion groups have had another very active year. The Horn of Africa seminars, Researching Africa Day, the OXPEACE conference and the Nigeria Research Day are all testament to a thriving African Studies research community across the university. To keep up to date with our news and next year's events on our website, Facebook and Twitter, you can also listen to most of our seminar talks on iTunesU.

As this year's newsletter demonstrates, the African Studies Centre continues to go from strength to strength. We have been joined by Dr Andrea Purdeková as Departmental Lecturer in African Politics (do read her research profile below), and Dr Jonny Steinberg has been appointed to a new University Lectureship in African Criminology at St Anne's College. Next year we will also be welcoming Dr Miles Larmer as a new University Lecturer in African History at St Antony's College (you can read more about him below). Other new arrivals for next year include Siobhan Coote and Anniella Hutchinson who join us as our new administrative team in the office.

On a personal note, I'm stepping down as Director at the end of this academic year after four years. It is very pleasing to reflect that over this time the relocation of the centre to 13 Bevington Road has proved such a success, that we have turned around a deficit to a consistent and substantial surplus, that the faculty at the centre has expanded, and that the masters programme has had such a glowing report. This has been achieved as a result of strong support for African Studies from the School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies, the Social Sciences Division, the colleges, and, most importantly, the hard work and dedication of my colleagues. Let me thank them and everyone involved with the centre for their help and support, and wish Nic Cheeseman luck as he takes over from me.

## Visitors

**Dr Jon Hill**, Senior Lecturer at Kings College London, was a visiting fellow from January to April 2013. Dr Hill's research falls within the area of African security studies and he is interested in Islamism and Islamist insurgent and terror groups operating in North and West Africa. During his time in Oxford he developed his analysis of the Nigerian military's response to insecurity related to the Boko Haram movement in Northern Nigeria.

**Dr Sun Xiaomeng**, Associate Professor and Vice Dean in the Asian-African Studies Institute of Beijing Foreign Studies University, was a visiting fellow during for Michaelmas and Hilary Terms 2012-13. Dr Xiaomeng successfully drafted the manuscript of her monograph 'Language and Power: Hausa in Northern Nigeria in the British Colonial Period'. The manuscript examines language policy in northern Nigeria during the colonial era. It focuses on the debates over the introduction of a standard script, the use of Hausa within colonial institutions (schools, military and the colonial service), and addresses the ways in which the language was disseminated regionally through the Literature Bureau and a local newspaper (Gaskiya ta fi Kwabo) during the 1930s.

**Julia Hornberger** and **Emmanuel Rotimi** are leading African scholars who write on various aspects of policing. Hornberger does close ethnographic work with South African police, while Rotimi works on the Nigerian police force and its relation to Nigerian democracy. Both were in Oxford thanks to a British Academy International Partnership and Mobility Grant and presented at a workshop called 'Reconsidering Policing in Africa'.

**Hylton White** heads the Anthropology Department at Wits University in Johannesburg. He has been conducting ongoing ethnographic research among young people in South Africa's eastern seaboard for the last twenty years. He writes on the relationship between young people and the dead and on youth, work and unemployment. Hylton was in Oxford as a Visiting Oppenheimer Fellow.

## African Studies Prizes 2012-13

Kirk-Greene Prize for Best Overall Performance: **Oliver Aiken**

Terence Ranger Prize for the Best Dissertation Performance: **Kieran Gilfoy**

African Studies Prize for the Most Innovative Dissertation:

**Samuel Iwilade & Sebatso Manoeli**



# “Born Again” churches in Kibera

By Dr Greg Deacon, British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow

My doctoral research looked at the socioeconomic role of Pentecostal or “Born Again” churches in Kibera slum, Nairobi, Kenya. There are a number of theories claiming that this branch, or branches, of Christianity are having a profound effect on African lives – in particular that there are consequences for entrepreneurship. After working in small business investment and having come to see the dominance of religion in Africa, the potential benefits of enterprise, development and Christianity fascinated me. An area I wanted to stay away from was Kenyan politics. That started to change when I woke on the 1st of January 2008 to the sound of gunfire along my road on the edge of Kibera.

The smoke that I could see rising over the slum came from violent protests in response to a highly controversial general election. By the time the smoke cleared nationally, at least 1500 people were dead and well over half a million had been displaced. From this conflagration, two prominent political leaders were charged with crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court (ICC) at The Hague in the Netherlands. They are accused of orchestrating horrendous acts of murder, rape and destruction against each other’s communities. Those same two men, Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto, were this year elected as president and deputy president of Kenya, respectively.

Before making their way to hearings at the ICC, Kenyatta and Ruto took part in mass prayer rallies – together. They regularly stand in church and declare that they are peaceful men of God who are reconciling a divided nation. My work as a British Academy postdoctoral research fellow starts essentially with this apparent contradiction – between images of destruction and salvation; what politicians say about them and, more importantly, what they mean to ordinary Kenyans.

I’m coming to the end of a year of fieldwork, exploring Pentecostalism and its ideas in the lives, understandings and expectations of Kenyans before, during and after the general election of 2013. There’s been time back in Kibera attending services, interviewing and discussing events; I’ve also been able to head out on the road, for up to a month at a time, going around the rest of the country seeing how people in different areas have understood what’s going on – in the past and looking to the future. Kenya in 2012–2013 has been, I think, a remarkable case study in the need for social sciences to account for religion. Political campaigns and everyday discourse have been overwhelmingly Christian in nature – and approaches to ‘forgiveness’ and ‘repentance’ will have repercussions for many years to come. Kenyatta and Ruto were reported to have stated that Kenya is a Christian nation. Analysing what that means, and the effects on growth and wellbeing, is the challenge I now face.

## The Routledge Handbook of African Politics

In March of this year the Routledge Handbook of African Politics was published, marking the end of a 3-year collaborative project between over 30 established academics and a host of ASC alumni. Covering everything from conflict to courts to class, the Handbook is ambitious in scope and is arguably the most comprehensive overview of African politics currently available on the market.

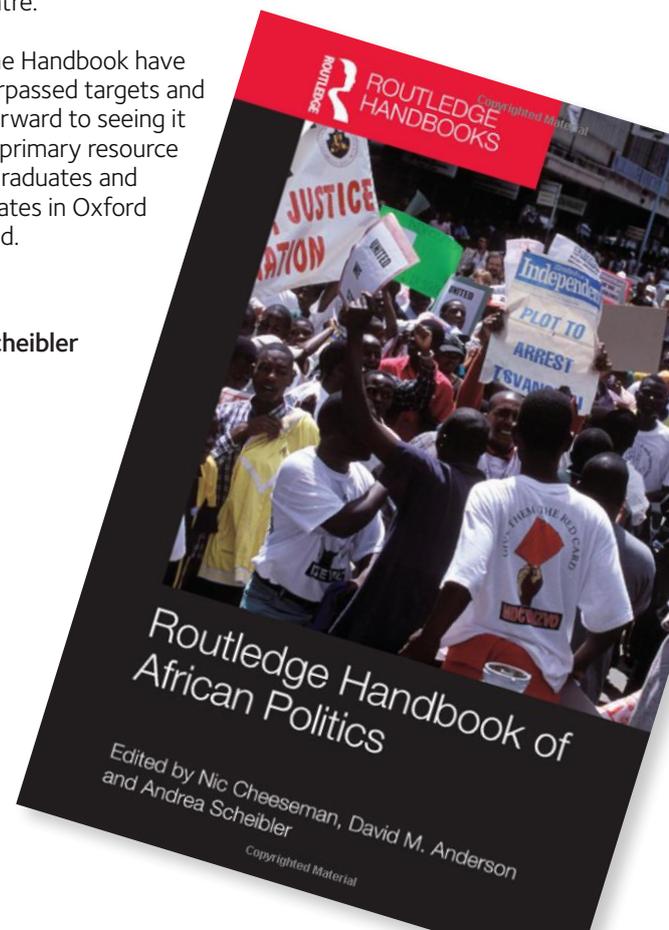
Edited by Nic Cheeseman, David Anderson (now at Warwick), and myself (2008–09), the Handbook also benefitted from an excellent chapter by Martin Williams (2007–08), and Zoe Marks (2007–08) served as our superb senior editorial assistant. Additional assistance was provided by a range of young Africanists at Oxford: Ben Armstrong (visiting student 2010); Yolana Pringle (DPhil History of Medicine); and Sam Wilkins (2011–12). A number of chapters were also written by former graduates, as well as by current faculty, so the Handbook is very much a product of the wealth of Africanist talent at Oxford and of the African Studies Centre in particular.

