

African Studies Centre

2018 Newsletter

Oprah Winfrey and the inaugural class of Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls in 2007. Noxolo is extreme right, front row.



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD



Oprah's 'Girl' at ASC!

Director's Report



In a chat with our students during their end-of-year cocktail party, they revealed that they consider ASC MSc programme the most intense nine-month postgraduate degree programme in the humanities and social sciences at Oxford. They reached this conclusion after comparing notes with their colleagues

in other programmes. Gladly, they concluded that they found the programme immensely rewarding.

One of our greatest joys at the Centre is that we continue to attract the best and brightest students from different parts of the world. We are particularly gratified that in the 2017–2018 academic year, like the previous year, majority of our student cohort was either African or of African descent. This gives us a unique opportunity not only to train non-African students who are devoted to a deep, complex and elevated understanding of the continent, but also to train students from Africa or of African descent, many of whom will return to the different countries in Africa to make important contributions to the development of their countries. One of the major benefits of the increase in latter category of students is that our classes and seminars are animated by discussions of real life experiences that challenge orthodoxies and provoke uncomfortable questions which expand and deepen knowledge.

Therefore, to continue in this path and ensure that brilliant students who lack financial resources are able to take up offers of admission, we are redoubling our efforts to secure more scholarships.

We are happy that one of our students in this academic year, Noxolo Ntaka, is a beneficiary of the benevolence of one of the most famous and accomplished black women in history, Ms Oprah Winfrey. Noxolo was part of the inaugural class of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy

for Girls in 2007. (See photo on the cover). A decade later, the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy Foundation (OWLAF) awarded her full funding to pursue an MSc in African Studies at Oxford (See Noxolo's story). Although the scholarship that Noxolo enjoyed at Oxford was not a regular annual scholarship, we hope that the example of her excellent experience at the Centre will encourage Oprah to formally inaugurate a scholarship for African girls in the Centre!

Our MSc cohort this year was a very energetic and critical one. The members of the class had a broad range of topics for their dissertations from memories of the genocide by German colonial officials in Africa to critiques of contemporary African democracies and elections. Some of the dissertations received distinctions. The prize winners among the cohorts are announced in this newsletter. As you will find in the newsletter, apart from teaching, my colleagues have been busy in the last one year. David Pratten's long term research on the history of masquerades in the Niger Delta, called 'Militant masks' – comprising films, listening stations and a new carving – was part of the exhibition sponsored by the British Academy in June 2018. Zoe Cormack was also part of the exhibition. Zoe's exhibition focused on South Sudanese objects in Italian museums. It was an opportunity for her to pursue other areas of interest not totally unrelated to her research on funerary cultures and memorialisation in South Sudan. As part of his ERC-funded project 'Comparing the Copperbelt', Miles Larmer worked with Thomas Hendricks, Benoit Henriot and Ramon Sarró to host the biennial conference of the Congo Research Network on 26–27 April 2018. In the next two years, Miles Larmer will be on leave as he concludes his significant research on the Copperbelt, which I am sure will yield new insights in this important region of Africa.

After almost four decades in power, Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe was forced out in a coup in 2017. Miles Tendi, who has been studying civil-military relations in the country, focuses on this coup, while also finishing a biography entitled *Solomon Mujuru: An African Liberation Fighter & Kingmaker*. Jonny Steinberg spent much of his sabbatical completing a book entitled *One Day in Bethlehem* – "a tale of gross injustice... during the dying days of apartheid" – which is due for publication in October 2019. Jonny will be on leave of absence in the next academic year which he will spend at Yale University, USA. Dr Julia Viebach is replacing Jonny for one academic year. Julia, who obtained a doctorate from the University

of Marburg, Germany, was until recently a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in the Oxford Centre for Criminology, Faculty of Law. Congratulations are due to Katharina Oke, who defended her dissertation on print culture in colonial Lagos in July 2018. Katharina was a Departmental Lecturer in African History at the Centre in the 2017–2018 academic year. We also have to say goodbye to her as she takes up her new position as Lecturer in Modern African History at King's College, London.

Apart from Julia, we welcome our new colleagues to the Centre. The Centre continues to attract first-rate early career scholars such as Dr Liz Fouksman who is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow. Liz, who completed her DPhil in International Development at Oxford in 2015, will be at the Centre for three years. Dr Tim Livsey, a historian of colonial and postcolonial West Africa, has also joined the Centre. Tim, who was trained at Cambridge and Birbeck, University of London, previously taught at Leeds Beckett, King's College, LSE, and Oxford's History Faculty. We are happy to formally welcome him to his new joint position at the Centre and the History Faculty – where he is stepping into Miles Larmer's big shoes for the next two years. Also, Dr Olly Owen has joined the Centre. Olly who is an Oxbridge and SOAS graduate, will be moving from his position as ESRC Future Research Leaders Fellow at the Oxford Department of International Development (ODID) to a one-year joint position at the African Studies Centre and Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology. Olly will be replacing Thomas Hendricks, the Evans Pritchard Fellow, who will be on leave for one year.

In this academic year, we hosted some leading academics from different parts of the world and some leaders from Africa. You will find the news and photographs of some of these visits in the newsletter.

My sincere gratitude to our administrator, Anniella Hutchinson, and successive assistant administrators in the last one year, Sinead Adams, Iulia Costinescu and Elle Styler, for their service. Anniella is leaving the Centre for a new job. We wish her well. I also wish to thank our Africanist colleagues in the university who supervised some of our students and opened their classes to them: Drs David Johnson, Sloan Mahone, Martin Williams, and Mark Graham. On behalf of the everyone at the Centre, I will like to thank Jonny Steinberg for his excellent leadership from 2015–2017. We all met at a restaurant in the city centre in December 2017 where we thanked him. I regret that I had to participate in presenting him with

a Liverpool FC shirt (see photo below) – because my colleagues will not let me give him *the shirt* of the better team!



We are saddened by the loss of two of the leading Africanists in Oxford. Professor Raufu Mustapha (1954–2017), an Associate Professor in African Politics at ODID, died of cancer on 8 August 2017. He was an excellent scholar, teacher, mentor, and colleague, who supervised the dissertations of some of our MSc students over the years. Anthony Hamilton Millard Kirk-Greene (1925–2018), after whom the Centre's Seminar Room is named, also died on 8 July 2018. Kirk-Greene is famous for his many works on 20th century British colonial history (See William Beinart's tribute).

In our efforts to renew and expand the mission of the Centre, we will formally inaugurate our International Advisory Board (IAB) in October 2018. The IAB whose members are distinguished Africans from different countries in the continent will help in enhancing the global profile and visibility of the Centre, among other tasks. We thank all those who have accepted our invitation to the IAB.

Wale Adebawo,
Director, African Studies Centre.



Oprah's Benefaction: Oxford and My Next Big Dream

Noxolo Ntaka

Nine months ago, I arrived at Oxford not knowing anyone. All I knew at that point was that I was here: at the institution that was my greatest dream. A large part of realising that my dream was possible, had to do with seeing other women who looked like me achieve it. I have always said that representation is important. It is important because it not only fuels people to dream but allows for little girls who look like me to know that anything possible. To see people I knew be relentless in their aspirations propelled me to believe that my dream was valid too. That I, too, could strive and carve my own path, even in spaces that were built, not with the idea of me – of us.

I was inspired and surrounded by women who were fearless in the face of their dreams. I was fortunate enough to receive full funding from the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy Foundation (OWLAF) to pursue my MSc African studies degree at Oxford. I was part of the inaugural class of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls in 2007. The school was part of Ms Winfrey's vision and gift to Nelson Mandela and South Africa towards the cultivation of a new generation of women leaders who would contribute positively to the future of the country.

I decided to apply to the Oxford African Studies programme because of my interest in the processes and politics of knowledge production on and in the continent and the impact these processes and politics have on the narratives framed around the continent's socio-economic and political landscape. Having been raised by a single mother and coming from a family where I am a first-generation graduate meant being the "first" of many things; the first to finish high school and go to university; the first

to graduate from university; the first to get a job and now the first to have received a fully-funded scholarship to pursue my master's degree at Oxford. To be a first-generation graduate and to come to Oxford is something my family could have never have thought was possible. I was born to a woman who was robbed of any opportunity to go to school because of the apartheid system and has worked tirelessly as a domestic worker her entire life to support my siblings and me. The opportunity to come here with full funding from OWLAF allowed me to immerse myself fully in the Oxford experience, to join societies as well as be one of the co-chairs of the 2018 Oxford Africa Conference.

I now realise that this institution has paved the way for my next biggest dream: to use the skills, knowledge and networks I have acquired at Oxford for something greater than just myself, but towards a vision for my country and Africa at-large.



Congo Research Network

Miles Larmer

On 26-27 April 2018, the University of Oxford played host to the latest biennial conference of the Congo Research Network, and to more than a hundred researchers in the history, politics, society, culture and economy of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The conference was organised by Thomas Hendriks and Miles Larmer of the African Studies Centre, together with Benoit Henriot of the 'Comparing the Copperbelt' project and Ramon Sarró of the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology. The event, financed by the 'Comparing the Copperbelt' project, Oxford's African Studies Centre and its Faculty of History, was hosted by St. Antony's College.

The conference, with the theme of 'Congolese Studies: Past, Present, Future', was organised into 15 panels on diverse themes examining the country's civil society, visual art and culture, colonial legacies, material culture, rebel governmentalities, political culture, religious beliefs and practices, natural resources and waterways. Some researchers focused on micro-level examinations of everyday life at village level, whilst others placed the DRC in cross-border comparison with its neighbours and still others, challenging the mainstream media's presentation of the country as lawless and 'exotic', demonstrated its centrality to globally significant flows of resources, people and power.

The highlight of the conference was the keynote address by Prof Bogumil Jewsiewicki Koss, one of the most eminent historians of the Congo since the country's independence. In a powerful presentation, Prof Jewsiewicki explained the interaction between post-independence Congolese history and his own intellectual journey from a focus on political and economic history to one that has explained historical change via a focus on social and cultural change. This was vividly illustrated by an analysis of Congolese visual art that has provided a key focus for Jewsiewicki's work, and which itself provides a powerful popular narrative of the country's own tumultuous history. Prof Jewsiewicki's presentation was followed by a roundtable in which four prominent Congo scholars – Filip De Boeck, Nancy Hunt, Emery Kalema, and Erik Kennes – celebrated the influence of Jewsiewicki as a scholar and person on their own studies.



Bogumil Jewsiewicki Koss gives the conference's keynote address



Congo Research Network speakers (left to right) Bogumil Jewsiewicki Koss, Filip de Boeck, Emery Kalema

Although the conference was one of the largest gatherings of Congo scholars, a number of prominent Congolese scholars – including Prof Donatien Dibwe dia Mwembu – were unable to attend due to the UK authorities' refusal to issue them with visas. This type of discriminatory approach, in which African scholars are denied access to travel to events which European or US based scholars are free to attend, is a growing problem in Europe in general and the UK in particular, and creates the danger that African scholars will be unable in future to participate in the production of knowledge about their own societies.

A well-attended panel at the conference focused attention on the wider politics of research in and about the DRC. The panel, entitled 'Whose research? The new Ethical Challenges and Political Economy of Research in DR Congo' raised vital issues such as academic papers in which Congolese researchers have played a vital role but who are not credited as co-authors; and the representation of Congolese girls in academic and media portrayals of sexual violence. As we celebrated the success of the Congo Research Network conference, this panel and wider discussions provided a clear reminder not only of the contemporary problems faced by Congolese society but also of the injustices and inequalities that perennially affect our intellectual work.



