



UNIVERSITY OF  
OXFORD

# African Studies Centre

2009 Newsletter



# Director's Diary

David Anderson

Week 4 of Trinity Term seemed the perfect week to compile a diary on life at the African Studies Centre. In the midst of the more tranquil summer term, I expected to provide an account of our research and writing – an antidote to the hurly burly of teaching and supervision in Michaelmas and Hilary. I should have known better.



## Monday ▶▶▶

An early start allows me to compile my usual list of tasks for the week. It is troublingly lengthy. I begin by reading through the drafts of four MSc dissertations and sending comments back to students. Once again the range of topics tackled is impressive, and the quality and originality of the work produced always excites me. After the final supervision, I hurry down to St Antony's where the Warden is running a series of lunchtime seminars for the Area Studies centres. Today it is our turn, and I give a short talk on the impact of the global recession on Africa. I'm pleased that our Departmental Lecturer, Matteo Rizzo is there, along with a few of our MSc students. Back to the office for an afternoon meeting with my Research Assistant, Neil Carrier, to review our progress in writing a paper on the prohibition of khat in Europe and North America, and to check on peer reviews for the *Journal of Eastern African Studies*. I then head for Manor Road and a 5.00 pm lecture given by Fl. Lt. Jerry Rawlings, former President of Ghana. Rawlings is a charismatic character and gives a spirited talk, full of wit, good humour and not a little guile and cunning. It is easy to see why he has endured in politics, and it is difficult not to like the man. But the talk also leaves an uneasy sense of the abiding weaknesses in much African politics – the importance of performance over policy substance, the pervasiveness of corruption, and the fragility of institutions. I'm pleased that so many students attended the lecture to be subjected to this *real politik*, and find myself thinking about how we might bring other figures of Rawlings' stature to Oxford.

## Tuesday ▶▶▶

I rise early with hopes of getting some writing done, and manage a couple of hours at the computer before my colleague Nic Cheeseman arrives at the office for a meeting with a publisher. We are persuaded to edit a handbook on African politics, a reference work aimed at a student readership, for whom we believe it will be enormously useful. Later, Nic and I hurry down to Manor Road for a seminar hosted by the Reuters Institute. Salim Lone is the speaker. Lone was the campaign manager for the ODM in Kenya's 2007 election and gives an informative talk, followed by a discussion of Kenya's current problems with its coalition government. The mood is pessimistic, with Lone clearly worried that violence and disorder will worsen in the coming months. With these sobering thoughts in mind, I head back to the Centre for a meeting with Wanja Knighton and David Pratten about scholarships and our in-coming students for October 2009. Then, wishing Sabrina Souza a happy birthday and grabbing a piece of cake, I rush down to Nuffield, where Dr Adrienne Le Bas, a JRF and a lively participant in workshops and seminars, is giving a talk on political parties in Africa. Her talk is excellent and generates an animated discussion among an audience that includes many students who study other parts of the world and appreciate Adrienne's rejection of African 'exceptionalism'. I head for home at 7.30 pm, conscious that I have still not tackled anything on my 'to do' list for the week.

**"This is our eighth African event of the week, and like all the others this attracts a large audience of students as our eighth African event of the week, and like all the others this attracts a large audience of students and faculty."**



## Wednesday ▶▶▶

Hoping for a quieter day, I again rise early. A tedious morning is spent dealing with the things that seem most urgent – how I wish we could go back in time and prevent the invention of email. Midday brings relief, as I catch the train to London for a Council meeting of the British Institute in Eastern Africa. The meeting is held in the magnificent British Academy building on Carlton House Terrace, on what is a glorious late spring day. I've served on the BIEA Council since 1986 in various roles, and in the coming year I have agreed to lend a hand with the administration of the institute's headquarters in Nairobi. Much of the meeting is spent being briefed by our Treasurer of the need for firm financial control. The global crunch has adversely affected research funding for Africa, and difficult times lie ahead. I find myself now worrying about how we are going to maintain our research activities and still balance the books. The evening brings some lighter relief, with a visit to the Ethiopian Embassy to celebrate the launch of a book on the ancient churches of Ethiopia, authored by my friend and BIEA colleague, the Cambridge archaeologist Professor David Phillipson. My own research is currently focused in Ethiopia, on the Lower Omo, so it is a useful opportunity to meet other country specialists.



*African Studies MSc students revising*

## Thursday ▶▶▶

Another morning at the computer allows me to clear the decks a little further, and I manage to get one or two tasks on my list accomplished, but I have now given up all hopes of getting any writing done this week and find myself wondering if I will ever again clear the email backlog? The gloom is lifted as I head to St Antony's again for lunch, this time to meet with the Foreign Secretary, David Milliband, who is in Oxford for the day. No one mentions the subject of MP's allowances, though it has dominated the news this week and is surely on our minds. Kenya looms large for the Foreign Office right now. Everyone acknowledges the importance of the international community giving support to reform, but no one quite knows what to do for the best. Milliband

looks concerned, but gives nothing away. An afternoon of supervisions with doctoral students follows, and then I chair our African Studies seminar at 5.00 pm. This week our speaker is Dr Rob Hope, from Oxford's Centre for the Environment, who tells us about his research on water provision for poor communities in several African countries, including Kenya and Mozambique. I never cease to be amazed by the variety of Africa-focused research that goes on in Oxford, across a huge range of disciplines and departments.