The opportunity to work closely with a number of key authors on the MSc reading list was certainly a privilege and, as Zoe Marks added, it is both humbling and encouraging to know that even luminaries need the occasional edit! But these opportunities do not come without the unfaltering support and encouragement of the ASC faculty, and it is hard not to view the successful publication of the Handbook as

testament to the collaborative and dedicated academic spirit of the Centre.

Sales of the Handbook have already surpassed targets and we look forward to seeing it become a primary resource for undergraduates and postgraduates in Oxford and beyond.

Andrea Scheibler



# The Kenyan Election 2013: the consolidation of democracy?

## The Kenyan Election 2013: the consolidation of democracy?

**In 2013 Kenya held its first elections since the disastrous polls of 2007, which triggered a period of civil conflict that left over 1,000 dead and 700,000 more displaced. Ahead of the elections, I ran a project with Gabrielle Lynch of Warwick University and Justin Willis of Durham University to help the UK government think through the risks and opportunities that the year would bring.**

Election year in Kenya means a number of things. First, on a regional level, East Africa holds its breath, hoping for peaceful polls that do not disrupt the slow but steady economic and political gains of the last ten years. Second, on a domestic level, Kenyans have to decide who to vote for, a decision made all the more difficult because it often involves picking the lesser of two evils. And third, on a personal level, elections in Kenya mean that most of my time is devoted to the African country closest to my heart, at the expense of friends, family, and other research.

In 2007, I spent a considerable part of the year in Kenya in the run-up to, and the aftermath of, one of the most controversial elections ever held in Africa. The official announcement that the incumbent, Mwai Kibaki, had won the election – despite widespread allegations of electoral manipulation – led to a period of civil conflict on an unprecedented geographical scale. While the elections of 1992 and 1997 had witnessed politically instigated ethnic clashes mostly in the Rift Valley, the violence in 2007 threatened to engulf the whole country.

As a student of Kenyan politics, it was my first experience of a major democratic set back. I started working on Kenya in 2004, two years after the authoritarian government of Daniel arap Moi had been defeated by the National Rainbow Coalition (NaRC). Those were heady days in which Kenyans were the most optimistic people in the world (according to Gallup), and the country appeared to be on a political and economic fast track to development and democracy.

The violence after 2007 revealed how fragile these gains had been. One of my strongest and most painful memories from fieldwork is being in Nairobi on New Years Eve, sitting with other Kenyan researchers as stories of attacks and atrocities rolled in by text, email,

and television. The feeling of watching a country fall apart has never left me. What no one tells you when you go on fieldwork is that you leave some of yourself behind.

There is not that much you can do as an academic to try and change the course of history. But the one thing you have going for you is that policy makers will read your work and, if it is convincing, might take it on board. With this thought in mind, in the run-up to the 2013 elections I developed a proposal with my friends and colleagues Gabrielle Lynch and Justin Willis to run an election observation program with a difference.

Our idea was simple. Often, election observation teams are only in the country for a short period of time and are staffed by a small number of people who do not know much about the place they are sent to. We thought that for an election as important and complex as the 2013 polls in Kenya it would make sense to bring together a group of academic experts with deep knowledge of the country to provide a different perspective over a longer period of time.

Thankfully, the British government agreed, and funded our project through the African Conflict Prevention Pool – a program that brings together the Department for International Development, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Ministry of Defense. Their support enabled us to put together a team of ten academics – five from the UK, five from Kenya – and devised a long-term monitoring strategy that began six months before the elections. It was a difficult election to work on. One of the main issues was the prosecution of two prominent Kenyan political leaders – Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto – on charges of crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court. Some donors and opposition leaders had initially hoped that the ICC prosecutions would lead to a radical shake-up of the Kenyan political class. But Kenyatta and Ruto's coalition, the Jubilee Alliance, managed to manipulate the charges for their own ends.

By portraying the ICC as a vehicle of colonial exploitation, and implying that their main rival, Raila Odinga, was in league with the ICC, the Alliance proved able to kill two birds with one stone, undermining the legitimacy both of the prosecutions and of their opposition. This strategy, and the advantages the Alliance enjoyed as a result of the wealth and connections of Uhuru Kenyatta, enabled the “coalition of the accused” to win a surprise first round victory.

The salience of the ICC issue had a direct impact on our work. As tensions rose, the Jubilee campaign hit out against the British government and the perception that international donors favored an Odinga victory. The war of words that followed had implications for our project, as some of our team was alleged to have

been involved in a plot to prevent Uhuru Kenyatta from reaching State House. Of course, there was no truth to the claim, but in Kenya rumour can be more powerful than fact. In the days that followed, we had to keep a low profile.

As I left Kenya, I reflected that ultimately the election had been a strange one. There was neither the bloodbath that some feared, nor the inspiring victory for democracy that others hoped for. Instead, Kenya muddled through. Consequently, the outlook for the country was not clear. The electoral system had failed at multiple points, leading Odinga's coalition to launch an immediate appeal against the result. Although the Supreme Court upheld the verdict, many Kenyans refused to believe that the election was free and fair.

Kenya thus stands at a crossroads. It has a new constitution that has introduced a Supreme Court and the devolution of power to 47 counties, but Kenyans have already realized that constitutional change is not sufficient to deliver credible political processes. Much will therefore depend on President Kenyatta, and whether or not he makes good on his pledge to rule in the interests of all Kenyans. If he does, Kenya will continue to grow, both economically and politically. If he does not, the potential for a repeat of 2007 is all too real.

But what did we learn from our project, and what did we contribute? Working with such a varied and talented group of people was a fantastic experience, and I learnt a lot just from reading the reports of my colleagues. We were able to pass on our concerns about likely areas of violence and potential sources of instability. We were also able to learn a lot about working with policy makers, and how donors operate under pressure.

Contrary to the depiction of policy makers in a lot of academic work, we found the Foreign Office and DFID staff in Kenya to be highly skilled, extremely knowledgeable, and to care deeply about their jobs. When they make mistakes it is not for lack of trying. They were willing to listen to what we had to say, and to consider it along with the other information they received. They also knew more than we did about a number of issues, and so we also came to understand Kenya better as a result of our conversations.

Of course, this didn't mean that they always took our advice. Donors receive information from a range of sources, and are motivated by a number of different priorities. The academic advisor can only ever hope to better inform policy, not direct it. But I think we did reach a consensus on one issue: when academics and policy makers collaborate, everyone benefits.

Dr Nic Cheeseman



# Introducing Miles Larmer

## Researching Katangese Gendarmes

My recent research trips have taken me to the Democratic Republic of Congo, to explore the history of the Katangese gendarmes – a politico-military group that, from the 1960s to the 1990s, opposed the regime of President Mobutu Sese Seko from exile in Angola. I hope this detailed case study will shed light on the nature of non-state politico-military groups, of the sort associated with the wars that have devastated parts of central Africa since the late 1990s. The evidence suggests that such groups were a significant factor in earlier conflicts, such as the Angolan civil war, but that this was not widely recognised at the time. Having completed a lot of archival research in Portugal, Belgium and elsewhere, I've been visiting Kinshasa and the southern Katangese city of Lubumbashi to interview former leaders of the gendarmes, both military officers and political leaders, along with my co-author Dr Erik Kennes.