(left to right) Erik Kennes, Bogumil Jewsiewicki Koss, Emery Kalema, Miles Larmer, Katrien Pype, Nancy Rose Hunt



Militant masks at the British Academy Summer Showcase 2018

David Pratten

Attended by over 1,700 people, including MPs and school parties, the British Academy hosted its first Summer Showcase in a 'festival ideas', 22-23 June. Featuring pop-up talks, performances, and video and audio installations, fifteen research projects were exhibited including David Pratten's research on the history of masquerades in the Niger Delta.

David's exhibit at the Showcase was called 'Militant masks' and comprised films, listening stations and a new carving. The installation examined why young men from the oil-producing Niger Delta region in Nigeria continue to perform a masquerade called agaba. Masquerades like agaba are often seen as repositories of tradition. But this was a story of a thoroughly modern, militant mask – a story that encounters Nobel laureates, James Bond, the Oscars, Gangster Rappers and Delta warlords...

Sometimes agaba is known as mgbedike: time of the brave or strong. These names are in the Igbo language, and the mask originates from Igbo-speaking communities in the South-East of Nigeria. In his trilogy of novels about the impact of colonialism on Igbo society, the Nobel laureate Chinua Achebe wrote about agaba, describing it as a huge, heavy mask that stood for the power and aggressiveness of youth. This gives us a clue to the ways in which the mask has always been closely associated with the identity, masculinity and quests for power and autonomy of young men.

A history of masking

Perceptions of masquerades in Nigeria are ambivalent. On the one hand, they can be seen as something of the past, of traditional belief systems, and by Christians they can be seen as demonic. In colonial propaganda films, like the Oscar-winning *Daybreak in Udi* (1949), the forces of tradition, male gerontocracy and conservatism were represented by agaba masqueraders.

On the other hand, these masks often represent a culture's heritage – they are celebrated at significant events such as festivals, burials, Christmas and New Year. It is as festivals, in fact, that the recent history of agaba starts. Igbo traders who moved to the coastal cities of Port Harcourt and Calabar for business in the 1940s and 50s performed their masked plays at school festivals, and on Igbo Day.

After the Nigerian Civil War (1967-70), with the Igbo traders leaving the cities, the agaba masquerade was taken over by local young men. In Calabar it was led by a group of Efik-speaking boxers and weightlifters from the poorer neighbourhoods of the south of the city. In Port Harcourt young men set up groups including 007 (in reference to the Bond movies). As it traced the violent contours of the Nigerian petro-state, the mask slipped from an ethnic designation to a generational one.



Credit: British Academy, Alistair Fyfe

Agaba masked carved as part of the research project in Port Harcourt, April 2018.

After the oil boom and during the recession years of the 1980s, youth unemployment in these cities was known as the 'agaba syndrome', and after clashes with the police there were attempts to ban the agaba masquerade. In recent years, the agaba groups have been associated with drugs and political violence. And while it distinguishes itself from violent gangs, agaba gives us an insight into the youth culture – the language, aesthetics, idioms of solidarity – common to a range of youth cults that have developed complex political links between the city streets and the Delta creeks.

During the insurgency across the Niger Delta in the mid-2000s young men joined militant groups in kidnapping, oil theft and sabotage in protest over the exploitation by the oil companies and the Nigerian state of the oil-producing communities. To give an indication of the link between the militants and the masquerade, patronage and performance, the former militant leader of the Niger Delta Vigilante, High Chief Ateke Tom, is now the 'grand patron' of the Area United agaba group in Port Harcourt.

Today agaba has spread right across the region's rural and urban communities to become a mask of and for the youth. It is popular because it is constantly improvised and changing. Its vernacular is pidgin English – a kind of lingua franca. Aesthetically, the mask is grafted onto local traditions and styles, and physically the mask is a space to display skill, bravery and power.

The open-ended, improvised and subversive qualities of the mask are best demonstrated in its music. The music of the agaba masquerade is traditionally associated with the metal gong (ogele) and the wooden flute (oja). But the song repertoire recalls the 'king' of highlife, Port Harcourt's own Cardinal Rex Lawson, as well as borrowing from prison songs, the palm wine drinking society, varsity cults, inverted hymns and the jarass or slang of what is known as 'gyration music'.

Agaba music and lyrics

Despite the vigorous, noisy and empowered context of the songs' performance, the songs are rich in an irony that undercuts a stereotypical image of these young men's societies as sinister and violent groups and reveal a surprising frankness about their precarious livelihoods and personal insecurities.

Most figurative among the agaba songs are those that deploy maritime and mafia imagery to describe the tough lives of young men living in the city. They liken this to the world of gangsta rappers when they sing about:

Dis rugged life
Where Tupac boys still de sail

It is a 'worsky' world (slang for its war-like arbitrariness) populated by 'winchy' people – a conflation of witches and wicked people usually referring to the police. Police corruption, typified by officers collecting roadside bribes, is ridiculed in another chorus:

Every junction police e-dey.

The political order is never far from the surface and folk heroes including the murdered rights activist Ken Saro Wiwa and journalist Dele Giwa feature in praise songs and laments:

See my people
See them suffer-eh
They suffer for work

Ogoni people say
Dey no go work for Shell oh

There is a duality of public calls to arms, and more private, laconic sketches of misfortune within the repertoire of agaba songs. They sing of the militant Egbesu cult in the Niger Delta:

Don't you run, don't you run away
If we jam Egbesu boys don't you run away.

But at the same time, they lament love and loss in the city:

I want to marry one girl
Mi Mama no gree me oh

And dashed ambitions:
I want to be a pastor, I no get bible
I want to be a student, I no get biro

Like gang performance around the world, these songs open up social spaces 'where tenderness, humour, hope and solidarity intermingle with everyday tragedy'.

So why do young men – who in this Bible belt area might otherwise be in church, still perform these masquerades? Three reasons strike me as crucial. In the context of these young men's 'rugged lives', agaba offers access to social networks for protection and profit in Nigeria's patrimonial political economy. Second, through masquerade, youth are able to configure a masculine identity that's tough, tested and both physically and spiritually 'rugged'. Finally, agaba presents a powerful critique of the Nigerian social fabric. It is a space in which young men expose the inequalities and iniquities of their position from the margin, projecting advantage onto their own disadvantage.



Credit: British Academy, Benedict Johnson

Miles Tendi



Robert Mugabe resigned as Zimbabwe's president, after 37 years in power, on 21 November 2017. Mugabe's resignation came after the Zimbabwean military staged a direct political intervention called Operation Restore Legacy on 14 November. I spent a good part of the 2017 to 2018 academic year researching the motivations, dynamics and outcomes of Zimbabwe's November 2017 coup. One of my main findings – that political beliefs are an important determinant of coup success – is a corrective to recent analyses that disregard ideology as a consequential factor in the success of coups in Africa. My research on Zimbabwe's 2017 coup will be published in civil-military relations academic journals between late 2018 and early 2019.

In addition to my research on the coup, in November 2017, I finished a biography entitled *Solomon Mujuru: An African Liberation Fighter & Kingmaker*. I would like to express thanks to Miles Morland, Michela Wrong and Mathilda Edwards at The Miles Morland Foundation for granting me a Writing Fellowship, which afforded me the tranquil space and time to complete the biography.

The use of biography to understand politics is marginal in the approaches of most scholars of 'African Politics'. Mainstream political scientists also, generally, do not write political biography. 1940s American behaviouralism may be out of fashion but its attempt to transform the study of politics into a 'science' has had lasting influence, as evinced by the endurance of positivism, rational choice, surveys and regression analyses as methodological

backbones of political science. Thus political scientists recoil from political biography writing because it necessitates subjective interpretations of political experiences and events related to individual figures. And yet "political life is, after all, lived by individual people, not by sociological abstractions or economic categories."

There has been discontent, among some students and staff, with the 'scientific' turn in politics department of many Western universities, which has sparked strong debates, commonly referred to as "Perestroika", about the need for opening up the study of politics to more diverse methodological approaches and the necessity of increased representation of women and minorities in political science. My use of the biographical method to tell the political history of not only Solomon Mujuru but Zimbabwe's ruling ZANU PF regime and wider 1970s transnational liberation politics in Southern Africa contributes to expanding attempts to diversify how we study politics.

The Politics of the Public Sphere and Print Culture in Colonial Lagos

Katharina Oke



Leslie James, Saheed Aderinto, and Katharina Oke.

I joined the Centre in September 2017 for ten months as Departmental Lecturer in African History. I took over some of Miles Larmer's teaching responsibilities while he was engaged in research. Among others, I shared my enthusiasm and practical tips for researching African newspapers with students in a guest lecture for the 'Methods, Research Strategy and Ethics' Core Course. Together with Wale Adebani, I co-convoked the Centre's weekly African Studies Seminar in Hilary Term.

Alongside teaching and actively participating in the Centre's various activities, I was also finishing my DPhil in Global History under the supervision of David Pratten. My doctoral thesis studies print culture in colonial Lagos against the background of the public sphere and brings together a variety of English-language and Yoruba-language newspapers. It narrates a nuanced history of how Lagosians constituted and negotiated a discursive field centring around newspapers between the 1880s and 1940s. Drawing on newspapers and archival records, the work not only highlights the practicalities of newspaper production and foregrounds the work accomplished by newspapermen in a changing 'information environment' and political context. It also offers insights into Lagos politics, contributes to the history of the educated elite, and to more global histories of communication. The dissertation, which I defended successfully in July 2018, complicates the Habermasian notion of the public sphere as an open discursive space, and not only highlights that the public sphere was an arena of contested meanings, but also illustrates axes along which the composition of this social structure was negotiated. Currently, I am preparing parts of my research for publication in journals and working on a book manuscript. Moreover, I will publish a chapter on 'Print Culture and Colonial Nigeria's Past' for the commissioned *Routledge Handbook of Nigerian History* which is edited by Saheed Aderinto.

In February 2018, I presented parts of my research at the Global & Imperial History Research Seminar in Oxford, and in June I presented my work at the Lagos Studies Conference in Nigeria.



Thomas Hendricks
Thinking with forests and loggers for my forthcoming book "Logging the Congo: Ecstasy and Rainforest Capitalism".



Memory, Commemoration and the Arts in South Sudan

Zoe Cormack

I joined the African Studies Centre in May 2017 as a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow. This was really a return to the Centre, as I graduated from the African Studies MSc. in 2010. Since then, I completed my PhD at Durham University and have held research positions at The Open University, The British Institute in Eastern Africa and the British School at Rome.