## Friday ▶▶▶

The working week is nearly over, and only now do I find the time to systematically go through the list of tasks I compiled on Monday. I deal with the last batch of doctoral admission files for next year. Lunchtime and another seminar: this one at Manor Road, to hear my colleague Nic Cheeseman and Rob Ford (of Manchester University) present the findings of their research on party systems and elections in Africa. This is our eighth African event of the week, and like all the others this attracts a large audience of students and faculty. On the way back to the Centre I pop into St Cross to pick up my mail and realise that it is the first time I have been here in a fortnight. I try to take lunch in college at least once a week, but when we are busy even that can prove difficult. Back to the office for 3.00 pm, I finally find time to get down to my own research, and work through the draft of a book chapter I am writing on ethnic claims and moral economies. While I'm typing away, downstairs Professor Beinart is hosting a book launch for Mark Gevisser's new book on Thabo Mbeki. The room is packed. Getting a few more words on the page has raised my spirits, but heading home at 6.30 pm I glance balefully at the list I made last Monday morning: seven things done, thirteen things still to do. Ah well, there's always next week.....



*But it's not all hard work...*



# Annual Record 2008–09

The MSc programme in African Studies welcomed its fourth cohort in October 2008. The 30 students were spread between nine colleges across the university, and participated energetically in the many activities organized throughout the year.



'Gumbe' workshop for professional dancers, Dakar, October 2002

Helene Neveu

## Visitors 2008–09

A number of scholars visited the Centre during the 2008–09 academic year:

**Professor Peter Little** (University of Kentucky)

**Dr Godwin Murunga** (Kenyatta University)

**Dr Flora Hajdu** (Uppsala University)

**Professor Odile Goerg** (University Paris-7 Denis Diderot)

**Ms Monika Sommer** (Hamburg University)

**Dr Jacqui Goldin** (University of Natal) and **Dr Andrew Ainslie** were Oppenheimer Visitors

**Dr Makonen Getu** has been based at the centre working on a range of issues including faith and development.

**Dr Alex Duncan**, also based at the ASC throughout the year, continued to work on the political economy of development.

**Dr David Turton, Dr Marco Bassi** and **Dr Graciela Gil-Romera** continue to work on an AHRC-funded environmental history project on the Omo Valley, Ethiopia (with David Anderson).

## Research Associates

**Dr Christopher Low** held a Wellcome Trust 'Value in People' award to continue his study of environmental influences on medical ideas and practices in Southern Africa.

**Dr Neil Carrier** has been working alongside Professor David Anderson on a number of research projects including the AHRC-funded project 'Trauma and Personhood in Late Colonial Kenya'.

**Dr David Turton, Dr Marco Bassi** and **Dr Graciela Gil-Romera** continue to work on an AHRC-funded environmental history project on Ethiopia (with David Anderson).

**Dr Hugh Macmillan** (Leverhulme Research Officer) has been working on the South African ANC in Zambia (with William Beinart).

## Major Conferences and Workshops 2008–09

The weekly research seminar in African Studies was very well attended throughout the year as was the South Africa postgraduate seminar series on Wednesdays during term time. Prof Mamadou Diouf (Columbia University) gave the African Studies Annual Lecture at St Antony's College "Islam, the 'Originaires' and the making of the public space in a colonial city: Saint Louis of Senegal." Our annual lectures are now available as podcasts via the university's iTunes U pages (<http://itunes.ox.ac.uk/>).

The Centre hosted and sponsored a large number of workshops during the year. Among them was the 10th Annual Researching Africa Day, convened by Lillian Cherotich (St Antony's) and Leigh Gardner (Jesus), which attracted some 50 doctoral researchers as well as masters students, and the annual Britain-Zimbabwe research meeting which was again held in St Antony's at the end of Trinity Term, with support from the Centre.



## Publications by African Studies Centre Staff

**William Beinart** 'Beyond the Colonial Paradigm: African History and Environmental History in Large-Scale Perspective' in Edmund Burke and Kenneth Pomeranz, 'Experts and Expertise in Africa Reconsidered', *African Affairs*, 108, 432 (2009), 1-21 (with Karen Brown and Dan Gilfoyle); 'Strategies of the Poor and Some Problems of Land Reform in the Eastern Cape, South Africa: an Argument against Re-communalisation' in Timothy Chesters (ed), *Land Rights* (OUP, Oxford, 2009).