Although this is mainly a historical study, the shadows of these conflicts still cast themselves across contemporary Congolese political life. In March 2013, a Mai Mai militia group named 'Bakata Katanga' briefly seized control of the centre of Lubumbashi: they hoisted the flag of the secessionist state of Katanga (1960-63) and declared that their aim, like that of the Katangese gendarmes fifty years earlier, was an independent Katanga. The ways in which historical memory of the secession continues to be replayed in

contemporary Congo makes for fascinating research, but also makes that research a sensitive matter. It can be difficult to persuade respondents to talk, and when they do agree, to get them to talk about the past in ways that are not dominated by present-day concerns and conflicts. It also means taking the ethics of research very seriously – I've been unable to interview some former gendarmes so as not to endanger them and my research assistants. Pictured here are two of our interviewees, Joseph Kabwit and Jerome Naweji: the latter is the younger brother of Moïse Tshombe, president of Katanga during the secession.

Having spent the previous decade carrying out research in neighbouring Zambia, Congo is a very different place to work! Navigating the state bureaucracy, organising research assistance and the basic task of moving around Kinshasa's vast and partly unmapped sprawl is a huge challenge in itself. But Kinshasa is also a wonderful place to work, where many people are concerned to preserve the country's history and keen to assist visiting researchers – although equally and rightly insistent that the results of that research find their way back home in



the form of published materials and presentations. I was fortunate to give a paper at the University of Kinshasa's Centre for Political Studies in May 2012, organised by the Congo Research Network (<http://congoreserchnetwork.com>): despite the university's profound lack of material resources, the quality of the discussion and questions from faculty and students was excellent. Another benefit of working in Kinshasa is of course its thriving cultural scene: in areas with no electricity, diesel-fuelled street-corner sound systems pump out new hits, whilst every weekend legendary musicians such as Papa Wemba and rising stars like Jean Goubault play open-air concerts into the early hours. Research should be fulfilling but there is no reason why it can't also be fun...

From November 2013 Miles will be University Lecturer in African History

# Introducing Andrea Purdeková

## Fieldwork Notes from Rural Burundi: Negotiating Memory and Coexistence After the War



Though many of my respondents are quick to mention that they are 'ordinary' people (*abantu bato bato*, literally 'small people') who only 'see in front of themselves,' who 'just take the hoe to go to work in the morning,' their testimonies, spanning decades, suggest otherwise. After all, 'local lives' in Burundi have long been incorporated into much broader projects, often of violent transformation. Most people were directly affected by political violence and many reflected on its purpose and causes. The outcome is a complex set of relations to the past, its role in the present, and to the weaving of narratives about this.

The vast differences between 'rural' settings serve as one map of that complexity. Different settings represent very different stores of memory that coexist in the country today. From the purpose-built 'Peace Village' of Mutambara II set on sandy, unproductive land south of Rumonge and housing mostly Hutu returnees, to the entrenched IDP site-turned-village surrounding a Tutsi massacre site in Bugendana, to the scattered settlements in the hills surrounding the burgeoning urban centre of Rushuvi, I have tried to talk to Burundians 'of all pasts' about their relation to the idea of recovering and dealing with the memories and experience of violence in a still very much conflicted present.

The stalled transitional justice process, should it take off, would be the first official nationwide attempt to address more than 50 years of violence and conflict. But how do Burundians relate to this project? Since this is yet another state-led process originating from outside their communities, it makes much sense to place it within the wider context of state-society relations: How do people imagine and relate to state and central power?

Many people suggest that it is difficult to talk about the past when, in fact, there is no clear break with it. Those who rule were themselves protagonists of violence and any justice or truth will be hard to achieve because it 'concerns them' (*bibakorako* – literally, 'they are touched by it'). The common theme across very different social groups is also the notion of being bypassed – literally, the motorcades

transporting the big authorities always whizz by, they never stop to deliver a message (*ijambo*). People say they were used and expended: 'We are like their bridge,' says an old woman, 'everything passes on top of us.'

Not only do many Burundians express concerns about the planned Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), sometimes they state the preference for leaving things 'where they are,' the preference for silence on the past. They say '*ivyatakaye vyatakaye*' – what is lost is lost. But in interpreting 'preference,' the wider context to a narrative becomes key: What does 'raising voice' mean in this particular cultural and political context? When is it the distrust in justice, resignation or fear, or heaviness of one's past speaking?

Sensitivities in speech are revelatory of the tensions that still linger and the delicate politics of the truth. They manifest, among other things, in evasions and indirect speech – for example, people often use general and vague terms such as *les evenements* (the events) or *intambara* (the war) or refer to *abandi* (the others) or *abakoze* (those who did it) to avoid more specific 'naming.' An important part of my research is to try and learn about the conflicted memory through the anatomy of narratives and narration.

Andrea is Departmental Lecturer in Africa Politics



# The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Gives the Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture 2013



**The Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture is one of the stand-out events of the African Studies calendar. Ever year, a high profile defender of human rights and the rule of law, gives a talk, at Rhodes House, in honour of Bram Fischer, the South African lawyer who led the defense team that helped to save the lives of Nelson Mandela and other leaders of the liberation movement during the Rivonia Trial.**

In 2013, we were delighted to welcome Navi Pillay, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to Oxford. A South African national, Navi was the first woman to start a law practice in her home province of Natal in 1967. In the years that followed, she acted as a defense attorney for anti-apartheid activists, exposing torture, and helping establish key rights for prisoners on Robben Island.

While practicing law, Navi also worked as a lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and later was appointed Vice-President of the Council of the University of Durban Westville. In 1995, after the end of apartheid, she was appointed as acting judge on the South African High Court, and in the same year was elected by the United Nations General Assembly to be a judge on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, where she served a total of eight years, the last four (1999-2003) as President. She played a critical role in the ICTR's groundbreaking jurisprudence on rape and genocide, as well as on issues of freedom of speech and hate propaganda. In 2003, she was elected as a judge on the International Criminal Court in The Hague, where she remained until August 2008.

In South Africa, as a member of the Women's National Coalition, Navi contributed to the inclusion of an equality clause in the country's constitution that prohibits discrimination on grounds of race, religion and sexual orientation. She co-founded Equality Now, an international

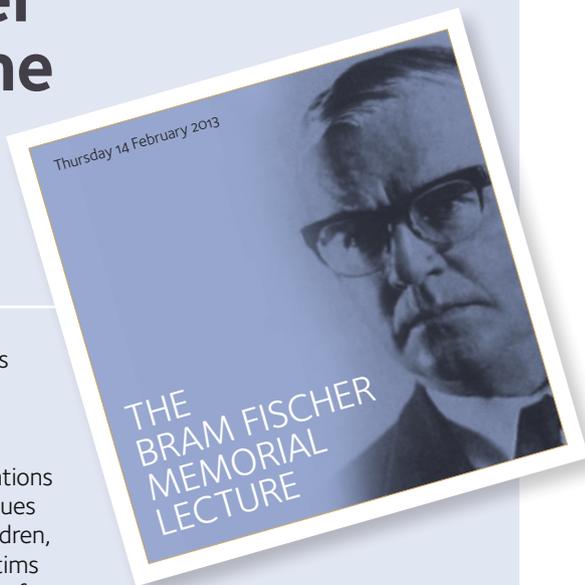
women's rights organization, and has been involved with other organizations working on issues relating to children, detainees, victims of torture and of domestic violence, and a range of economic, social and cultural rights. More recently, Navi was appointed as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in July 2008. On 24 May 2012, the United Nations General Assembly extended her mandate for a further two years.

In her impassioned talk Navi went to great lengths to pay credit to the "everyday heroes" who work to defend and advance human rights in undemocratic African states. She reminded us that for every authoritarian leader there are hundreds of citizens risking their lives to save others. In doing so, Navi made us think about the many Bram Fischers out there in Africa today, receiving little recognition but doing work that will, over time, help to bring greater freedom to their people. Her talk was frank but optimistic: the struggle continues, but it is in good hands.

As always, the Fischer Lecture was a collaborative effort and I would like to end by acknowledging the enthusiasm and leadership of Lord Joffe, the patience and flexibility of Jonny Steinberg, the assistance and efficiency of Anne Heffernan, the backing of the African Studies Centre, the organizational powers of Sarah Gray, and last but certainly not least, the support of the Acting Warden and Rhodes House.