During my time in the African Studies Centre, I am working on a research project about funerary cultures and memorialisation in South Sudan. The end result of this work will be an historical-ethnography investigating visual and material practices of memorialisation and exploring the effects of conflict and displacement on strategies for honouring the dead. I'm looking at these issues through a combination of ethnography, archival and museum research and interviews in Juba, Kampala and Khartoum. This is a challenging topic for research, but I hope that scholarly work engaging

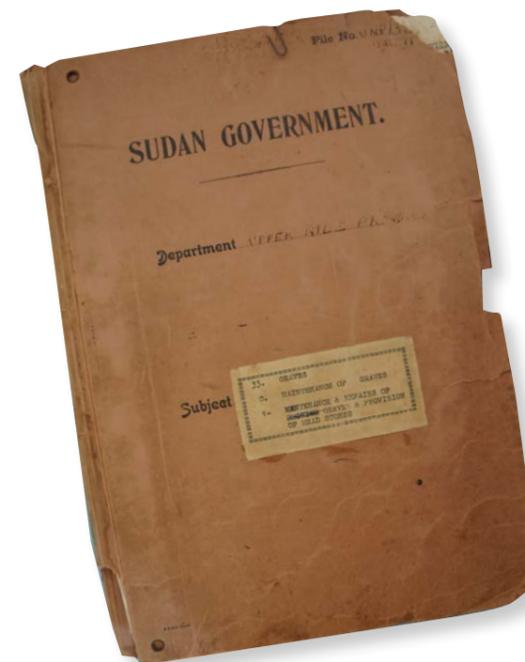
with the social consequences of the current crisis can usefully inform conversations about South Sudan's future.

Over the last year, I've had the opportunity to return to Juba for long term research for the first time since 2012. It has been an enormous privilege to reconnect with old friends and spend an extended period of time developing my project. Yet it has also been shocking to see the effects of conflict and economic crisis on everyday life in Juba.

One of my major research sites is a 'Protection of Civilian' site at the United Nations base on the outskirts of Juba. The site is home to about 40,000 people who have sought safety with the UN since the outbreak of conflict in 2013. Here, I have been studying how funerals are conducted and emerging personal and public practices of commemoration. While in Juba, I have also spent time at the

National Archive of South Sudan. Despite the conflict, the National Archive has remained open to researchers and have even undertaken a large digitisation project. Thanks to the archive staff, I have found several very revealing documents. I'm now in the process of writing up this material, but plan to make a several more research trips before the end of my fellowship.

Alongside this core research, I've also been co-Director (with Dr Cherry Leonardi, University of Durham) of an AHRC research network investigating collections of South Sudanese arts and material culture in European museums. Over the last year we've held three workshops (in Durham, Oxford and Juba) aiming to develop a research agenda on these objects, discussing issues around the display of South Sudan in Europe and how to connect the collections in Europe with South Sudanese heritage professionals, academics and artists.



'Graves in Upper Nile Province' (File 232UNP33C1). (Image courtesy of the National Archives of South Sudan, Juba)

Members of the network (who are drawn from 12 countries) are now working on a collaborative publication highlighting and rethinking a selection of objects from South Sudan in museum collections.

One highlight of the year was taking part in the British Academy Summer Showcase in June. This was a major public engagement event, featuring British Academy sponsored research. My installation focused on South Sudanese objects in Italian museums. The display examined two ethnographic collections made by an explorer and administrator in the mid-nineteenth century (which are now housed in Venice and Rome). The exhibit invited the public to consider the ways that African art and material culture has entered European museums and to debate the future of these objects. This made for some lively discussions, especially given the V&A's recent offer to permanently loan objects acquired after the battle of Maqdala to Ethiopia and President Macron's commitment to return African heritage in France to the continent.



Liz Fouksman Joins African Studies as a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow

We live in a world of spiralling inequality, precarity, and under-employment. Add decades of automation and productivity growth, with the far-reaching impact of machine learning and artificial intelligence looming on the horizon, and it seems that the time is ripe to rethink the way that wage labour is organised, and the role it plays in our lives and our societies. And yet, even in countries with endemically high unemployment rates (such as South Africa, which despite economic growth has had a stubbornly persistent unemployment rate of over 25% for decades), we continue to insist that wage work must remain the primary way to legitimately access income. Why do we continue to look to wage labour as our key distributive mechanism in a world of increasing labour surpluses? Why do we still insist on 40-hour work weeks despite increasing productivity that should in theory free us from labour? And why are we failing to seriously consider other mechanisms – universal social protection, universal basic income grants, social dividends or the like – as a way for those without stable employment to access money and resources?

My research uses the lens of southern Africa to explore these questions, focusing in particular both on Namibia, the site of a small two-year experiment with universal basic income grants, and on South Africa, whose high wealth and income inequality, endemically high structural unemployment rates, and labour precarity is coupled with an extensive social grant system that gives cash grants to a third of the population. I am especially keen to understand why the long-term unemployed themselves seem to hold a deep attachment to wage labour, rather than demanding more direct forms of wealth and income redistribution. I also do action-research with the global movement around universal basic income guarantees (UBI), and I complement my research in southern Africa with comparative case studies in the Global North.

I am happy to be able to join Oxford African Studies Centre for the duration of my three year Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship. This is a return to Oxford for me after three years away, which I spent at a year-long fellowship at Harvard University's Center for Ethics, preceded by two years as a postdoctoral fellow at the Society, Work and Politics Institute (SWOP) at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in Johannesburg, South Africa. At Oxford, I completed my DPhil in International Development in 2015 under the supervision of Nandini Gooptu and African Studies' own William Beinart. Russian-born and San Francisco-raised, I look forward to calling Oxford home again.



Zoe Cormack (centre) with fellow anthropologist Deng Nhial Chioh (left) and community leader Peter Nyieth (right) at the 'Naath [Nuer] Cultural Centre' in Juba Protection of Civilian site

One Day in Bethlehem

Jonny Steinberg



I was on sabbatical in Michaelmas and Hilary terms and spent much of that time completing a book on which I have been working for several years. Titled *One Day in Bethlehem* and due for publication in October 2019, the narrative foundation of the book is a tale of gross injustice. In April 1992, during the dying days of apartheid, two young black men, Fusi Mofokeng and Tshokolo Mokoena, were taken from their homes by the security police and accused of planning the murder of a white police officer who had been shot dead on the street that afternoon. They were convicted of the murder, by reason of common purpose, and were sentenced to life in prison.

Six years, later, in 1998, with South Africa now in the fourth year of its democratic dispensation, Mofokeng and Mokoena appeared before South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), together with the men who committed the murder, to apply for amnesty. The TRC accepted that the murder was politically motivated and gave the men who committed it amnesty. The TRC also accepted that Mofokeng and Mokoena

had had nothing to do with murder. It could thus not grant them amnesty, it ruled, for they had committed no crime.

And so the ones who had committed the murder were freed and the ones the TRC deemed innocent remained in prison another 12 years. Mofokeng and Mokoena spent those 12 years trying to tell the world what had happened. They wrote over 400 letters – to cabinet ministers, judges, clergy, journalists, parliamentarians, the secretary-general of the ruling party: anybody who might listen – before a prominent South African journalist, Jacques Pauw, finally told their story in the pages of a national newspaper. By the time they were released on parole in 2011, 19 years in prison behind them, the world believed that they were innocent. They were given a hero's welcome in the town of their birth, Bethlehem, and the town's mayor promised them free houses and jobs in compensation for their suffering.

The book is an account of Mofokeng's and Mokoena's experiences. It is a vehicle through which to explore a host of wider matters associated with South Africa's transition to democracy, the most prominent of which is memory. The more I researched what happened that day in April 1992 the more I came to realise that Mokoena's and Mofokeng's memories were unreliable. They believed from the bottom of their souls that they were innocent and had indeed convinced the world that they were so. And yet they had long ago lost their grasp on the basic facts of what happened that day. Their recollections of large chunks of the afternoon on which the murder took place were fictitious.

The book does not question their innocence and is thus not an attempt to catch them out or second guess them. Rather, I explore the ideological and political resources they used, at times unconsciously, to remember what happened on the day of the murder. I suggest that a powerful public narrative about the transition to democracy, one propagated by the TRC itself and by South Africa's ruling African National Congress, shaped the memories of these two men. The book is thus an exploration of how ideology shapes a sense of self at the very deepest level, to the extent that it determines what we remember and what we forget.

Nigeria's Foremost Lawyer, Afe Babalola, at ASC Lecture

Anthony Akinola



Aare Babalola and his entourage with the ASC faculty

...A man apparently gifted with a very good sense of humour – one trait I have come to associate with many from his native city of Ado-Ekiti, southwestern Nigeria – Aare Afe Babalola (Senior Advocate of Nigeria, SAN) is a story in human determination and valour. He was hardly the most privileged child of his generation, raised as he was on the farms by very poor parents. The only claim he ever had to studying under the classroom was at primary school. Not least because his parents were not able to afford him secondary school education, the determined Afe Babalola embarked on private studies, which saw him earn his O-level and A-level certificates as well as a law degree from the renowned University of London. If a clairvoyant had predicted that Afe Babalola would be what he is today, a legal practitioner of no mean standing as well as being owner of a university of great promise – the Afe Babalola University at Ado-Ekiti, there was a time in his life when the sanity of such a clairvoyant would have been seriously questioned.

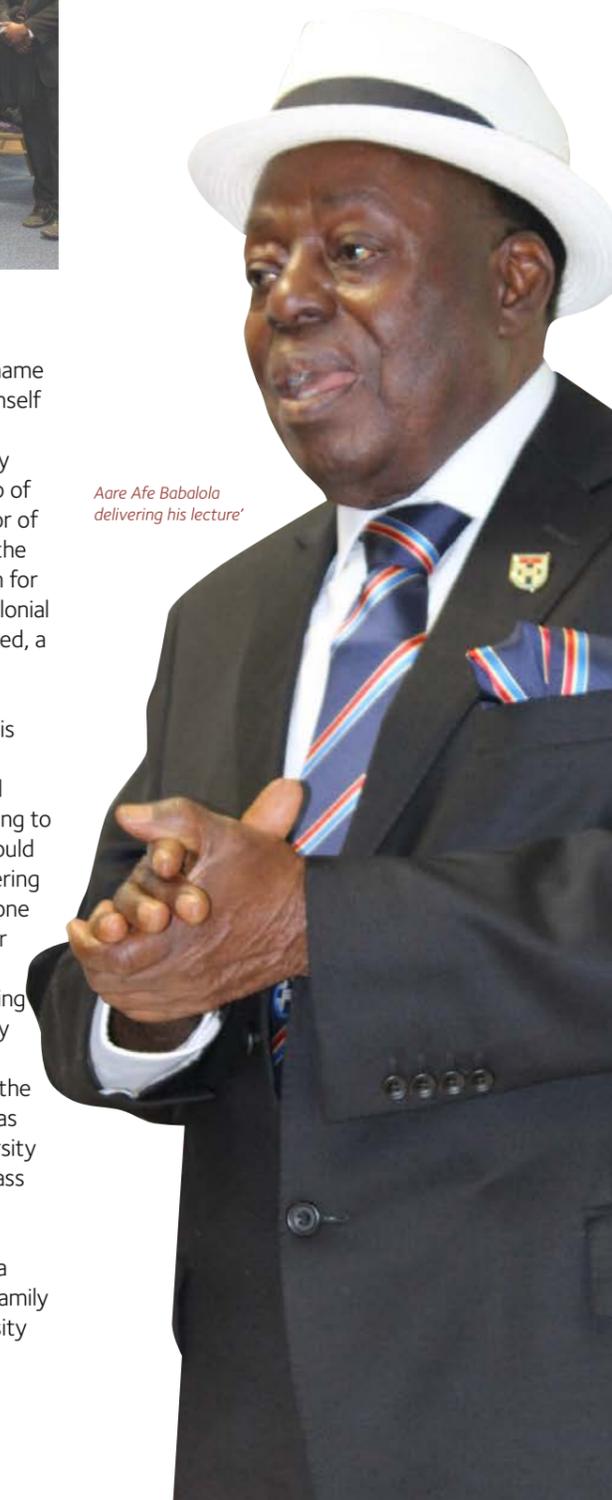
As fate would have it, Aare Afe Babalola is today a household name, not only in Nigeria but also in the world of academia. His numerous honorary degrees from acclaimed

universities attest to this. It is in acknowledgement of the great name and reputation he has earned himself that the Aare was invited to the African Studies Centre, University of Oxford, under the directorship of Wale Adebawu, Rhodes Professor of Race Relations, to give a talk on the important subject of "The Search for Sustainable Education in Post-colonial African States." It was, as expected, a well-attended lecture.