**David Pratten** 'Masking Youth: Transformation and Transgression in Annang Performance', *African Arts* 41(4), 44-60.

**Matteo Rizzo** 'The Struggle for Alternatives: NGOs' Responses to the *World Development Report 2008*', *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 9 (2), 277-290; 'Becoming wealthy: the life history of a rural entrepreneur in Tanzania, 1922-80s', *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 3(2), 221 - 39.

**Nic Cheeseman** 'Democratization, Sequencing, and State Failure in Africa: Lessons from Kenya', *African Affairs*, 108 [with Dan Branch]; and 'Kenya Since 2002: The More Things Change the More They Stay the Same', in Whitfield and Mustapha ed., *Africa Since Democratization* (James Currey).

**David Anderson** 'Violence and exodus in Kenya's Rift Valley: predictable and preventable?' (with Emma Lochery), *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 2.ii ( July 2008); 'Obama: they fought for Britain, then turned to rebellion', *The Times*, 3 December 2008, p8.

**Hélène Neveu Kringelbach** 'Studio Cameroon The Everyday Photography of Jacques Touselle. November 9, 2007, June 29, 2008, Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford, England', *African Arts* 42(3), 85-86.

## Research Notes: David Pratten



*Agba masquerade, Ikot Akpa Nkuk, 2008, photo by David Pratten*

### The Politics of Youth in Nigeria

I've just concluded a project looking at inter-generational tensions and the mobilisation of youth as a political category in southern Nigeria. Its focus has been to document the livelihoods and modes of sociality among young men in order for us better to understand the reported 'crisis of youth' on the African continent. In the course of the research new perspectives have been examined in relation to vigilantism, cults and masquerades.

The findings of the research point to the way in which marginalized young men express their identity and cope with insecurity through a rich interplay of ideas about power and masculinity along with often violent strategies to seek accountability from patrons. It was funded by a British Academy Small Grant.

I am currently writing up this research in my second monograph and have been editing a book, *Readings in Youth in Africa*, for the International Africa Institute series.

## Introducing Matteo Rizzo



**Matteo is Departmental Lecturer in African Studies and Atiku Abubakar Fellow of St Antony's College**

I was appointed as a Departmental Lecturer in 2008. Broadly speaking, my research focuses on the politics of development, both past and present, and is interdisciplinary. This reflects my training which consists of a first degree in African Politics, an MSc in Development Studies, and a PhD in the economic and social history of rural development.

I am fluent in Swahili, having studied the language for my first degree and lived in East Africa for over two years. I also worked for Save the Children for over two years, as a rural poverty adviser. My research interests so far includes the unintended consequences of development through a study of the groundnut scheme in

Tanganyika, the impact of privatisation and economic deregulation of the working poor through a case study of the transport system of Dar es Salaam, development aid effectiveness, the role (potential or actual) of civil society in development, and the incoherent message of the World Bank's World Development Report.

I contribute to the teaching of the two core courses of the MSc in African Studies, including lectures on interdisciplinarity, the informal economy, famine and land reform. I also offer an Optional Paper on "The informal economy and social networks in Africa".



## Research Notes: H el ene Neveu Kringelbach

### Dance and dancers in Senegal and beyond



For seven years now, I have conducted research on dance and dancers in Dakar. Having originally set out to look at popular dances and hip-hop, I found myself drawn into the world of the myriad dance troupes that exist in every Dakarois neighbourhood. During fieldwork I watched hours of rehearsals every week, took part in training

workshops, acted as an informal photographer, and helped organise the bi-annual Kaay Fecc dance festival in 2003 and 2007.

This was all the more exciting as Senegal has a vibrant performing arts scene, a legacy of former President L eopold S edar Senghor's cultural policies. In the 1960s and 1970s, he sought to carve out a leading political role in Francophone Africa. He thought this could be achieved through patronage of 'culture and the arts', a field in which he had already acquired legitimacy as a leading pan-African intellectual.

In the 1960s, one-third of the state budget was devoted to the Ministry of Culture, and in the next two decades Senegal went from one extravaganza to the next, from the 1966 World Festival of Negro Arts to the Mudra Afrique contemporary dance school, a National Ballet that toured the world and a National Theatre troupe that was performing "Africanised" versions of Moli ere and Shakespeare plays in Paris.



*Dancer Fatou Ciss e in 'picc' (bird) by Gacirah Diagne, Dakar, May 2003), photo by Helene Neveu*

The performing scene I am now writing about has been shaped by this history. But it has also been deeply affected by the structural adjustment era of the 1980s. Major funding for music, dance and theatre now comes from Europe and the US. Nevertheless, the hundreds of urban dance troupes spread all over Senegal make up a thriving youth scene. Talent is often revealed during neighbourhood events and family ceremonies, where young people experiment with the latest dance crazes from "mbalax" videos, Senegal's dominant popular music style.