## **Dr Nic Cheeseman**

Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture



# Oxford University Pan African Conference 2013

Oxford University Pan African Conference 2013 was held on May 4th 2013 at the Oxford Union. The conference, themed "Towards a 21st Century African Renaissance: Sowing the seeds of Success," is the flagship event of the Oxford University Africa Society (OUAS). The conference, which is one of the largest gatherings of African scholars in the United Kingdom, brought together over four hundred participants including dynamic scholars, entrepreneurs, activists, and political leaders and heads of government from around the world.

The conference focused on issues such as governance, technological advancement, sustainable development and healthcare innovation and showcased Africa's development and investment potential as well as its emerging role as an economic powerhouse. Highlights of the conference included keynote speeches by His Majesty, King Letsie III of Lesotho, Dr Guy Scott- Vice President of Zambia and Mr Euvim Naidoo – President, South Africa Chamber of Commerce, America. Other speakers include the H. E. Prof Kwaku Danso-Boafo – Ghana High Commissioner to the UK, Ms Mmasekgoa Masire-Mwamba-Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General and Mr Richard Dowden.

The speakers from the keynote and panel sessions highlighted the importance of democratic governance, transparent leadership and entrepreneurship as the bedrock of economic development and the need to leverage technological innovation to develop home grown solutions if the continent is to truly become the 21st century investment destination. Other common themes that emerged from the conference included the role of art and media as powerful tools to spread a message of social change in Africa, the need for high and low tech investment in healthcare to reduce the burden of disease, and the need to change the narrative of the continent to one which recognizes the central role Africa is starting to play in global economy.



# The Future of Peacebuilding: OXPEACE Conference

10-11 May 2013

OXPEACE is an interdisciplinary organization that works to further the study of peace and peace building within the University. It is currently fundraising for a Chair in Peace Studies. Dr Nic Cheeseman has been an active member of OXPEACE for the last couple of years, and partly as a result of this the relationship between OXPEACE and the African Studies Centre has become stronger.

Like it or not, peace building is an issue that is never far from the minds of those who study Africa. Past OXPEACE events have included talks and video showings of peace building efforts in Kenya, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. The African Studies Centre was therefore pleased to be able to support the annual OXPEACE conference in May 2013. The Conference began with a dinner attended by 90 people, held in Kellogg College on Friday 10th May, at which the after dinner speaker was Ms Ingrid Betancourt, the Columbian former Senator, who was held hostage by the FARC for six years (2002 to 2008) and is currently studying Theology at Oxford. Her words held delegates spell bound as she discussed how she has come to terms with her own internment, and found a way to move on with her life. Starting the conference in this way reminded us all that peace building is as much a personal issue as it is a political one.

On Saturday 11th May, over 100 people attended the Conference in the St John's College Garden Quad Auditorium and Reception Room. The morning began with a paper on 'The Evolution of Peacebuilding in the Context of UN Peace Operations' by the first head of the

UN Peacebuilding Commission, Carolyn McAskie OC of the University of Ottawa. Four breakout sessions followed, two before and two after the lunch break, each with three or four presentations, exploring: counter-terrorism and peacebuilding; universities and peacebuilding; UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding; and environmental peacebuilding.

The final plenary featured both Dr Cyril Obi of the African Peacebuilding Network based at the SSRC, New York, on 'International Peacebuilding in Africa or African Peacebuilding: What prospects for the Future?' and Professor Paul Rogers of the University of Bradford on 'Chances for Peace in the Next Decade. The talks and the Q&A covered a remarkably wide ground, some more optimistic, some pessimistic. Many delegates raised concerns about the prospects of a new war in Syria that could destabilize the Middle East which, at the time of writing, is looking increasingly likely.

Reflecting the remarkable diversity of speakers and themes, two of the presenters, Yossi Leshem (Israel) and Azzam Alwash (Iraq) showed films of their work in peace-related environmental conservation in Israel/Palestine and in the Iraqi Marshes on Saturday evening. Their brave work serves as an important reminder of the diversity and longevity of the costs of war.

Dr Nic Cheeseman and Revd Dr Liz Carmichael Co-Conveners, Oxford Network of Peace Studies (OxPeace)

## Oxford Central Africa Forum

The 2012-2013 academic year was a busy one for the Oxford Central Africa Forum (OCAF). We continued to convene our weekly Friday seminars at Queen Elizabeth House (Department of International Development), hosting practitioners and scholars working on and in the region as well as students from across the university. Speakers included: Alex Vines OBE (Chatham House) on sanctions in Africa, Filip Reyntjens (University of Antwerp) on violence and political transitions in the Great Lakes region, Max Battle (Good Governance Group) on Michael Sata's Zambia, and Norbert Mao (President of the Democratic Party, and Council Chairman, Gulu District, Uganda) on the ICC and the challenge of transitional justice in Northern Uganda. In addition to the seminar series, OCAF convened several thematic conferences and public lectures. For example, in Michaelmas term, the Rt Hon. Clare Short (former Secretary of State for International Development) delivered the inaugural OCAF Vaughan Memorial Lecture on "The United Kingdom's relationship with Rwanda from 1997 to 2003". In Trinity, OCAF was involved with the organization of a one day conference at SOAS entitled "Burundi 1993-2013: looking back on 20 years of war, peace-building and democracy". To all those who attended and participated in OCAF events, thank you for making it a memorable year.



# Horn of Africa seminar

**During 2012-13, the Horn of Africa seminar brought together academics, post-graduates, policymakers, and practitioners with an interest in the region. Our presentations covered the range of the region's countries – including Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan and Kenya – and encompassed a variety of disciplinary approaches, as well as both policy and academic research.**

Speakers on the seminar during 2012-13 included Dr Neil Carrier (Oxford), Professor Richard Reid (SOAS), Rony Emmenegger (Zurich), Dr David Styan (Birkbeck), Dr Tobias Hagmann (Roskilde) and Martina Santschi (Swisspeace). Topics covered included trust and goodwill in Eastleigh, Nairobi; violence and state-building in Northeast Africa; property rights and citizenship in Ethiopia; Djibouti's role in the region; Ethiopian governance in the Ogaden region; and local political dynamics in South Sudan.

In addition to our seminar presentations, the series hosted three significant events during the year:

In December, we hosted a book launch for the *Routledge Handbook of Land and Water Grabs in Africa*, which featured a panel discussion including Professor Tony Allan (SOAS/KCL), Martin Kuelertz (KCL), Dr Eckhart Woertz (CIDOB) and Dr Harry Verhoeven (Oxford) – all of whom contributed to the book. The book launch was co-hosted by the Oxford University Water Security Network.

In April, the seminar hosted a one-day workshop, *Post-transitional directions in the Somalias*. The workshop included presentations from a range of scholars and other experts, including Dr Markus Hoehne (MPI-Halle), Professor Lidwien Kaptjens (Wellesley), Dr Laura Hammond (SOAS), Mohamed Al-Hadi (Al-Shahid Network), Mohammed Seid (Independent legal scholar), Jamal Osman (Channel 4 news), Siham Rayale (SOAS) and Mohammed Ingiriis (Goldsmiths). Presentations covered a range of issues, including refugees, the role of political Islam, constitutionalism, the media, transitional justice, clan-based violence, state formation and gender. The workshop was co-sponsored by the Journal of Eastern African Studies, and served to launch a special issue of

the journal, *Effects of 'statelessness': dynamics of Somali politics, economy and society since 1991*, which was guest edited by Dr Hoehne. Podcasts of several of the presentations are hosted on the Oxford University website.