Aare Afe Babalola, to the joy of his Nigerian compatriots, did not in any way disappoint. He surprised everyone, at his age of 89, refusing to be treated as an old man who would be asked to sit down while delivering a lecture which lasted well over one hour. The Founder and Chancellor of Afe Babalola University talked extensively on how the partitioning of Africa had impacted negatively on the ongoing developments in the continent He seized upon the occasion to showcase what he has been able to do in his own university in order to elevate it to world-class status

Great occasion, Aare Afe Babalola was accompanied to Oxford by family members and staff of his university and law firm.

Excerpt from a piece published in *The Guardian*, Nigeria 26 May 2018. Republished here with the permission of the author.



Aare Afe Babalola delivering his lecture'

The Oxford Central Africa Forum

Barnaby Dye

The Oxford Central Africa Forum (OCAF) has experienced another strong year under the leadership of Barnaby Dye, Jakob Hensing and Brita Bergland Kvalsvik. It has hosted a raft of speakers from the Oxford, the UK and Europe, launching books and presenting research papers at the regular seminar on subjects ranging from mining, political ideology, dam building and political economy. In-keeping with the tradition of the forum, we have included speakers from the policy world, notably Oxford Policy Management, and hosted the UK premier of a Rwandan-directed and produced film, followed by a Q and A with the director Jean-Luc Habyarimana. OCAF also co-hosted (with Royal Holloway, University of London) a two-day conference workshop in November that convened scholars to discuss the ideology and modernisation strategies of the emerging illiberal state-building countries.

However, the future of OCAF is uncertain. It was founded in 2010 by a group of doctoral students researching the region (namely Will Jones, Alexandra Martins, Emily Paddon, Henning Tamm, Harry Verhoeven). This group created OCAF as an interdisciplinary opportunity to further their studies and the Forum fast became the UK's leading discussion group on Rwanda, Burundi and Eastern Congo. However, as time has progressed, the number of doctoral researchers focused on Rwanda, Burundi and Eastern Congo has decreased. Therefore, for OCAF to continue, it needs future incoming students to engage and run the seminar. If you are interested in this, please email Barnaby Dye (Barnaby.dye@politics.ox.ac.uk) or the African Studies Centre (african.studies@afrika.ox.ac.uk) for more information.

Oxford University Africa Society (AfriSoc) Committee 2018-2019

On July 1st 2018, the Kojo Botsio administration officially assumed its role at the helm of the University's Africa Society (AfriSoc). Elected by the Society's membership in June of this year, the Committee has high aspirations to establish and advance key priorities including increasing African student enrolment at Oxford, tackling issues on gender, welfare and women's rights as well as equitable regional representation and strengthening the internal infrastructure necessary to ensure that the Society continues to serve the needs of its members. Led by incoming President, Papa Kojo Botsio (Ghana – DPhil Candidate), under the banner of Pan-Africanism, the newly elected committee members are:

Vice President:

Nada Kurdi (U.K. – DPhil Candidate)

General Secretary:

Simphiwe Stewart (eSwatini – DPhil Candidate)

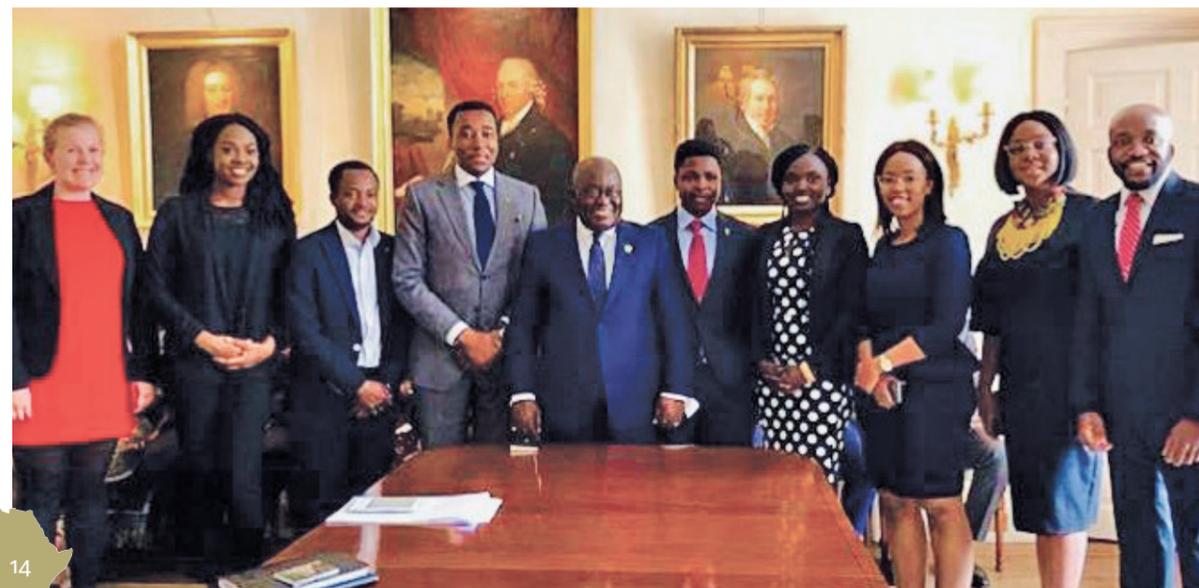
Treasurer:

Nolianga Imasuki (Zambia – MPhil)

Social Secretary:

Olayinka Makinwa (Austria – MSc)

To learn more about AfriSoc and keep abreast with this year's exciting developments, visit the Club's website at: www.oxforduniversityafricasociety.com



AfriSoc members with the President of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo (middle in blue suit).

60th Anniversary of Oxford Africa Society

Temitope Ajileye



Mrs Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, and members of AfriSoc



Dr Phyllis Ferguson, Prof Patricia Daley, Ambassador Abena Busia, Dr Tunde Oseni and Dr Simukai Chigudu at the AfriSoc event.

In the evening of June 3rd, 1958, Lord Hailey gave the inaugural address of the Oxford University Africa Society. Since then the Society has become the foremost platform for African issues and a vibrant and supportive community for many African students in Oxford. It brings together Africans and non-Africans alike, from an assortment of backgrounds, creeds, cultures, and ethnicities who share a desire for positive change in Africa.

Long before the African Studies Centre was established, the Society contributed majorly to scholarship related to Africa in Oxford, as testified by the weekly lectures, seminars and discussion groups in our term cards.

During the 60th anniversary of the Society, celebrated on the 2nd of June 2018 in the InvestCorp Building at St. Antony's College, we sought to bring together past and current members. Among the alumni who responded to our call were Professor Patricia Daley, professor of Human Geography and the first black lecturer at Oxford University, Ambassador Busia, a pioneer in Black

Feminist studies, Dr Tunde Oseni, from the Department of Politics Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria. Oseni graduated from the Oxford MSc in African Studies. There was also the newly appointed Dr Simukai Chigudu of the ODID. The four of them, together with Dr Phyllis Ferguson, former senior member of the Society and, briefly, Professor Kole Omotoso, through Skype connection from Nigeria, helped us achieve the objective we set for ourselves in organising this event.

We took advantage of the occasion to reflect on our shared history, both the history of the Society within Oxford University, and the history of the past decades of the African continent, through the themes the society has dealt with, the movements it has participated in and the people it has engaged. Secondly, we re-asserted our presence in the University and our importance in the academic landscape, which even our former members believed had faded away. Moreover, the poster exhibition and the book exhibition organised by Nana Ayebia Clarke (owner of the homonymous

publishing company) in the atrium showed how our history has been intertwined with the history of the University and the African continent over the course of the past six decades. Finally, and most importantly, we were able to gather new ideas to reposition ourselves in an environment where African voices and Afro-centric institutions are slowly but steadily increasing, to build a framework and a community that can help future generations of African students to find inspiration for the way forward.

We wish to thank all those who have contributed to this event with time, resources, sign posting, advice and contributions. We acknowledge this event would not have been possible if not for your generosity.

Temitope Ajileye (Outgoing General Secretary, Oxford University Africa Society)



OUCAN Annual Conference

Harry Verhoeven

The Oxford University China-Africa Network (OUCAN) is an academic, multi-dimensional organisation that seeks to forge cross-disciplinary and trans-regional links between researchers, practitioners, and officials around the phenomenon of Chinese engagement with Africa. The OUCAN Annual Conference is the flagship event of the network. Past conference themes have included Global Health in China-Africa Relations (2017), Natural Resources in the Changing Landscape of China-Africa Relations (2016) and New Spheres of Development Finance: The Role of Chinese Finance in Africa's Infrastructure Landscape (2015).

This year, the annual conference took place on May 22nd 2018 with the theme "Between physical and ideological mobility: The Role of Transport Infrastructure in Sino-African Relations". Railways, ports, airports, highways have been and continue to be central in China-Africa relations connecting the manufacturing hubs on the continent with outlets via sea and air. Academic and policy discourses have long recognized China as a major infrastructure player. The One Road, One Belt initiative, as well as the newly founded Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) have further underlined China's global dominance in this sector. China's approach to infrastructure and financing



is unique in its speed, and scale, providing an attractive alternative source of financing for many African governments. At the same time, transport infrastructures are products of economic governance and particular political situations connecting people both spatially and temporally.

It was in this regard that a number of experts from Oxford University, the University of Sheffield, Georgetown University, Johns Hopkins University, University College London, the University of Edinburgh, and Afe Babaola University (in Nigeria) attended this year's conference. The day was filled with thought-provoking discussions about the political, socio-economic, and anthropological themes regarding central motivations, organizing principles, modes of operation and imagined futures in the planning, construction and implementation of Chinese-built

transport infrastructure in Africa. The three panels engaged with different issues. The panelists presented case studies covering China's engagements in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, the DRC, Nigeria, Benin and Togo. Throughout the conference it became apparent that the historically contingent nature of these infrastructure projects requires a spatially and temporally differentiated approach to the study of Chinese-sponsored transport infrastructure in Africa.

The conference would not have been possible without the generous support of many institutions and individuals. We thank The Oxford University China Centre, the staff of St Hugh's College, the African Studies Centre, St. Antony's College's GCR and the Antonian Fund, and especially the Africa Oxford Initiative, for a substantial financial contribution.

The Africa Oxford Initiative

Kuukuwa Manful

The Africa Oxford Initiative (AfOx) emerged from a series of discussions between staff and students across Oxford University and in a number of African academic and research institutions. What began as an information exchange quickly transformed into a collective ambition to make Africa a strategic priority for Oxford as it is one of the great global universities. This last year has a time of growth and expansion for us. We have increased our reach with our communications platforms through our social media channels, newsletters and more, and continue to document and promote all things Africa in Oxford.

We launched AfOx officially on the African continent with a reception in Kenya hosted by the Deputy British High Commissioner. Several Oxford alumni, students and prospective students attended the event and pledged support for the initiative. We will hold similar events in Nigeria and Ghana later this year.