For those who choose to move on from there, careers are short-lived and mean performing in music videos, hotels, dance festivals, political rallies, big weddings, TV competitions, as well as teaching foreigners. The lucky few may tour abroad on a regular basis and collaborate with foreign choreographers. Whereas some troupes gather youths from the same neighbourhood, others are the product of hometown associations – particularly from the Casamance region, where a separatist movement is actively maintaining a sense of cultural particularism. So there is more to dance than meets the eye.

## Introducing Nic Cheeseman



I was appointed as University Lecturer in African Politics and Hugh Price Fellow of Jesus College in 2007. My doctoral research, which focused on the politics of the one-party state in Kenya and Zambia, won the Arthur McDougall Prize for the best dissertation on elections or representation from the Political Studies Association of the United Kingdom. Since then, my interests have become more contemporary and most of my work today is in the field of comparative democratization.

My main teaching for the African Studies MSc includes lectures on comparative and quantitative methods, nationalism, and the state. I also convene the Democracy and Multi-Party Politics in Africa Option Paper.

During 2008 most of my thoughts and work focused on Kenya, following the disputed election and subsequent 'crisis'. It proved to be both a very important and a very depressing time to be a 'Kenyanist'. Right now I am finishing up a book project, 'Democracy in Africa', which has been accepted for publication by Cambridge University Press. So far the research has taken me to Kenya, Zambia, Malawi and Ghana, and I'm hoping to add Botswana to the list in the near future.

## Research Notes: Neil Carrier, Sloan Mahone, and David Anderson.

### Trauma and Personhood in Late Colonial Kenya



*'Kabwere Wanje, a famous Giriama healer and his family, photograph taken by Edward Lambert Margetts in 1958*

The AHRC-funded project, 'Trauma and Personhood', led by Sloan Mahone, co-researched by Neil Carrier and David Anderson, is based around the archive of the late Edward Lambert Margetts (1920–2004), a Canadian psychiatrist who was in charge of Mathari Mental Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya during the late 1950s. The archive was collected by Dr Mahone, and includes nearly a thousand images, many of which are photographs taken in East Africa from 1956–59. The subjects of these images range widely from patients and buildings at Mathari, to people, places and objects that piqued Margetts' interest on his travels through East Africa. As well as being a rich resource for the social history of East Africa and the history of colonial psychiatry, many of these images are visually stunning and testify to Margetts' prowess as a photographer.

These images and the wealth of wider material in the collection are significant in several respects. Dr Margetts' tenure at Mathari Mental Hospital coincided with the later years of the Mau Mau rebellion, and he treated, photographed and wrote about a number of detainees. Rather than viewing Mau Mau as a form of collective psychosis, as his predecessor J. C. Carothers had done, Margetts' approach to these detainees was very different, examining the impact on them of the traumatic conditions prevalent in detention camps. Another striking feature of the Mathari photographs is the high incidence of movement disorders (often neurologically along the spectrum of Parkinsons' disease) within a relatively small patient population. These photographs have the power both to disturb and intrigue, and the project engaged the help of a specialist on such movement disorders to further explore their medical and historical significance.

Beyond the hospital, the project has focused on the theme of health and healing in East Africa more generally. Many of the Margetts images are of prominent local healers whom he met on his travels, and Dr Mahone and Dr Carrier made a number of trips to East Africa where they conducted photo elicitation exercises with the families of such healers. 'Repatriating' the images proved highly rewarding, and the team learnt much of the social history of healing in Kenya through interviews with the family of Waitara – a prominent Kikuyu healer to whom Margetts brought a Mathari patient for treatment – and of Kabwere, a man of great significance in the history of the Giriama.

Perhaps the most startling images in the collection are of individuals from Kisii who had undergone trepanation, a theme that engaged Margetts himself. Dr Mahone undertook a number of research trips to Kisii to meet omobari (the local surgeons who carry out the trepanations) and their patients, allowing a fascinating examination of the historical, social, cultural and medical meanings behind the practice. Further photo elicitation work was undertaken in Zanzibar in December 2008, where Drs Mahone and Carrier met members of the island's Ithna-asheri community. Margetts had taken several stunning pictures of an Ashura mourning procession in 1957, and had met with prominent Ithna-asheri to discuss its significance. Mahone and Carrier retraced his footsteps in Zanzibar, and were able to place changes in the practice of Ashura in the historical context of post-Revolutionary Zanzibar.



*Francis Kabwere, photo by Neil Carrier*

**The foregoing offers only a sample of the strands emerging from this project. Several other themes emerge from the photographic collection which will also be explored in a number of joint and single-authored articles and a monograph to be written by Dr Mahone. It is hoped that the images will be exhibited in Nairobi and in the UK, and these exhibitions will no doubt spur further debate and discussion of this unique collection of images.**

# A year in the life of an MSc student

by George Karekwaivanane

Having done previous studies focused on African economic history, I wanted a programme that would broaden my understanding of African history and provide a good foundation for doctoral work.