In May, the seminar hosted the 'Oxford Pastoralist Research Day', designed to tap into the concentration of academics and practitioners based in Oxford to spark discussion between sometimes siloed research communities. The theme was *Pastoralism and Resilience: Current Debates and Approaches to Development in Pastoralist Regions*. Presenters included Dr Dawn Chatty (Oxford), Dr Helen Young (Tufts), Dr Clare Oxby (Independent), Zoe Cormack (Durham), Jason Mosley (Oxford), Kit Dorey (Oxford), Dr Zeremariam Fre (PENHA), Liz Fouksman (Oxford), Dr Angela Raven-Roberts (Oxford), Ina Zharkevich (Oxford), Sultanat Rusalova (Oxford) and Tamma Carleton (Oxford). Dr Raven-Roberts organised the event.

The seminar was convened by Jason Mosley, research associate at the African Studies Centre.

## Nigeria Research Day

**On 9th May, Hannah Hoechner and Olly Owen co-ordinated a Researching Nigeria Day in Queen Elizabeth House, supported and enabled by Oxford Development Studies Conference Support Facility and in partnership with the ASC.**

The day, a repeat of other successful sessions held at Oxford and King's College, London in previous years, brought early-career scholars, established academics, and researchers working in the private, public and third sectors together to share new research, in a semi-formal setting, and to discuss ways of collaborating more effectively with institutions within Nigeria. We were fortunate to have attendees ranging from distinguished professors;

Cyril Obi, Wale Adebanwi and Murray Last to undergraduate students, not only from the UK and Nigeria, but as

far afield as Scandinavia and (by video-conferencing link) from the US, and including many from Oxford University at all stages of their careers. Papers discussed subjects, both familiar and innovative, including maritime piracy, the functioning of public institutions, basic education, traditions of hairstyling, Nigerian WWII veterans, collections of palm-oil trade artefacts in British museums, and price discrimination in Lagos markets; while presenters came from disciplines as diverse as security studies, literature, development economics and museology. The day was completed by a relocated ASC

Thursday seminar by Professor Cyril Obi of the SSRC. It also resulted in the deepening of an online collaborative information-sharing resource for researchers in Nigeria. The event showcased the breadth of research on Nigeria currently taking place in the UK, and complemented other Oxford-based research in Nigeria, including Nic Cheeseman's on-going work with Lagos State and the Nigeria Research Network's Islam research programme based at ODID. Thanks to all who supported and participated in the event.





Didi Hand

Photo competition: Three Sapeurs show off their shoes for the cameras during a competition in Bacongo, Brazzaville, 2013

## 14th Annual Researching Africa Day: Researching Africa: The Flow of Research?

In its 14th meeting, on the 23rd of February, Researching Africa Day brought researchers from across various disciplines once again to St Antony's College. The workshop was attended by over eighty participants from Oxford, other universities in the United Kingdom, as well as overseas researchers. The panel debates were lively and engaging, and continued well into the wine reception at the end of the workshop!

This year's theme, '*Researching Africa: The Flow of Research?*', invited a critical reconsideration of research as a series of finite and sequential stages. As a social practice the research process is typically conceptualised as having a flow. There is first *accessing* the field, then acquiring information, then *interpreting* this pool of data, and finally there is *presenting* it as a finished thesis. However does the research question, for example, really emerge whilst reviewing the literature, or does it develop much later whilst ploughing through archival documents or during a conversation with informants? Is there a discrepancy between how we say we do research and how we actually do it?

The workshop's four panels teased out the tension between the messy, not altogether chronological ways of doing research and the smooth, idealised ways of talking about it.

In the first panel, *Accessing*, the papers underscored how the field can remain inaccessible even after contact with key informants has been made, and even whilst interviewing is underway. Researchers explored their own methods of constructing trust and soliciting meaningful participation from the people whose lives and world they write about, or the archivists who shelve and organise their records. Sharing 'secrets' and becoming intimately knitted into the lives of those we study over time were some of the experiences panellists discussed. In the second panel, *Acquiring*, the interconnectedness of the research stages that are meant to be finite and separate was brought to the fore. What is acquired, the papers suggested, is shaped by how we access information and also where we are situated in a labyrinth of relationships of power and social backgrounds. The third panel, *Interrogating*, highlighted how

various sources are socially produced in ways that are not always apparent to the analyst. This included photographs, newspapers and archival records. The papers explored the limitations and challenges the historical construction of sources imposes on analysts, but also the opportunities it presents for more rigorous engagement with social theory. The last panel, *Presenting*, questioned whether the research process ends with the writing of a finished product, or whether 'writing up' serves other cognitive or interpretative purposes. The conventions of presenting research were debated, as were alternative forms of presentation, including the public posting of sources on the internet, and even a flower exhibition!

Dr Ramon Sarro, from the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Oxford gave the closing remarks.

**Khumisho Moguerane**



# A Good African Story

Andrew Rugasira (2010–11)



**Uganda produces over three million bags of coffee a year (approximately 200 000 tonnes), but most of this coffee is exported raw – as green beans – for processing in the consuming countries of the developed world. I founded Good African Coffee in 2003 to help coffee farmers in western Uganda produce quality coffee that we would then roast, pack and brand for local and international markets. Before this, no Ugandan coffee company had ever placed a branded coffee product on supermarket shelves in South Africa or the UK. This became my mission and has been my journey over the past nine years.**

Our challenge was clear: Can an African social enterprise that aspires to empower the rural community develop a profitable, sustainable, global brand? Under the banner “Africa needs trade not aid” and a profit-sharing commitment to our farmers and their communities, we developed the building blocks for the social enterprise. These included improving crop quality and post-harvest handling, boosting productivity and environmental stewardship, and building institutional capacity through financial training and the development of savings and credit cooperatives for the farmers.

Good African Coffee has come a long way since 2003. When we began, we met significant resistance to our business model both at home and abroad. At home, the resistance came not only from the bankers and private equity firms from whom I sought capital, but also

from coffee farmers who were cynical after decades of exploitation by the industry.

Abroad, supermarkets were hesitant to work directly with an African-based brand because they had not done it before and the risks looked too great: Could we consistently deliver a product of high quality? Did we have the managerial competence to drive the business forward? Were we actually credible? Yet despite this resistance, farmer by farmer, village by village, trip after trip, banker’s meeting after banker’s meeting, we gained credibility, acceptance and momentum.

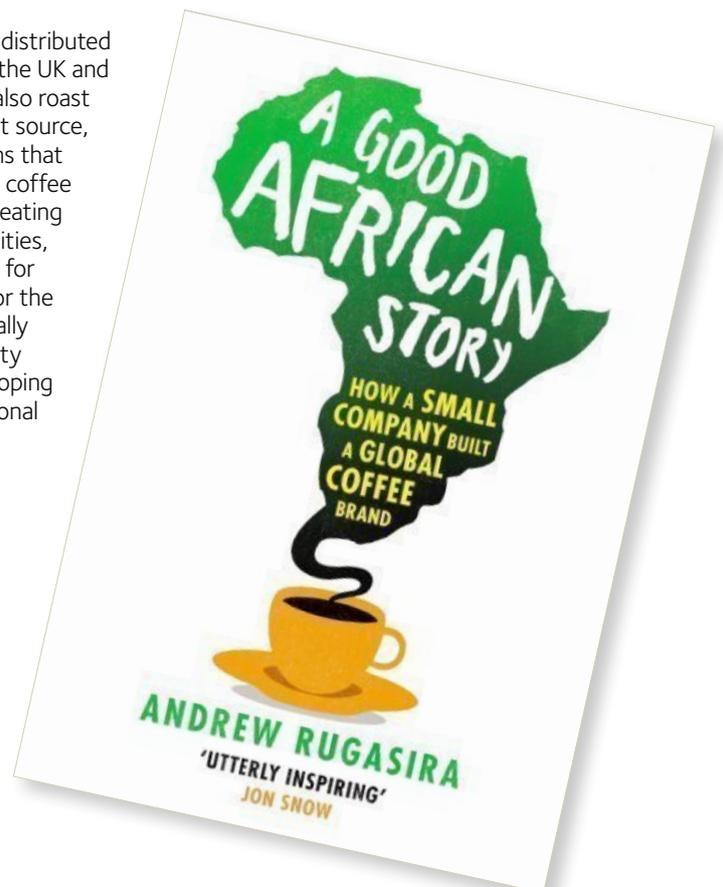
Today, our coffees are distributed in 600 Tesco stores in the UK and widely in Uganda. We also roast and pack our coffees at source, in Uganda, which means that the value added to the coffee is retained at source creating employment opportunities, better farmgate prices for the producers, taxes for the government and critically the exposure and dignity that comes with developing home-grown international consumer brands.