We continuously work to promote research excellence through collaborations with African institutions. Through grants, academic exchange and facilitation of major funding

applications, we have supported conferences and workshops in Nigeria, South Africa, the United Kingdom and Ghana this past year and will continue to do so in the coming years. Our travel grant scheme has expanded even further, and not a month goes by without a researcher from an African country visiting Oxford under one of the schemes we support. The 2018 AfOx visiting fellows come from 8 different countries and are affiliated to Oxford colleges during their stay here. The number of places on this visiting fellowship scheme has gone from 3 to 13, and we are grateful to the colleges, departments and academics in Oxford who have supported us in increasing our reach and impact.

In collaboration with The African Academy of Sciences, we organised one of the biggest meetings of early-to-mid career African researchers in Oxford. This meeting saw over 100 African research leaders, international funders and members of research organisations coming together to discuss 'Interdisciplinary Research Towards Tackling The SDGs in Africa'. As usual, we also run our twice termly insakas (gatherings for sharing knowledge about Africa-focused

research) with speakers from a wide range of disciplines including Medical Sciences, Anthropology, History and Epidemiology. We also supported other events in Oxford including the Oxford Africa Conference and the Oxford Africa Society 60th Anniversary celebration.

Looking ahead, we are committed to expanding our programs even further - towards supporting academics and researchers whose work is Africa-focused as well as increasing opportunities for Africans in Oxford. The Africa Oxford Initiative is above all a participatory network - so we encourage everyone in Oxford with an interest in Africa and in African research and academic collaborations to get in touch with us. Send us information about your research, events, projects and news, and do not hesitate to give us feedback or to share ideas with us. We also encourage academics and researchers in institutions in African countries who are interested in or currently collaborating with colleagues in Oxford to get in touch with us at afox@ndm.ox.ac.uk.



The Oxford Africa Conference

Noxolo Ntaka

The 2018 Oxford Africa Conference began with a pre-engagement event that hosted, H.E. Nana Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana on 11th May at Said Business School. President Akufo-Addo's keynote address and conversation was on the theme "Enough Rhetoric! Catalyzing an Era of Concrete Action". It was only fitting to have President Akufo-Addo set the tone for the Conference in light of his flagship policy "one district one factory"; his vision for an Africa beyond aid and his implementation of Free education for public senior high schools as of 2017 – as the work he has done spoke directly to the Conference theme. In its eighth year running, the Oxford Africa Conference subsequently followed on 18th – 19th May at the Blavatnik School of Government. The Oxford Africa Conference is the leading interdisciplinary Conference on Africa and was delivered by a team of Oxford students.

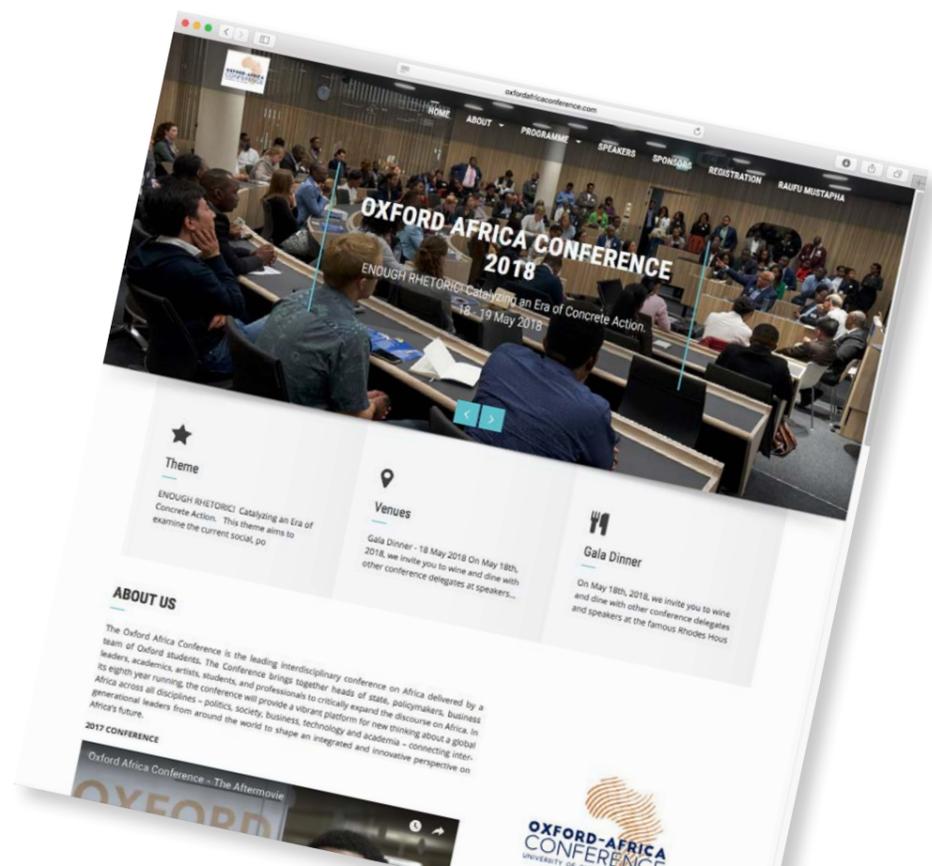
The Conference provided a vibrant platform for new thinking about a global Africa across all disciplines – politics, society, business, technology and academia – connecting inter-generational leaders from around the world to shape an integrated and innovative perspective on Africa's future. This year's Keynote speakers included UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, First Lady of Namibia Monica Geingos, Former Chief Justice of Ghana Georgina Wood and CEO of DLO Energy Linda Mabhena-Olagunju. Intentionally daring, the theme "Enough Rhetoric! Catalyzing an Era of Concrete Action", expressed the organizers desire for a solution-driven gathering that would deliver tangible outcomes. In the spirit of concrete action, key resolutions of the Conference were collated from the "Beyond the rhetoric" workshop sessions so as to be made available and passed on to key decision makers in African institutions such as the African Union (AU), key regional blocks such as the Southern Development Community (SADC), the Economic

Community of West Africa (ECOWAS) and the East African Community (EAC) as well as credible think tanks, civil society organizations and public-private platforms across the continent. The aim of the "Beyond the rhetoric" sessions was to ensure that in addition to traditional Conference style panels, delegates would also have a chance at deliberating and delivering actionable solutions in relation to *Fast Tracking Universal Health coverage: Innovations for Delivery and Rethinking Education – Skills Development for Employment, Research and Innovation*.

In addition, this year's edition of the Conference sought to bring to light key issues that have not been adequately addressed but are as equally important for the progression of the continent. These included *Addressing Mental Health: Africa's Invisible Epidemic; "_____ " is (un)African: lifting the rug on LGBTIQ+ Identity; Feminism in Africa-Challenges and Prospects to truly empowering Africa's women and Not*

too Young to Lead – A new generation of Leaders in Party Politics and Elected Public Office. Both events for the Conference hosted over 400 delegates and speakers at Oxford.

Lastly, the 2018 Innovation fair was sponsored by the United States African Development Fund (USADF). Each year, the Oxford Africa Innovation Fair brings together entrepreneurs and innovators tackling challenges in Africa. This year's innovation fair winner for first prize was ECOACT from Tanzania which develops a chemical free, energy conserving plastic technology to recycle and transform plastic garbage and packaging materials into durable plastic timbers using unique technology. This year's Conference left many inspired and rejuvenated to not only continue the conversation, but to also be propelled towards developing pragmatic steps for Africa's future. We look forward to the 2019 edition of the Oxford Africa Conference and have no doubt that much more will be achieved – building from this year's Conference!



South Africa discussion group

William Beinart

The South Africa discussion group has run over many years in different forms: as a forum for post-graduate students to present their research, as a visiting speakers' seminar, and as a vehicle for staff and students to discuss key developments in the country and the region. As Jonny Steinberg was on leave, I convened the group in Hilary (jointly with Sanne Verheul at International Development) and Trinity terms. In Hilary, we aimed to cover both Zimbabwe and South Africa. I introduced a discussion of South African land reform policy, with an eye on the Zimbabwean comparison, Miles Tendi and others analysed Zimbabwean politics and Jason Robinson at Oxford Analytica led on recent South African political developments. These seminars were all excellent participatory sessions. Farai Maguwu of the Zimbabwe Centre for Natural Resource Management spoke on Zimbabwean mining and its regulation in a well-attended session. Hannah Dawson gave a paper on her doctoral research in Zandspruit informal settlement, Gauteng.

In Trinity term we had one open discussion, comparing the recent changes in the politics of liberation movements in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Angola (led by Miles Tendi and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira). This proved particularly fruitful – perhaps emphasising continuities despite changes in leadership. The other sessions were all full papers. Natasha Erlank from the University of Johannesburg discussed the African press in the 1920s and 1930s, exploring the social elements of its role. Crispian Olver, author of *How to Steal a City*, on corruption in Nelson Mandela Bay, discussed his more general background research on 'patronage, power and political markets in South African municipalities'. He explained the financing of the municipalities and how opportunities arose for irregularities. Rocco Zizzamia, a master's student at ODID, discussed high rates of turnover amongst workers in less attractive jobs in Cape Town, and Kate Orkin, at the Centre for the Study of African Economies, reported on her analysis of the 2016 South African municipal election.



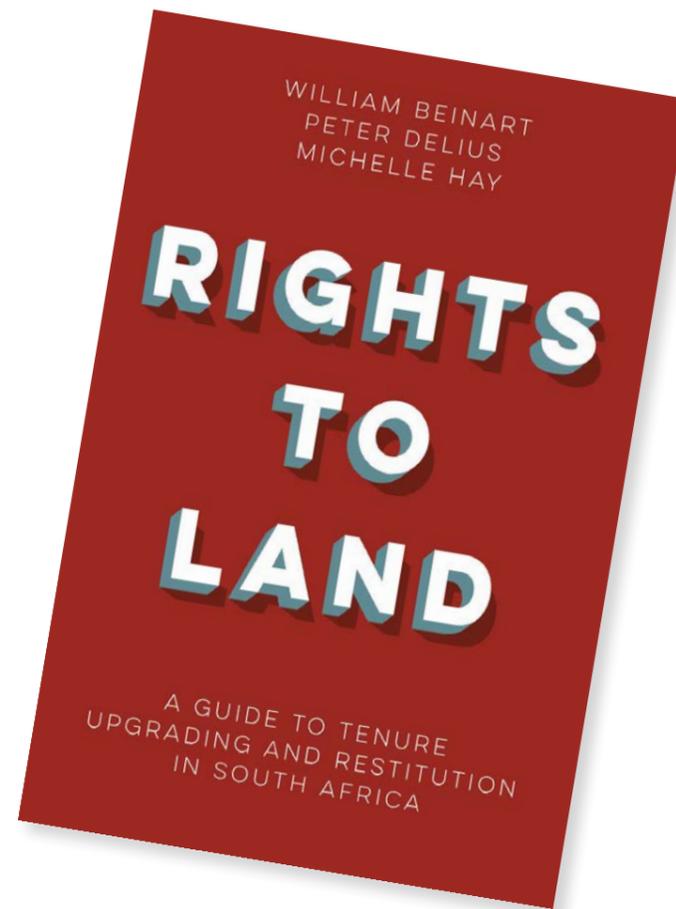
William Beinart, Peter Delius and Michelle Hay, *Rights to Land: a Guide to Tenure Upgrading and Restitution in South Africa* (Jacana, 2017)

This short book arose from our work on restitution cases in South Africa and our discussions about the vulnerability of those with land in customary tenure. We were also concerned more generally with the lack of direction and effectiveness in South Africa's land reform programme. We deal with two aspects of land reform – tenure upgrading and restitution.