What I found attractive about the MSc in African Studies was its coverage of both historical and contemporary themes on Africa as well as its multidisciplinary nature. After being accepted onto the programme, I wrote to one of the former students in order to get a sense of what to expect. In addition to an overview of the programme, she gave me a friendly warning to expect a significant amount of pressure. True to her warning the programme was very demanding and the work load seemed to increase as the year progressed. As a foreign student what I was apprehensive about though, was the possibility of having to spend a year in a demanding yet impersonal academic environment. I was pleasantly surprised, however, by the friendly nature of both the academic and administrative staff at the African Studies Centre. While adjusting to the new academic environment and learning how to navigate the library network necessarily took a bit of time, I ultimately found studying at Oxford quite conducive.

With regard to the programme itself, the multidisciplinary approach exposed me to various disciplines and their contribution to the study of Africa. However, this meant that the feeling of being challenged and stretched in new directions was a constant experience during the year. The extensive feedback on written work also very helpful and I came away with a sense that the staff fully engaged with my work. In addition, the dissertation element of the course helped to solidify my skills in research design and fieldwork. An aspect that made studying the MSc particularly memorable was the experience of learning with different people from various academic backgrounds. What stands out in my memory was the experience of being constantly struck by the unique insights and abilities of my colleagues. The degree programme was also complemented by the various seminars on Africa which were held in various departments around Oxford. In addition to a broadened understanding of African history the programme also sharpened my ability to think critically, organise and articulate ideas.



Thankfully there was also life outside the lecture theatre and I consider myself fortunate to have been a member of St Antony's college, one of the most international colleges in Oxford. The diversity of student body not only made it easier to settle into Oxford, but living and interacting with such a varied group of people was in itself a valuable experience. The various social functions held in the college also proved to be a welcome distraction from the rigours of academic work. Looking back at the year that flew by, and its enriching personal and academic experiences I look forward to staying on in Oxford for a D.Phil in History.

## African Studies Prizes 2008-2009

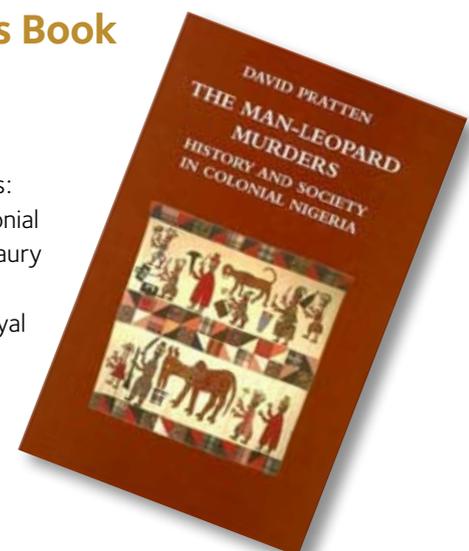
**Kirk-Greene Prize** for Best Overall Performance:  
Aidan Russell

**Terence Ranger Prize** for the Best Dissertation Performance: Janet Remington

**African Studies Prize** for the Most Innovative Dissertation: James Smith

## Dr Pratten Wins Book Prize

Dr David Pratten's book *The Man-Leopard Murders: History and Society in Colonial Nigeria* won the 2007 Amaury Talbot Prize for African Anthropology from the Royal Anthropological Institute.



## Connecting Continents

**Former MSc student (2005–06) Kelly Rosenthal describes a teaching exchange programme between Oxford and Fort Hare.**



*Marbre Stahly-Butts, William Attwell, Tim Gibbs, Kelly Rosenthal and George Karakwaivanane prepare for this year's programme.*

In 2007, while working as a consultant at the Fort Hare Institute for Social and Economic Research (FHISER), I realized that there was a serious need for postgraduate research methods training for graduate students there. Unfortunately, there was a lack of resources and personnel to provide this training, and students were struggling with their degrees as a result.

The Fort-Hare-Oxford Research Methods Project was designed with two main goals in mind: to provide research training to postgraduates at FHISER, and to give Oxford graduates the opportunity to teach in a South African university. The first course ran in 2008, with ten students from a variety of social science backgrounds, and was taught by Tracy Carson, Donald Goodson, Tim Gibbs and myself.

The course draws heavily on our training in the African Studies Centre here in Oxford, and this year it will be taught and facilitated entirely by African Studies MSc Graduates: George Karekwaivanane, William Attwell, Marbre Stahly-Butts and myself.

Last year, the course was generously funded by the Mandela-Rhodes Foundation and the African Studies Centre in Oxford. This year, based on our successes, Fort Hare has invited us back, and provided funding. The African Studies Centre is still a generous supporter of the course, and I received an ASUK fellowship to facilitate it. We are excited about the future of this initiative, and hope to continue to build links between African Studies at Oxford and the University of Fort Hare.

## Opinion: Defending Human-rights in Zimbabwe

**Danielle Connolly (2007–08) talks about returning to Zimbabwe after completing her studies**

After finishing the MSc in African Studies in 2008, I came back to Zimbabwe to find the country going through an intense period of change. The power-sharing agreement that was signed on 15 September 2008, although deeply distasteful to many, was still the first time that the opposition had ever been moved from the periphery into the centre of power.