When we started buying coffee from farmers in the Kasese district in 2004 the average market price was USD0.43 per kilogram of quality Arabica coffee. We purchased around seven tonnes, paying three times that

price – USD1.25/kg. Seven years later, in 2011, the average price we paid was USD4.25/kg, almost 25% more than the average market price; that year, we bought over 400 tonnes. Today, Good African Coffee has a network of more than 14,000 coffee farmers organised into 280 producer groups; and we have partnered with these farmers to set up 17 savings and credit cooperatives.

In 2003, the majority of the farmers we met lived in mud-and-wattle huts; they had few assets and were economically insecure. Today, many have built permanent structures and own bicycles and motor bikes; they are rearing goats and chickens as a business, and they grow a variety of crops in addition to coffee. They have seen their household incomes grow in real terms. In a modest way, Good African Coffee spurred the entrepreneurial talents of these farmers. My testimony points to the huge reservoir of entrepreneurs on the continent, and to the enormous impact social entrepreneurship can have on Africa’s agricultural economy.

By Andrew Rugasira based on his recently published book, *A Good African Story: How a small company built a global coffee brand*. Bodley Head (7 Feb 2013) London.



# Inspiration Behind The Awethu Project

Yusuf Rander-Rees (2008–9)



It was during my studies at Oxford that I became convinced of the idea that would eventually become the Awethu Project: South Africa is overlooking world-class entrepreneurial potential in our own under-resourced communities. I realized the people I was interacting with at Oxford (and earlier at Harvard) didn't necessarily have more potential than people from low-income areas in South Africa – the difference in life trajectory was being created by how well institutions like Oxford develop potential, and how poorly we do so for large swathes of our population in South Africa.

Oxford's formula isn't magic: run a rigorous and highly competitive talent identification process, then invest world-class resources in the people who emerge from it. Inevitably, you produce world-class entrepreneurs, scientists, leaders, etc. Why could the same not be applied to high-potential talent identified from under-resourced communities in South Africa? I was particularly interested in applying this model to entrepreneurial talent, because it seemed to me that entrepreneurial competencies such as problem-solving, leadership, resilience, and hard work, could be developed even in the absence of a strong education system. As a result, the potential talent pool in South Africa, where in my province alone there are 1.2 million informal businesses and we have a 40% unemployment rate, promised to be enormous.

Four years ago I returned home from Oxford, and set out to build a business on the basic premise that world-class entrepreneurial talent exists in under-resourced South African communities, and that if we could effectively identify people with this talent, and enable

them to realize their full entrepreneurial potential, then the social and economic returns would be immense. I moved back in with my parents, and we got started with about GBP 4,000 of startup capital.

In 2011 the Awethu Project was acknowledged as one of 15 of the world's most visionary social enterprises by the Echoing Green Foundation, after they assessed nearly 3,000 applicants from over 100 countries. In 2012 we were one of the first 20 projects to receive funding from the South African government's National Jobs Fund out of over 3000 organisations that applied. Today we are one of the leading business incubators in South Africa, with over 250 Awethu Entrepreneurs in our Incubator and over 50 team members employed! Our goal is to have 500 Entrepreneurs in our Incubator by the end of the year, and to create 1,000 new jobs by the end of 2014. If we can do this, we will be one of the lowest-cost and most scalable job creation programmes in South Africa.

## Altitude Medical

Jake McKnight (2006–7)



I came to Oxford to do the 9 months Masters in African Studies and fully expected to be back working for MSF in Africa shortly thereafter. As it happens, I've been here for almost 7 years and now find myself selling door handles. This far from illustrious-sounding outcome is, in fact, proof of both the opportunities that Oxford affords and the creativity and intellect of the people who study here.

Towards the end of the MSc, I was at a party when a friend from my college

told me that he'd had an idea for a product earlier that day. He explained that as a doctor and statistician, he was frustrated by the fact that hospital workers didn't sanitise their hands, despite the known efficacy of alcohol sanitiser in stopping infection and saving lives. His idea was to use the door handle as a way of forcing people to sanitise their hands before they entered hospital rooms. I remember putting down my beer and telling him that it was a fine idea and that I'd love to help him with it if at all possible.

A few weeks later, he got back to me and said that he wanted to give it a shot. Thus, we started our company Altitude Medical, and soon brought on-board other teammates with different skills. We then applied for, and eventually won, two Oxford-based competitions: Idea Idol; and the Said Business School Venture Fund. Through this exposure, and perhaps the confidence-inspiring backdrop of ancient buildings and dreaming spires, we managed to find significant investment to design, test, patent and

finally manufacture the product. The road wasn't always easy, and it was tough to do my DPhil alongside the business, but we have now completed successful trials at Johns Hopkins and I'm hoping to launch the product at the end of the year.

If I'm honest, business pressures have meant that I'm now starting to neglect my research career and the many academic opportunities the MSc and DPhil have afforded me, but the fact that I was able to find such a great idea, gain support and attract investment, all the while working on my DPhil speaks volumes about what a creative and exciting place Oxford can be. I'm immensely grateful to the African Studies department, to the business school, to my college, and to the many Oxford people who've helped me along the way.

[www.altitudemedical.com](http://www.altitudemedical.com)  
and coming soon...  
[www.pullclean.com](http://www.pullclean.com)



# MSc Graduates recently awarded PhDs

**Michelle Osborn  
(2005–6)**



## Authority in a Nairobi Slum

My doctoral thesis conjoins anthropology and history through an examination of local-level urban politics. As a historical ethnographic account, my dissertation examines the contemporary existence of chiefs in Kenya as situated in the *longue durée* of colonial and post-colonial history, tracing how shifting Kenyan rule has contributed to chiefs' changing authority. Kenya's chiefs, who are essentially local state bureaucrats, offer a unique lens for exploring urban governance and the establishment and negotiation of local authority and legitimacy. Chiefs form the foundation of Kenya's Provincial Administration, which has remained the cornerstone of the Kenya state and local governance since its colonial inception. However, chiefs' sovereignty has become increasingly fragmented over the last twenty years, particularly within urban areas, through the reintroduction of multiparty politics, the politicized mobilization of militant youth, and policy amendments related to chiefs' authority. The site for my work was Kibera, which is one of the oldest and largest urban settlements in Nairobi, and where Kenya's flourishing political pluralism is particularly evident. Historical and political forces converge in Kibera to reveal changing and negotiated interactions between state and local actors. Chiefs struggle in this context to negotiate authority and legitimacy; nevertheless they remain crucial to contemporary urban governance at the local level. As the first historically situated, ethnographic account of Kenya's urban chiefs, this study contributes to our understanding of governance in practice and reveals how the colonial imprint remains visible within the postcolonial state.

**Aidan Russell  
(2005–6)**

## Talking Politics in Northern Burundi

Exploring the traumatic decolonisation and first decade of independence in Burundi, my thesis focused on a small area of the northern border with Rwanda as the local community adapted to the great transformations and crises around them. I considered a series of remarkable moments across twelve years. Each exemplified a different mode of engagement between people and state on the edge, from the dissent of anti-colonial rebellion, the collaboration and accommodation of the unstable postcolonial years, to the repression of a genocidal state in 1972. Dealing with issues of subjecthood and citizenship, of border politics and violence, the thesis attempted to tell a new story of political transformation in the Great Lakes, integrating the exceptional intricacies of local politics into the broad, and often misleading, narratives of national mythology.