At present the land rights of millions of South Africans who hold land in the former homelands, in informal settlements and on transferred land are uncertain. The 1996 Constitution seemed to promise enhancement and upgrading of tenure, but this has not been effectively done. Those affected are amongst the poorest and it is important that their rights are not shouldered aside. For such families, their land rights are a major asset that should be clearly recognised.

In the book, we propose that all South Africans should hold their land in systems that are as secure as ownership and suggest a three-pronged approach: effective implementation of the Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act (1996) and similar legislation; clear definition by the courts of the strength of family and individual rights to customary and informal landholdings; and amended legislation to upgrade existing holdings with a long term goal of a single national system of titled land tenure.

Land restitution, initiated in 1994, was an important response to the injustices of the apartheid era. But it was intended as a limited and short-term process – initially to be completed in five years. It has continued to the present, with inadequate research, contested cases, lengthy disputes and a lack of support after implementation – creating uncertainty and undermining investment into agriculture. Zuma passed legislation in 2014 to reopen the process, although this has now been temporarily invalidated by the Constitutional Court. We provide an analysis of what went so badly wrong, and warn that a new phase of restitution may ignite conflicting ethnic claims and facilitate elite capture of land and rural resources.



William Beinart was formerly Professor of Race Relations (1997–2015) and Director of the African Studies Centre; Peter Delius taught for many years at the University of the Witwatersrand, where he was head of History, and visited the Centre and St Antony's as an Oppenheimer Fellow; Michelle Hay did the African Studies masters and then a doctorate at Wits.



A Frenchman in Gabon: Challenging Positionality in Post-Coloniality

Noe Michalon (MSc Class, 2017–18)



Noe, second left, in Ndendé, Gabon, with others

“Why did you guys kill Gaddafi?!”

Answering this young man, shortly after a political rally he attended, was surely not an easy task. Undoubtedly, he was making a difference between my country's government and the young Frenchman I was. But he needed to have the French citizens' opinion. Although France can be seen almost everywhere in Gabon, French people rarely come to the popular neighbourhood where he lives, and where the public service is neither visible.

However, rolling in the centre of Libreville, Gabon's capital city, one cannot feel homesick as a French person. On your left is the French school. On your right is the French military base. Then comes the French ambassador's vast (p)residential compound. The next street offers you to see the French consulate. After having passed by the massive presidential palace comes the Total headquarters, the French main oil company, a few hundred meters after the *Agence France Presse* (AFP) offices and before the Embassy of France.

It comes without saying that such a strong French presence impacts your positionality as a researcher. Your interviewees listen to Radio France International and watch France 24, and are hence particularly well-informed about your own country. But they want, understandably, to confront the official discourse with the one, *rarer*, of the common French citizen that I was. I

cannot remember any discussion that did not end up with a comparison with French politics from my interlocutors.

Gabon, despite its 1.8 million inhabitants' population, has always been a strategic country for its former colonial power, notably for its tremendous oil resources, instigating a strong relationship of interdependency. Léon Mba, the first president after independence (1960) is famous for having asked Charles de Gaulle to make Gabon remain a French district, which Paris rejected. When a coup occurred against Mba in 1964, the French army swiftly intervened to oust the coup plotters and reinstate Mr Mba. When post-multipartism troubles erupted in 1990, France sent parachutists to protect oil facilities and French citizens.

The Gabonese power-brokers have managed to take advantage of this special relationship, often labelled under the name of *Françafrique*, and to turn it into a less strong but existing counter-influence that the French journalist Antoine Glaser named *Africafrance* (2014). President Omar Bongo, who ruled Gabon from 1967 to 2009, received, in his Parisian hotel, representatives from the whole French political class at each of his frequent trips to Paris and was involved in affairs of occult funding of most of the French political parties (*Affaire Elf*, 1994).

The latest 2016 elections shook this ambiguous relationship. Omar Bongo's son, Ali, president since his father's death

in 2009, was re-elected despite European accusations of fraud, with a massive score of 95% for him in his home region which reported a record-breaking 99.93% turnout. The government's spokesperson denounced the “French interference” as president Hollande did not congratulate Mr. Bongo for his re-election, while his main opponent, Jean Ping, asked France to recognize his own victory.

In this situation, being a French researcher in Gabon cannot but be neutral. Your research pushes you to interact with citizens from all backgrounds and to keep an open dialogue with your interviewees. I noticed that most of my interviewees were actually responding to my questions with “two publics” in mind: me, and my country. Several of them ended up asking me to tell French representatives about their poor living conditions or to make decisions regarding the unsolved 2016 crisis.

This is not without adding biases to my research. Speaking in French, and not in local languages, to a French researcher might not elicit different answers. But I believe this does not make these interviews wrong or illegitimate, as a method of research. Any Gabonese national would find other kinds of biases. The wide politicization of the population also impacts on any researcher's positionality. For instance, most of the Gabonese scholars I interviewed had links to political parties (usually from the opposition), if they were not part of the parties.

We cannot fully remove our biases – I could not deny my Frenchness while my interviewees could not deny their strong views of French influence in Gabon. Acknowledging my biases in my research, defining, as much as possible, the context of these interviews, was the best way for me to adopt a canny attitude and ensure honesty in my research.

I could not tell the young man why “France killed Gaddafi.” But engaging in dialogue and hearing his opinion were needed before starting the interview...

My fieldwork experience in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Nelly Ky (MSc Class 2017-2018)



Uprising in Ouagadougou

My first experience conducting fieldwork for the MSc in African Studies dissertation was simultaneously a daunting and fulfilling experience. I spent five weeks in my home country, Burkina Faso – in the capital city, Ouagadougou. The topic of my dissertation was the Politics of the 2014 Popular Insurrection in Burkina Faso and my aim was to investigate both the internal dynamics of the protest movement as well as the responses of the regime under siege; to understand the role of normative politics in motivating and de-motivating action during popular uprisings. Doing so required interviewing a large number of elite actors ranging from trade unions' leaders, civil society organisations, political parties and former ministers and army generals of the besieged regime.

The challenging aspect of my fieldwork experience was undoubtedly my ability to navigate the polarisation of the country's political landscape along with being conscious of my positionality as a citizen of the country, studying in a foreign country and investigating the politics of an event that, although historic, has been the subject of much controversial debates. Incidentally, the controversy around the event was one of the element I was seeking to elucidate, and it revolved around the refusal of trade unions, which had historically been the vanguard of civil society in Burkina Faso to take part in the protests that culminated to the insurrection. Thankfully, my carefully crafted questions aided in asking open ended questions and maintaining a political neutrality when engaging with these important actors and played an instrumental role in my understanding of the role of ideologies in political contestation.

With time and practice, the challenges I first confronted slowly turned into a strength and the more time I was engaging with these elites, the more

I was able to earn their trust, which in turn provided a great deal of nuanced insight into my understanding of the event. My initial apprehensions and scepticisms towards interacting with former ministers and army generals disappeared and I became more confident in probing these elites and accessing information that would have probably not been shared with an outsider.

My positionality played well in my favour, but it also meant that I was no longer external to the phenomenon as conventional academic principles suggest. Overall, it was a successful fieldtrip experience and immersing myself in the history and politics of my country to understand a larger phenomenon such as popular uprisings and social movements in Africa opened my eyes to the often-neglected aspect of the role of ideological values and norms in the literature on African politics.



Sudan files and Sudan-o-philes: The lost treasures of humanitarian archives

Danielle Del Vicario (MSc Class 2017-2018)



Last November, the English edition of *Lives at Stake: South Sudan During the Liberation Struggle, a six-hundred-page opus on Norwegian People's Aid's (NPA) work in Sudan* authored by former Secretary General Halle Hanssen, was launched in Nairobi. While the book is mainly about NPA's relationship with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) during Sudan's second civil war (1983-2005), its foreword by South Sudanese political exile Pagan Amum opens with a more recent remembrance from the autumn of 2013, just after South Sudan's President had unilaterally dismissed his entire cabinet:

I received a surprise call from Halle, he was in town and would like to see me immediately [...] something was deadly serious. It was an act of solidarity from the Labour Party and NPA, sending a long-time friend of SPLM, to try to prevent a split in the SPLM and a disaster for the peoples of South Sudan.

The endurance and political significance of this unexpected friendship is, in many ways, typical of the strange relationships made during the war. Indeed, Hanssen's book is much more than a record of humanitarian intervention. It traces the intricacies of local and international connections between humanitarians, politicians, rebels and businesses, born of the

inescapable uncertainty of conflict. If these connections remain largely ignored by policy and academic studies of Sudan's war, humanitarian sources offer a way to change that.

Working at the BIEA in Nairobi in 2016, I began the research which became my MSc dissertation. I was interested in the SPLA presence in Kenya in the early 1990s after the movement lost its rear bases in Ethiopia. Someone recommended I speak to Philip Winter, the former South Sudan Programme Director of Save the Children. A few days later, Philip was ushering me into his home office and showing me his 'Sudan files', an entire wall of reports, correspondence and other ephemera from his time in Sudan in the early 90s. Our lunch that afternoon was the first of many in which Philip gathered an eclectic mix of 'Sudan-o-philes': South Sudanese, Kenyan and expatriate friends made during the war who continue to debate the fragmented politics of South Sudan.

I returned to Philip's several times over the next year. I also searched for other humanitarian archives but failed to find a single NGO which had kept records of its South Sudan programmes. That is, until arriving in Oxford. In the last six years,

OXFAM's papers have been catalogued and moved into the Bodleian. So far little used, they stand as an important untapped resource for area studies. They allowed me to recreate the SPLA's daily diplomatic interaction with foreigners and rendered a treasure map of names of past employees, partners and so-called 'counterparts'.

Once you have their names, humanitarians are very *Googleable* people. While the South Sudanese named in the OXFAM files were not as easy to find, simply knowing the early membership of the little-recognized SRRRA (the SPLA's humanitarian wing), gave me a degree of 'insider' status when speaking to South Sudanese.

In general, archives' long closure periods and attention to privacy make it difficult to conduct archival research on contemporary history and, still more so, to use the archival record to trace key historical actors who are still alive today. Given that the myth of humanitarian aid's supposedly 'apolitical' character was long ago debunked, it is time not only for 'interdisciplinary' scholars to take humanitarian documents more seriously, but for humanitarian agencies to recognize the wider importance of efficient record-keeping.



SCF Plane 2'

Anya-Nya propaganda and the Israeli involvement in southern Sudan, 1969-1971

Yotam Gidron (2016-2017)

Earlier this year, a paper that I wrote based on my MSc dissertation was published in the *Journal of Eastern African Studies*. The paper examines the involvement of the Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency, in secretly producing and disseminating propaganda for the southern Sudanese rebel group Anya-Nya in the early 1970s.

When I began working on this research, supervised by Sebatso Manoeli, I was primarily interested in the ways in which southern Sudanese sought to use photography to represent their struggle and national aspirations and to voice their political claims at the international sphere. I knew that Israelis were involved in the war, but thought that their intervention was limited to the provision of arms and trainings to the rebels.