When I first got back, in order to gain some necessary experience and be able to assess the activity in civil society, I started with a six-month internship at the European Commission. I was responsible for maintaining a violence report and closely followed court cases of over 30 human-rights activists who were detained last year and are being prosecuted on questionable charges of terrorism. It was depressing, but the positive side was that my reports at the Commission made an impact with Brussels and the embassies of member states. It also gave me valuable insight into how the donor community responds to Zimbabwe.

I am now working for Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, in the Institutional Reform and Policy Formulation Unit. We have a very ambitious programme and intend to overhaul the Attorney General's Office, the Judiciary, Police, Prisons, and the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission, by producing policy papers and draft legislation. This is somewhat daunting given that I have no experience with legislation, but I'm learning a lot and reading a 'gazillion' national and international statutes. It's a brilliant organisation to work with as they really are at the forefront of defending human rights in the country.

Harare is also, despite the news reports, a great place to live. There is a vibrant cultural scene, we just had a series of Arts Festivals, and the Chimanimani mountains are so beautiful. The weather is gorgeous, I drive a great green 33-year-old Mercedes Benz, and there is now food in the shops! Finally, I hope more Zimbabweans (and others) will come back to support the transition of their country.



## Opinion: Sudan and the Bashir indictment

**Patrick Mair (MSc 2007-8)**

In February 2009 I began working as an intern with the Sudan Programme of Justice Africa, a research and advocacy organisation directed by Alex de Waal, campaigning for human rights and social justice in Africa. Based in Khartoum, I am helping to prepare a project engaging with civil society groups on issues such as the forthcoming national elections and the threat of renewed conflict over the troubled implementation of the country's Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

My arrival coincided with the International Criminal Court's long-awaited decision to issue an arrest warrant for the President, Omer al-Bashir, on charges of war crimes committed in the course of the conflict in Darfur. The effects of the announcement on life for both foreigners and Sudanese have been stark, as an already paranoid regime resorted to even more restrictive measures. Westerners, tainted by the clamour for regime change and military intervention by activists in far-off countries, routinely face accusations of collaboration with the ICC and plotting to undermine the Presidency.

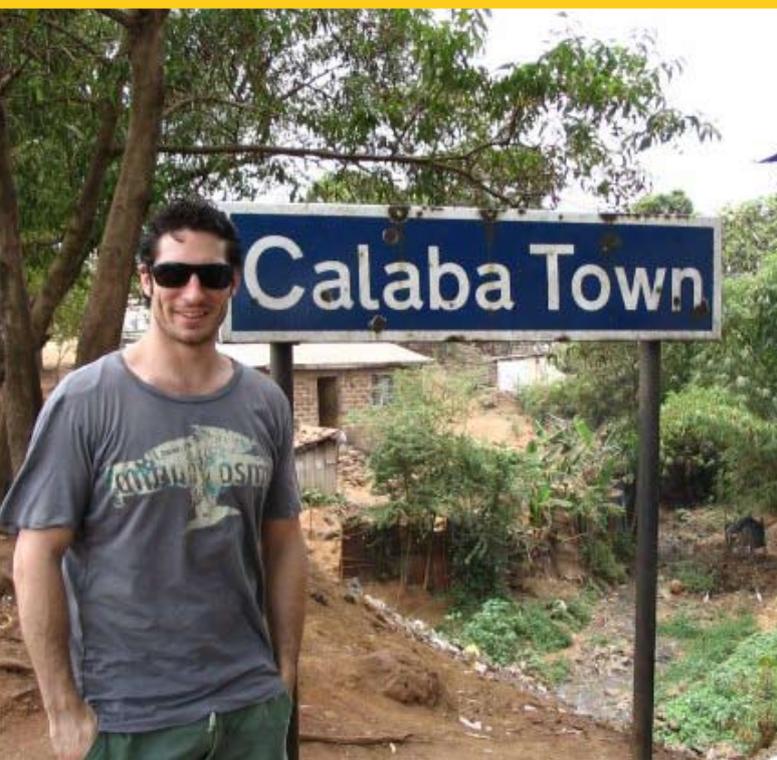
The immediate decision to expel over a dozen international NGOs is indicative of the government's defiant stance. Of course it is not only international organisations and their staff who have suffered as a consequence of the warrant. The mood among Sudanese activists and civil society groups is gloomy: harassment by the authorities has intensified to the extent that many have been forced to suspend or shut down their activities. This is a severe blow given the important fields in which civil society groups

are working, including human rights, gender equality, and, most pertinently at the moment, civic education on electoral practice.

While it may be less sensational in the eyes of the media, the effects of the arrest warrant on civil society organisations are every bit as serious as the expulsion of NGOs. It remains to be seen what the longer term effects of the ICC's decision will be on the Sudanese political scene. For the moment though the outlook does not look promising. Rather than prompting the isolation and demise of al-Bashir, the indictment has seen politicians and people alike rally around their President, who looks more likely than ever to win the elections early next year.