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**Babatunde Oseni  
(2007–8)**

## Democracy in South Africa and Nigeria

I commenced a Doctorate in Political Science at the University of Exeter immediately after his MSc in African studies at Oxford in 2008. I spent four years in the UK (researching and teaching at Exeter) and in South Africa and Nigeria for field work and writing up. My doctoral work focused on the 'cumulative and interactive effects' of one-party dominance and institutional choices on constitutional democracy in Africa, with a comparative emphasis on Nigeria and South Africa. Two key questions define this thesis: what shapes the use of political power by governments in new African democracies? And how does the use of political power affect the degree to which these democracies are likely to consolidate, particularly in terms of their institutionalization, and in the extent of public perceptions of their legitimacy? My PhD research took me to several research institutes and political institutions in both countries and the Rhodes House Library in Oxford. I currently lecture in Political Science & International Relations at the Crawford University, Igbesa, near Lagos, Nigeria.

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## Lydia Bosire (2007–8)

### Judicial Statecraft in Kenya and Uganda

I graduated from the University of Oxford with my DPhil in Politics, having defended my dissertation titled *Judicial Statecraft in Kenya and Uganda: Explaining Transitional Justice Choices in the age of the International Criminal Court*. I conducted over 300 hours of interviews with elite stakeholders in Nairobi, Kampala, The Hague and New York, in order to explain the conditions under which interest-pursuing regime elites (and, in some cases, NGO elites) choose or reject international prosecutions, domestic prosecutions, or alternatives to prosecutions. The research makes a theoretical contribution by explaining how preferences for transitional justice policies are constituted through “judicial statecraft”: the strategic use of justice-related policies as carrots and sticks in the overall contestation of power. My research finds that the choices of elites engaged in judicial statecraft depend on three factors: the extent to which the elites are secure that their policy choices cannot be subverted from within; the cost and credibility of transitional justice threats; and the effects, both intended and unintended, of history. The research



contributes new insights to both scholarship and practice, making it particularly timely when discussions about the ICC are frequently in the headlines. I am working at the UN Department of Political Affairs in New York.

## George Hamandishe Karekwaivanane (2008–9)

### Legal Encounters in Zimbabwe

When I first began thinking about a topic for my doctoral research, I was considering studying the institution of chieftaincy in Zimbabwe. However, as I worked through the newly accessioned Ministry of Internal Affairs files in the Zimbabwean National Archives, I came across a number of legal cases involving tenacious African litigants who took on colonial officials in the courts and, in a number of cases, won. These cases raised a number of questions which I felt warranted further investigation: When, why and how did Africans make use of the colonial legal system in their engagements with the state and with each other? What can such legal encounters tell us about African legal consciousness and agency? How did the state respond to such legal challenges? Can the shifting ways that the state deployed the law cast a new light on the nature of the state and the continuous processes of state reconstruction in Zimbabwean history? With these questions in mind, I decided to shift the focus of my doctoral research and set out to investigate the role that law played in the constitution and contestation of state power in Zimbabwe between 1950 and 1990.

The product of my research was a thesis entitled ‘Legal Encounter: Law, State and Society in Zimbabwe c. 1950–1990’, which makes four main contributions to scholarly debates about the relationship between law, state power and agency in African history. First, it highlights the importance

of paying attention to the interplay between the legitimating and coercive capacities of law, in our efforts to understand the role of law in constituting state power. Second, it interrogates ‘legal centralism’ as an approach to understanding developments in the legal sphere in Zimbabwean history. Instead, I show that during the period under study, Zimbabwe experienced a process of evolving legal pluralism characterised by the mutual appropriation of practices, symbols and concepts between statutory and ‘customary’ law.

Third, it maintains that the significance of African legal agency went beyond illustrating the utility of the law in specific social, economic and political struggles. It also gave expression to emergent political imaginaries, shifting ideas of personhood and alternative visions of the social and political order. An important dimension of the legal struggles I examine was the rejection by Africans of state efforts to define them as ethnicized, custom-bound subjects, and their efforts to assert themselves as rights-bearing citizens. Finally, I argue that the historical examination of legal struggles that the thesis undertakes has much to offer to scholarly efforts to understand contemporary legal struggles in Zimbabwe. I demonstrate that contemporary debates in Zimbabwe around ideas such as ‘human rights’, ‘the rule of law’, ‘judicial independence’ as well as the legal struggles between citizens and the state, are best understood within a longer history of struggles over the content of, by means of, and within spaces defined by law. In addition, I argue that one way of reinvigorating human rights discourse in Zimbabwe, and in Africa more generally, is for activists to re-contextualise it in this longer history of struggles for rights in Africa, as opposed to the post-cold war neo-liberal orthodoxy.



# Alumni Updates

## 2005/2006

**Donald Goodson** graduated from NYU School of Law with a JD this past May and is to begin working as a litigation associate at Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP.



▲ **Meghan Treleaven** had a little boy in June this year.



▲ **Tope Folarin** (MSc 2005–6) has won the prestigious Caine Prize for African Writing. Tope was awarded the prize for his short story 'Miracle', which can be read in full on the Caine Prize website. The Chair of Judges, Gus Casely-Hayford, announced Tope Folarin as the winner of the £10,000 prize at a dinner held on Monday, 8 July at the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Gus Casely-Hayford praised the story, saying: "Tope Folarin's 'Miracle' is another superb Caine Prize winner – a delightful and beautifully paced narrative, that is exquisitely observed and utterly compelling".

## 2006/2007

▼ **Mathieu Gasparini** is now married and father of a newborn child, Liam, who was born on 25th June. Mathieu is still working for the city of Lausanne in the Human Resources department and remains connected with Côte d'Ivoire where he still does some business.



## 2007/2008

**Yvette Stephens**: has been on a second tour of Afghanistan and is hoping to be given the opportunity to work in a training and mentoring role in Kenya.



▲ **Zoe Marks** just completed her DPhil in Politics at Oxford and will be taking up a five-year Chancellor's Fellowship at the University of Edinburgh in their Centre of African Studies. Zoe has been named a 2013–2014 Women and Public Policy Programme Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School, where she will spend part of the upcoming academic year.

## 2008/2009

**Janet Remington's** article, Solomon Plaatje's Decade of Creative Mobility, 1912–1922: The Politics of Travel and Writing in and beyond South Africa, arising from her MSc African Studies research has been published in the Journal of Southern African Studies.

**William Attwell** is working as a Principal Analyst: Economic Policy in the Office of the Executive Mayor of Cape Town where he develops and implements economic policy on behalf of the city administration. Recent projects include the City of Cape Town's Economic Growth Strategy and Strategic External Relations Policy. William continues to publish scholarly articles and book chapters on subjects including black economic empowerment in the *New South African Review* Vol. 3; the changing global role of city economies in the *IMFO Journal*, 3, 1; the role of liberal activists during the transition to democracy in South Africa in *The Road to Democracy* Vol. 6; and trans-boundary natural resource management in the *SADC Law Journal* Vol. 3.

**Jake Peters** is now working in Sri Lanka with The Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), a French-based INGO, focusing on food security programmes and capacity building for civil society organisations.

## 2009/2010

**Dan Paget** now speaks Spanish after living in Barcelona for two years where he has been working as a senior researcher for a small consultancy, RCS, on artisanal and small-scale mining. In October, Dan will be starting a DPhil in Oxford, where he will be studying opposition parties supervised by Nic Cheeseman.

**Leanne Johansson** has been undertaking fieldwork during the second year of her DPhil in Anthropology. She has been living on the border between Nigeria and Cameroon, in the disputed Bakassi peninsula, examining issues related to state-making, national identities and cross-border trade.

**Marcia Schenck** has been working in Indonesia, Argentina, Ethiopia and

# African Studies Photograph Competition

For the first time this year, the African Studies Centre organized a student photo competition. Current and former students were invited to submit photographs of fieldwork in Africa. A selection of 18 high-quality photographs from Ethiopia, Tanzania, Madagascar, Rwanda and the DRC were submitted. The winning photographs were chosen by a panel of African Studies faculty, on the basis of composition, originality, and image quality. The three winners were given Blackwells book vouchers, and the winning images will be printed and framed at the Centre. **Prepare your entries for 2014!**

## Winners of the 2013 African Studies photo competition:

- 1 Emily Crane for 'Supporters of the ruling party TGV at their presidential nominating conference, Madagascar, 2013' (cover)
- 2 Micah Reddy for 'Ethiopian Orthodox Priest, Lalibela, Ethiopia, 2010' (below)
- 3 Didi Hand for 'Three Sapeurs show off their shoes for the cameras during a competition in Bacongo, Brazzaville, 2013' (page 11)

Germany with various international organisations this year as a Mercator fellow and fellow of the German Academic Foundation. Marcia is looking forward to continuing her PhD.