Surveying southern Sudanese publications from Oxford's Bodleian Library and at the Sudan Archive in Durham, I soon realised that during the final three years of the war – precisely when the Israelis intervened – there was a striking shift in the rebels' public relations efforts. Not only did their publications suddenly feature numerous photographs, but they presented a completely new image of the rebels and their relationship with southern Sudanese civilians. The Israelis, it turned out, were not only arming and advising the rebels but also served as their ghost propagandists.

To better understand how this unexpected collaboration worked, I collected Anya-Nya publications in archives in the UK and Italy and then travelled to Israel, where I interviewed Mossad veterans who were involved in producing these publications. After finishing the programme in Oxford, I was also able to review additional archival materials of the Israeli Foreign Ministry.

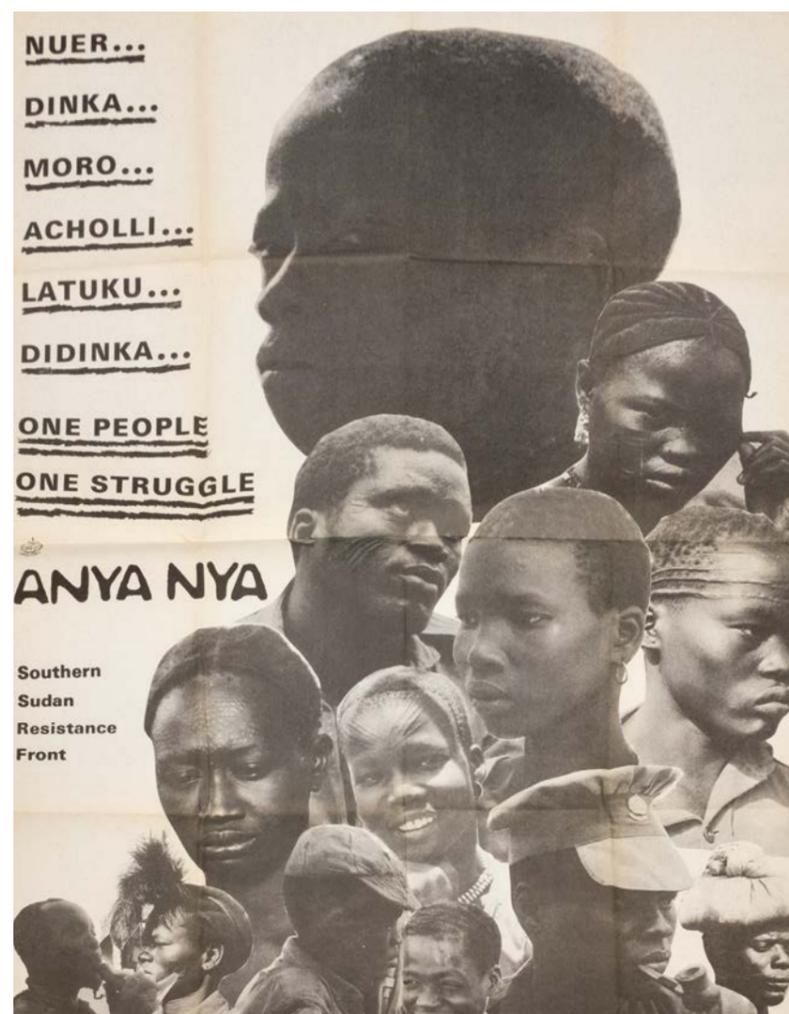
Israelis and southern Sudanese were brought together by Cold War and Middle East rivalries that intersected in the Horn of Africa. Southern Sudanese

were trying to attract international support for their struggle throughout the 1960s, with little success. The Israelis agreed to help as part of their broader effort to form regional alliances with non-Arab states and minorities in order to weaken and deter Israel's Arab adversaries – in this case, Egypt and Sudan.

The propaganda the Mossad produced was the result of the encounter between Israeli and southern Sudanese ideas and interests: The Israelis relied on southerners in Sudan and Europe to provide them with materials and information, but they also crafted the publications in light of their own ideas about how the southern

Sudanese nation and rebels should be represented.

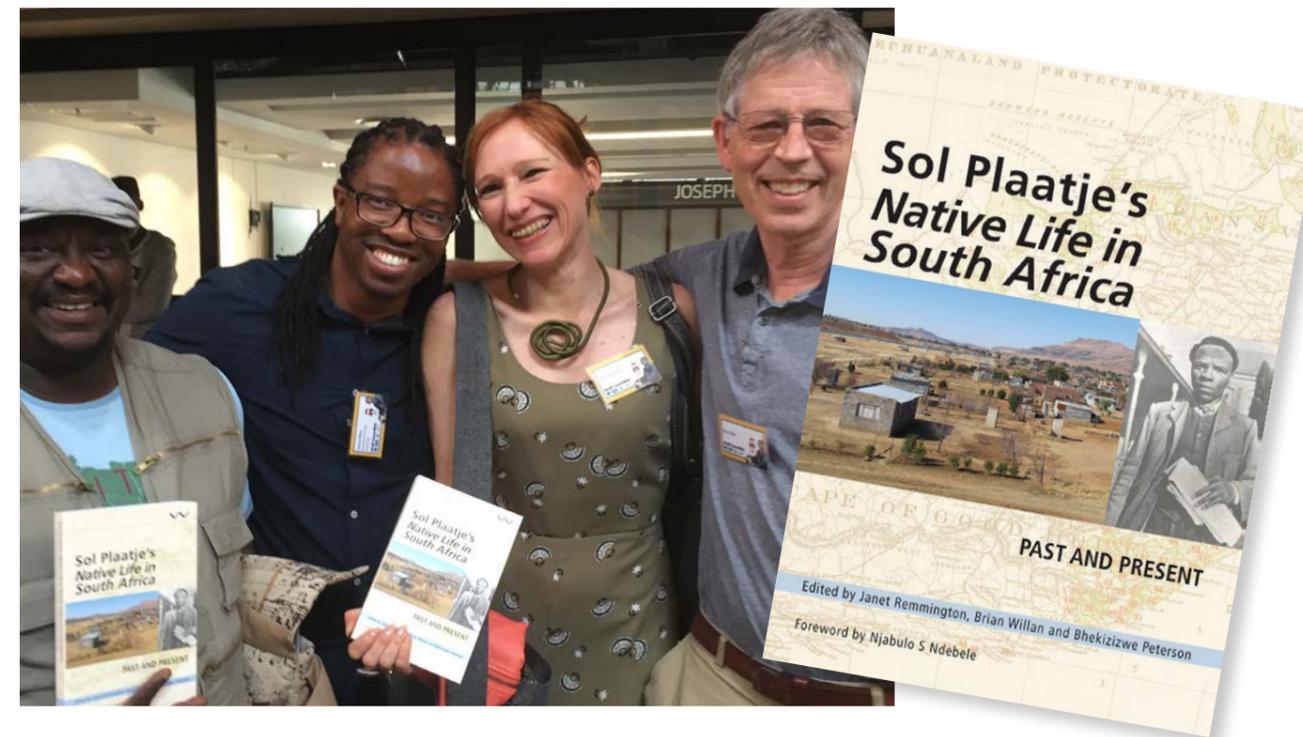
The MSc program and the African Studies Centre were a remarkably inspiring and motivating environment and I benefitted greatly from conversations with my cohort and the academic staff during my work on this research. While my work deals with a short and obscure episode in the history of South Sudan, I hope that it can be of broader significance for our understanding of the circumstances that influenced the ways in which African armed liberation movements came to be visually represented and promoted.



Anya Nya Propaganda

NIHSS award for best edited collection

Janet Remington (2008-2009)



It's a decade since starting the MSc in African Studies (2008-09) when I took a career break from publishing. I could not have imagined how my life would take on an energizing and challenging new direction. It happened that my Masters dissertation on Sol Plaatje would provide the impetus for a range of publications, provoke me to broader PhD study around African print and travel cultures, and open up fresh interdisciplinary collaborations.

First, I was completely taken by surprise when my dissertation won the 2009 Terence Ranger Prize and, in March this year, I was overwhelmed to learn that the book I had co-edited with Dr Brian Willan and Professor Bhekizizwe Peterson, *Sol Plaatje's Native Life in South Africa: Past and Present* (Wits University Press, 2016), co-won the Non-Fiction Edited Volume category at South Africa's National Institute of Humanities & Social Sciences (NIHSS) Awards. It was a dark winter evening in Oxford when my phone screen lit up with the news from the iconic Market Theatre in Johannesburg. Work and family life had not made it possible for me to attend, but fellow editor and Professor of African Literature at Wits University, Bheki Peterson, gave a moving vote of thanks, referencing the continuing relevance of Plaatje's contribution on the land issue, and dedicated the award to Plaatje.

I am grateful to Wits Press who were open to the idea of the book in 2014 and of course I remain indebted to the African Studies Centre for its commitment to provocative interdisciplinary research and to challenging its students,

and to my inspirational supervisor, Professor Elleke Boehmer. The edited volume on Plaatje could never be anything but a truly collective exercise. I was acutely aware of my early career scholar status, so sought to collaborate with experts as fellow editors and to seek out authors from a range of specialisms. I was lucky enough to co-edit the volume with historian Brian Willan, doyen of Plaatje scholarship and Plaatje's biographer, and with Bheki Peterson, renowned for his work on African intellectuals and much more.

Together, we – and the book's multiple contributors – shared a passion for and fascination with Plaatje's landmark book, *Native Life in South Africa*. The book arose out of an early African National Congress deputation to protest against the 1913 Natives Land Act, but was Plaatje's individualistic handiwork. It called imperial and colonial powers to account, bore witness to the resistance of Africans, and gave a personalised account of Plaatje's journeying within and beyond South Africa. Originally published in wartime London in 1916, the book travelled far and wide under different covers, only to fall into relative obscurity during apartheid, and to experience very limited engagement post-apartheid. The centenary of its publication in 2016 was an occasion not to be missed. The book aims to shed new light on how and why *Native Life in South Africa* came into being at a critical historical juncture, and reflects on how it can be read in relation to South Africa's heightened challenges today.



Sino-African Perspective

Li Lianxing now is a PhD student of political science at Tsinghua University in Beijing, focusing on Nigerian party politics and Africa-China relationship. He took the MSc in African Studies between 2008 and 2009, and after that he went to Cambridge for an MPhil in International Relations. Then he worked in media for about 8 years. His career started from China Daily, where he became an international news reporter covering hot-spot zones and developing countries. Apart from exclusive interviews with many top world political leaders, he also carried out some report trips to conflict zones in Syria, Egypt, Somali-Kenya border, and Pakistan. Then he was selected as the first Africa-based reporter of the newspaper. Before leaving media, he also worked as an on-camera reporter of the China Global Television Network (formerly China Central Television news channel), to equip himself with a more comprehensive media skills kit. After all these first hand experiences, he realized how important it is to observe Africa out of the box—by a home-grown perspective, or possibly an oriental one. China and Africa are sharing many fundamental similarities in terms of social diversity and development history. It's extremely doubtful to claim that there is a development model to be copied from China to Africa, but there are really painful lessons that can be shared by both. Besides, there are also many unsung common values from both philosophies when looking at the society and the world. He tries to find and use some of them in his prospective research. He is soon expected to take a one-year field study in Nigeria and hopefully go back to Oxford for more resources and insights.