Having studied the conflict issues in Sudan during the MSc as well the wider context of transitional justice, I've found it a fascinating experience to be on the 'frontline', so to speak, of the peace-versus-justice debate. I have learnt that the search for accountability for war crimes cannot be removed from the realities of the political situation. The intentions of the ICC and its supporters are commendable from a moral perspective. Nevertheless, it has become clear that in this case good intentions are not necessarily compatible with the practicalities of Sudanese politics and the complex approach to peace negotiations. This latest twist in the bloody history of conflict in Sudan appears to have done little to hasten the advent of either peace or justice for the people of Darfur.

*For a view of the full debate on Sudan and the indictment of Bashir, go to <http://iccobservers.wordpress.com>, the website run by Dr Phil Clark and the Oxford Transitional Justice Group. There you will find many pieces debating the actions of the ICC, including an interview with Professor David Anderson supporting the indictment.*



## Sierra Leone, inside and out

**Chris Mahony (2006-07) weighs up life as a UN employee compared to life as a NGO researcher.**

Back in 2003, while living in Sierra Leone and doing some consultancy work in Liberia I tried to take a photo from behind some government soldiers who were beating a suspected LURD informer in front of his community. Unfortunately the man was under a tree in the shade and my flash went off. It was one of those moments of extreme nervousness. I was happy enough when they turned their rifles around and used the butt of their guns to teach me a lesson, one I probably needed to learn. You definitely don't learn these lessons when employed by the UN.

*The changing skyline of Meskel Square in Addis Ababa.*



*Emma with one of her interviewees in Addis Ababa*



## Capturing a Changing City

### Emma Lochery (2007-08) on her time researching urban change in Ethiopia

Reshaping a city is extremely complicated. A city is far from a blank slate; new construction and development involves moving people – moving them away from their local markets, health centres, education facilities, and sometimes the social networks that act as their only safety net in times of hardship. Moreover, in the rural outskirts of the city, farmers have been removed from their land; now they have to build a livelihood within the new urban dynamic. Finally, running through the city government's whole urban renewal project is the question of how to target new social services and construction at the poorest and those who need it most – notoriously difficult to do.

These are the questions that brought me to Addis Ababa. During my time here, I am based at the excellent Institute of Ethiopian Studies at the original Siddist Kilo campus of Addis Ababa University –a former palace of Emperor

Haile Selassie that he donated with much fanfare in 1960. I am grateful for this base; arriving in a new country and designing my own research project was not easy. However, after the intensity and structure of the MSc, it has been rewarding to have some time to explore different research directions and plan for a future doctorate.

My current work focuses on social history and the great changes in local markets that I am seeing in the city. I am focusing not on policy but rather how people consider their communities and the change around them. I am interviewing people about their memories of childhood, family life, and education. My goal is to understand some of the micro dynamics, and in particular capture some of the memories of lives being swept away by the influx of concrete high-rises, shopping malls, and extra lanes of traffic. And as my time in Addis Ababa continues to fly by, I have become ever more grateful for a chance to hear stories which so often fall between the cracks in academic analyses and reading lists.

Five years later and I was asked to apply for a job directing the Witness Evaluation Legacy Project at the United Nations' Special Court for Sierra Leone. The role was to assess the feasibility of setting up a witness protection programme in Sierra Leone's justice system and to make a proposal as to how such a programme should be created. Having worked at the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2003 and having conducted my MSc research in Sierra Leone in 2007, I was familiar with the country and particularly with living in Freetown. I was less familiar with living and working for the UN.

In fact, working for the Special Court has taught me important lessons about what we learn by interacting with ordinary folk, and what we miss when we don't. Sadly in 2008 I spent less time with ordinary Sierra Leoneans, getting a sense for their interpretation of the real causes

of their socio-economic discontent. Ordinary people's views were expressed to me through the consultations we had with civil society representatives. One might say they are better placed to represent the public view, particularly on technical issues such as in-court protection provisions, drafting of protection legislation or the feasibility of various protective methods. But I think there is a problem where issues are not put in layman's terms and critiqued by the ordinary person on the street. Despite my experience, it seemed that I was less well-equipped to relate to contemporary issues working with the UN than I was when I lived with a family and travelled to work in a cramped mini-van. And this, of course, is the lesson to remember, that it is imperative for multi-lateral agency personnel not to become insulated from the people they purportedly serve.



# Alumni Updates

## Class of 2005-2006

**John James** ▼ married Therese Fatiga on April 18. As well as working for the BBC he has recently taken on a similar role with Dow Jones Newswires.



**Giulia Muir** has been working at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) in Rome on issues of biodiversity loss and emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases in the context of food security. Her first baby, Lisa Muir-Innamorati, was born in August.