## 2010/2011

**Alexander Noyes** has been working in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defence Analyses in Washington, DC, and will be returning to Oxford this year to begin a DPhil in Politics.

**Esi Agyeman** got engaged to Peter Markeo Gillo. They are now planning for their traditional engagement, "Kwanjula", to be held in Uganda this December. Esi is the Executive Assistant to the Executive Director at SIFMA Foundation in New York City's Financial District. The foundation focuses on fostering financial literacy among youth. A PhD remains on the horizon.

**Tyler Matthews**, after being deployed to Eastern Afghanistan with the US Army in 2012, is currently living in Colorado Springs, working as an Infantry Platoon Leader and spending as much time as possible enjoying the beauty of the Rocky Mountains with his wife.

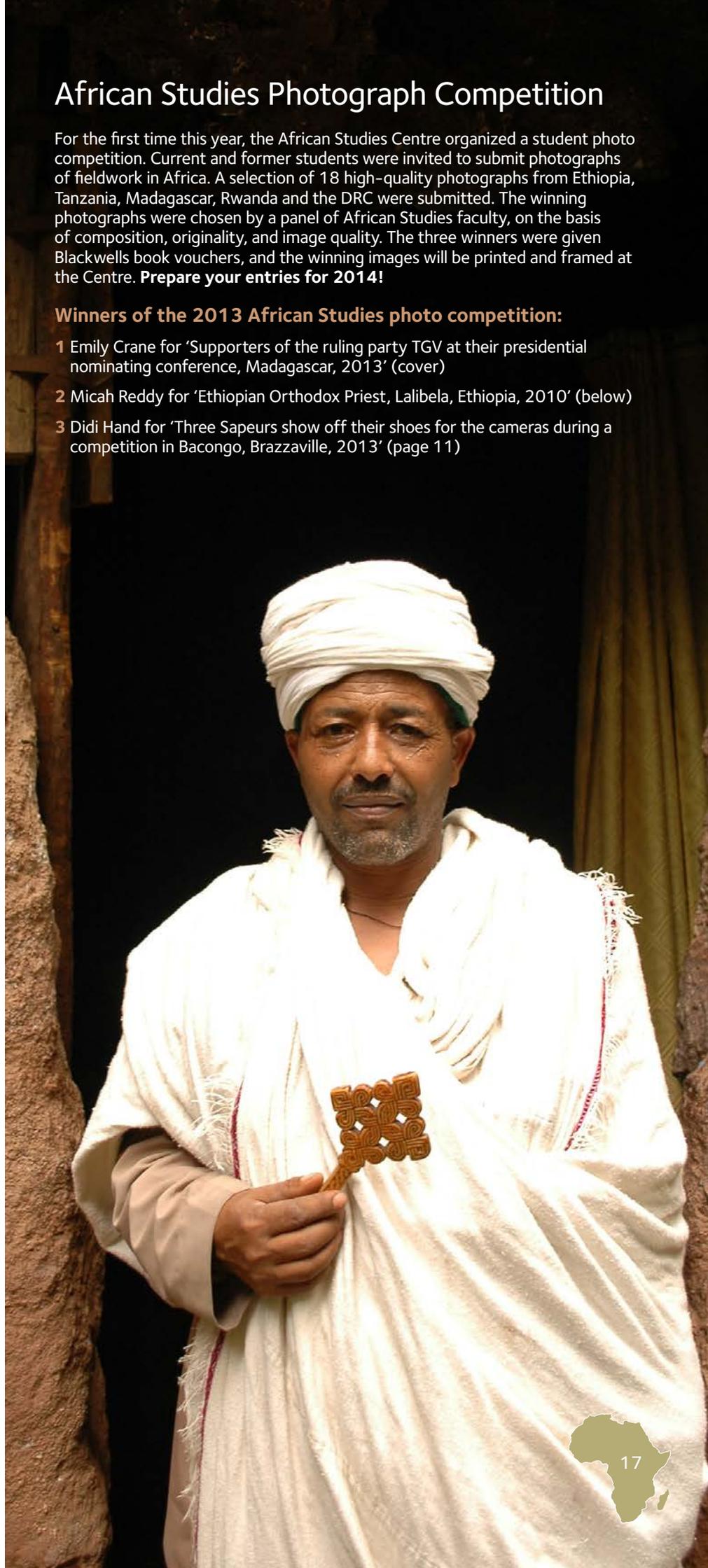
**Liz Ramsey** completed a Masters in Public Affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, and is now working as a consultant on the Land Governance Assessment Framework at the World Bank.

## 2011/2012

**Cecile Feza Bushidi's** PhD at SOAS is progressing well and will be taking her to Kenya starting November.

**Lara Vancans** is the Events and Marketing Coordinator for the Corporate Council on Africa in DC.

**Zenobia Ismail** is working with the Centre for Social Development in Africa on a study titled, "The Politics of Social Protection," studying the relationship between social protection and voter behaviour.



# African Studies Class of 2012–13



**Oliver Aiken** **UK**  
BA International History  
(LSE)

The "import doctrine":  
The SASO leadership and  
African American thought  
and writings: 1968–1973



**Christopher Akor** **Nigeria**  
BSc Politics  
(University of Ibadan)

The 2012 fuel subsidy  
crisis in Nigeria:  
Perspectives on the social  
contract



**Melissa Armstrong** **Canada**  
BA Hons History and Politics  
(University of Saskatchewan)

Militias, Maladies and  
Medicine: Towards a  
History of Health in  
Umkhonto we Sizwe Camps



**Nicole Beardsworth** **S Africa**  
MA International Relations  
(Univ. of Witwatersrand)

Short Term Gains and  
Long Term Losses? The  
Impact of Power Sharing on  
Opposition Parties in Kenya  
and Zimbabwe



**Emily Bridger** **Canada/ UK**  
BA History  
(Dalhousie University)

Africa's Media or "Mother of  
the Nation"? Winnie Mandela,  
Militant Motherhood and  
Female Violence in South  
Africa's Anti-Apartheid  
struggle, 1985 - 1991



**Katherine Bruce-Lockhart**  
**Canada** BA African Studies and  
History (University of Toronto)

"It cannot be dealt with  
through friendly cups of  
tea": Dealing with Deviance  
at Kamiti Women's  
Detention Camp, 1954–  
1960



**Emily Crane** **UK/ US**  
MA International Relations  
(St Andrews)

Island Politics: Land Grabs  
and Political Change in  
Madagascar



**Kari Dahlgren** **US**  
BA Anthropology (University  
of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

(Re)imagining Ujamaa:  
Perceptions of  
Development in Chamwino,  
Tanzania



**Dane Degenstein** **Canada**  
BA Politics  
(University of Alberta)

A party for the people?  
Plural perspectives on  
the CCM and multi-party  
politics in Tanzania



**Jing Dong** **China**  
BA Hausa/ Linguistics (Beijing  
Foreign Studies University)

Comparison between  
Christian and colonial  
policies in northern Nigeria:  
from the perspective of  
education



**Natasha Frosina** **US**  
BA International Relations  
(George Washington University)

The project of opposition in  
authoritarian states: the  
case of Rwanda



**Shizuka Funayama** **Japan**  
Bachelors International  
Politics (Waseda University)

Social Entrepreneurship  
as an approach to  
development



**Kieran Gilfoy** **Canada**  
BA Political Science and Dev.  
Studies (St. Francis Xavier Univ.)

Youth marginality and  
land investment in Liberia:  
a study of post-conflict  
agrarian change



**Helene Glomnes** **Norway**  
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