UN/SETTLED

Sydelle Willow Smith

Following discussions around the Rhodes Must Fall movement in 2015, Sydelle has been documenting the attitudes, stories and spaces of white South Africans in an ongoing series of portraits, interviews and photographs. The project, called Un/Settled, seeks to create a space of introspection and vulnerability among those of the South African population who have not often been required to interrogate their place in post-apartheid society, but find themselves now doing so. Sydelle's photographs are accompanied by an essay by Olivia Walton, which draws on interviews, photographs, and personal experience. The work has been featured in South Africa's Mail & Guardian and The Lake magazine, among others. It has received support from South Africa's National Arts Council, and an Artist Fellowship from the Migration and Health Project at the University of the Witwatersrand.



A fond farewell: Mr Anthony Kirk-Greene (1925 – 2018)

William Beinart

Anthony Kirk-Greene (b.1925) died aged 93 on 8th July. Above all Tony was an enormously hardworking and committed historian of Africa and of the colonial era. As a young man he served in the army in India, during and immediately after the war, and then followed a successful career in the Colonial Service in Nigeria (1950–60). He also taught as a founding member of staff at Ahmadu Bello University (1961–65). This background gave him a lengthy and distinctive experience in Africa that few British-based Africanists now replicate. He learnt Hausa and he saw colonial rule from the inside in an area where it was relatively short-lived and constrained.

Tony was in some respects a man of his time and yet in important ways transcended this. He is best-known for his extraordinary knowledge and prolific writing on the British colonial service. Yet his earlier work especially demonstrated his ethnographic interests (*Adamawa Past and Present*, 1958); his expertise in Hausa language and culture (*A Modern Hausa Reader*, 1967); and his concern to explain the complexities of Nigerian civil war and Nigerian politics. In addition to papers he produced an invaluable sourcebook on *Crisis and Conflict in Nigeria* (1971) and an introduction to *Nigeria since 1970* (1981). His work on the colonial service has provided a very valuable resource for scholars in many fields of African history and, despite his immersion, he could be sharply critical of individuals and gently sceptical about its structures.

Tony came to St Antony's in 1967 on a five-year fellowship. He taught undergraduates on the African papers for PPE and Modern History and supervised many students doing topics in African and colonial history. With the strong support of College warden Raymond Carr, he was reappointed as a Senior Research Fellow till retirement in 1992 and he taught enthusiastically throughout his appointment. He also directed the Foreign Service Programme. Tony understood and accommodated the increasingly Africanist perspectives in British and American African Studies. He built and nurtured a strong network of colleagues in the United States as well as Britain and Africa. Throughout his career, he was a wonderful resource for those studying West Africa and hosted a wide range of visitors from Nigeria, till well after retirement, who showed him great affection and respect. He helped to make St Antony's a key centre for the study of Africa within the University.

One of Tony's major legacies to the University was his assiduous work on the Colonial Records Project at Rhodes House and on its successor, the Development Records Project, as Director 1980–84. He wrote countless letters, organised workshops and meetings and succeeded in regenerating this unparalleled archive with a large number of collections, particularly relating to agriculture, education and medicine. As just one small example of this legacy, papers were secured on education in colonial Nigeria including material from British teachers at Umuahia College, the leading school in south-eastern Nigeria. These and other materials in Oxford provided a rich resource for a recent prize-winning study by (former SAM) Terri Ochiaga about Chinua Achebe and his friends in their youth and the making of Nigeria's first generation of literary giants.

When I first came to the College in 1997, Tony was a supportive member of the African Studies seminar and programme. He attended many Thursday seminars and made an effort to get to know a new generation of staff and graduate students studying Africa. He was particularly generous in supporting a junior research fellowship, travel grants for students to research in African countries, as well as a prize for dissertations on Africa. When we established a full African Studies Centre in the university for the first time (2002), with continuing close links to the College, and were eventually able to secure a building, we named a Kirk-Greene seminar room in recognition of Tony's sustained support for African Studies. He contributed important building blocks. During his time at the College, there were two or three Fellows specialising in Africa. There are now 8 or 9 with such expertise. Raufu Mustapha – sadly recently deceased – David Pratten and Wale Adebaniwi have ensured that Nigeria specifically remains an important focus of attention at the College.

A.H.M. Kirk-Greene (second left) Dr Aliyu Modibbo Umar (second right) and two others at a conference on Nigeria at Stanford University, California, USA, 1988.



Ooni of Ife Visits the ASC



The Ooni in front of the African Studies Centre, Oxford



The Ooni of Ife presenting a gift to the Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr Easton during his visit to Oxford

His Imperial Majesty, the Ooni of Ife, Oba (King) Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi visited the African Studies Centre, on Monday 27 November, 2017. The monarch of Ile-Ife, in Southwestern Nigeria, which is considered the cradle of the Yoruba people in Nigeria and the Diaspora – including in the Americas and the Caribbean – is the 51st Ooni of Ile-Ife. He was crowned on 7 December, 2015.

The Ooni, who is an accountant, is also the Chancellor of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. His visit to the African Studies Centre was geared toward establishing cultural and educational links between Nigeria and Oxford University. The visiting monarch was welcomed to Oxford University by the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Dr Robert Easton.

The Governor of Kaduna State was at the African Studies Centre to declare that 'Nigeria requires a new elite consensus'

Governor El-Rufai visited the African Studies Centre, on Friday, 9th March 2018.



The governor attending to students after the talk



Malam Uba Sani, Ms Hadiza Bala Usman, MD, Nigerian Ports Authority, Prof Wale Adebaniwi, Prof Rachel Murphy, Head of School for Interdisciplinary Area Studies, Oxford, Governor El-Rufai and Mr Jimi Lawal, the Governor's special adviser

British High Commissioner to Zambia gives talk at the ASC

Mr Fergus Cochrane-Dyett, the United Kingdom High Commissioner to Zambia, presented a lunch seminar entitled "Is Britain Still Relevant to Africa?" at the African Studies Centre on Monday, 21 May.



Mr Fergus Cochrane-Dyett, UK High Commissioner to Zambia and Prof Miles Larmer at the presentation

African Studies Class of 2017–18



Edward Asomani Ghana
BA Politics
Sheffield Hallam University
Human Agency and the management of democratic elections: A lift history of Ghana's electoral commissioner Dr Kwaduo Afari Gyan from 1993-2015



Nikiwe Bikitsha South Africa
MA Journalism and Media studies
University of the Witwatersrand
SA Inc: Partner or Hegemon? What is the socio-economic impact of South African retail investment in Zambia?



Abigail Branford South Africa
MPhil Education, Globalisation and Int. Dev.
University of Cambridge
The Problems and Prosepects of Teaching South Africa's Recent History: Teacher Perspectives and Textbook Analysis



Esther May Brown UK
BSc Political Science.
University of London
Bye bye vulture number one: the impact of President Seretse Khama Ian Khama on democracy in Botswana



Pierpaolo Crivellaro Italy
BA in Political Science
Freie Universität Berlin
CSR and beyond: 'local' perceptions of ENI's presence in Mozambique



Mbalenhle Matandela South Africa
BSc Gender and Transformation
University of Cape Town
#PairOfButtocks: Digital Feminist Contestations and Academic Freedom



Noé Michalon France
MA Journalism and Int. Affair
Sciences Po, Paris
Poser les actes: MPs, Multipartism and Rentier Political Entrepreneurship in Gabon



Asa Mudzimu Zimbabwe
MPhil in African History
Rhodes University
'(Un)Making Medical Pluralism? The case of therapeutic system at Rupenyu Clinic in northwest Zimbabwe, 1965 to 1982



Michael Mutyaba Uganda
BA Social Sciences
Makerere University, Uganda
Structures" to "Defiance": The De-Institutionalization of the FDC party of Uganda



Joshua Alexander Nott South Africa
BSc Social Science
University of Cape Town
Class Apartheid: Inequality and the South African Constitution



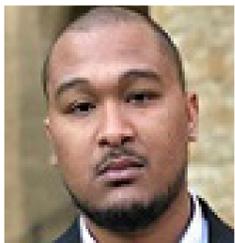
Danielle Del Vicario Canada
BA (Honours) English Literature and History, Durham University
The SRRA and Information networks in Southern Sudan, c.1985-93



Seraphim M. De-Souza Ghana
BA African Studies
University of Cape Coast, Ghana
The Ambivalent Future of Ga: Indigenous languages and language use in Ghana



Princess Hamman-Obels Nigeria
MA in Int. Political Economy & Dev.
Erasmus University, The Hague
Governing Elections in Africa: Evidence from Nigeria's 2011-2015 Elections



Keyan Jardine South Africa
BA History and Philosophy
University of the Witwatersrand
Sons of the Bandit King: Notes on the Mythology of South Africa's Number Gangs



Sofiane Kadmiri Morocco
BA International Studies
Al Akhawayn University, Morocco
Morocco Foreign Policy: Explaining the Shift Towards West Africa



Noxolo Ntaka South Africa
B.Soc.Sc Economics and Politics,
University of Cape Town
The Politics of epistemic location at the University of Cape Town: writing and teaching African studies from the South



Vonique Osei-Antwi UK
BA (Hons) Politics with International Relations, University of York
From the Porcupine to the Star: Marriage and Matrilineage in Asante Integration into Post-Colonial Ghana



Hendrik Oye Germany
BA in International Studies
Leiden University, Netherlands
Negotiating Development: Togolese Agency in Chinese and German Agriculture and Infrastructure Projects



Nick Queffurus UK
LLB
Bristol University
Data analytics in a fragile democracy: the case of the 2017 Kenyan Elections



Arkady Silverman Canada
MA (Honours) Int. Relations
University of St Andrews
Therapeutic Trajectories: Echoes of the Two Publics in Cameroon



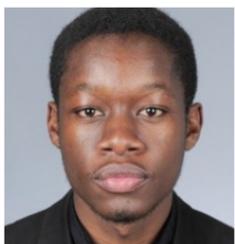
Yolanda Kisenyi UK
BA International Relations
University of Birmingham
Germany's Holocaust in Namibia: The Marginalisation of Germany's Colonial History within Social Memory and its Role in Shaping Contemporary Afro German Identity



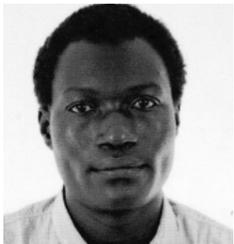
Ernest Plange Kwofie Ghana
BA Political Studies
KNUST Ghana
'Performing' oversight: vetting as a political ritual in Ghana's parliament



Nelly Ky Burkina Faso
BA Int. Relations and Political Science
University of British Columbia, Canada
The Politics of Burkina's Faso 2014 Popular Insurrection.



Trevor Kibet Langat Kenya
BA Social Sciences and Int. Relations
Sciences Po, Paris
Policy and Language Preservation in Africa: The case of 'pedagogie convergente' in Mali and the formation of a Pan-African Language Programme



David Loa Eperit Lomuria Kenya
M. Communication Studies, University of Nairobi
Civil War and Public Memory: An investigation into the role of collective civil war memories in South Sudan conflicts



Aube Tollu UK
BA European Studies
King's College London
The ones who say no: Unpacking the alternative interpretations of Somali discrimination to make sense of non-participation in violent jihad in Kenya

African Studies Prize winners 2017–18

Kirk-Green Prize for best overall performance:
Danielle Del Vicario

Terrance Ranger Prize for outstanding dissertation performance:
Esther Brown

African Studies Centre Award for excellent overall performance:
Arkady Silverman



African Studies Centre



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