**Sarah Rubin** is in the doctoral program in Anthropology at Case Western Reserve University. Her research project is on emotional distress in motherhood and postnatal depression in Cape Town. She recently won two fellowships-The Society for Psychological Anthropology/Lemelson Graduate Research Fellowship and the Eva L Pancoast Memorial Fellowship – to support her research.

## Class of 2006-2007

**Stephanie Brown** interned with the UNHCR in London last year, organising lots of events for Refugee Week. She has also worked on a project with Lizzi Milligan (also on the MSc in 2006-7) in Uganda for the charity KEP and recently moved to Edinburgh to begin her PhD researching Eritrean refugee journeys, with funding from ESRC.

**Marissa Doran** has accepted a job on the Professional Staff of the US House Foreign Affairs Committee, working on international organizations, State Department oversight, and the Africa portfolio.

**Bukola Kpotie** ▼ and her husband welcomed the happy and safe arrival of their twins: baby girl Omotara Sikaa Morolake Kpotie and baby boy Omotade Zenali Olalekan Kpotie.



**Mathieu Gasparini** moved from Switzerland to Côte d'Ivoire in March and is now settled in Abidjan, working in import-export.

**Katie McKeown** has been working in Kenya on a wildlife film history project with Prof. William Beinart. This autumn she will start a PhD. on Mozambique, based in Minnesota.

**Lizzi Milligan** is currently working in public sector research at Ipsos MORI but is moving to Bristol in the autumn to undertake an ESRC-funded PhD on secondary education in East Africa.

**Justin Pearce** is back in Oxford after spending a great six months in 2008 doing research in Angola for his DPhil in politics, funded by ORISHA.

## Class of 2007-2008

**Nana Antwi** ▼ married Joey Ansong in Cambridge on 27 July 2008. She is doing her DPhil in the Politics Department at Oxford and is looking at the Liberian Civil War of 1989-2003. Nana has recently been awarded the Martin Lynn Scholarship 2009 – an award annually made by the Royal Historical Society for research within Africa.



**Gustavo de Carvalho** finished his contract with Global Witness (London-based NGO) and is taking a job as Analyst in Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding for the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) in South Africa from September.

**Annabel Charnock** has been working in Ghana for the Danquah Institute, a media, research, and policy analysis centre that played a major role in the National Patriotic Party's campaign in the 2008 general elections.

**Steven Costello** has been working since January 2009 for the African Affairs Policy office of the Office of the Secretary of Defence as a Programme Officer focusing on civil-military issues that concern United States Africa Command (AFRICOM).

**Alex Free** has been working for the Oxford-based Fahamu and Pambazuka News as their publications assistant since September 2008.



**Kofi Hope▲** is a DPhil student in Politics at Oxford, investigating North-South partnerships in trans-national activism, and is looking at relationships between Canadian and South African groups since the 1980s. Kofi married Lisa Sookhoo in August.

**Arjun Kohli** is working for the United Nations Environment Programme on a worldwide campaign to raise awareness on climate change.

**Ashley Leech** has just finished, working in Abuja as a Senior Programme Manager for Africare, a US-based NGO that works on health-related issues in Nigeria.

**Emma Leonard** is a Research Administrative Assistant at the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at the University of St Andrews.

**Caroline Mose** is a PhD candidate at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

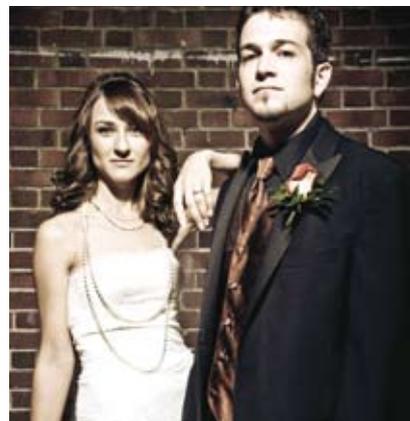
**Alice Motion** has started working with the UK Civil Service. She has just been appointed as a Senior Policy Advisor for the UK Border Agency.

**Eirik Nilsen** is working for a Norwegian software company that runs a professional software engineering school in Accra, Ghana.

**Tunde Oseni** is currently a PhD Candidate and Teaching Assistant in Politics at the University of Exeter working on the Comparative Analysis of Presidential Democracy in Africa.

**Cosanna Preston** has finished a year-long contract in NGO management working at the Oxford Hub, which supports students to get engaged in social and environmental issues. She is hoping to relocate to Nigeria for the autumn.

**Silvana Toska▼** married Jason Blum in Princeton, NJ on September 20th, 2008. She is currently doing a PhD in International Relations at Cornell University, with a focus on the Middle East and Africa.



**Toni Weis** is currently working in the Africa department of the Heinrich Böll Foundation, a political think-tank affiliated with the Greens in Germany. He presented his dissertation (on East Germany's Africa policy) at the European Conference on African Studies in Leipzig in June this year.

**Martin Williams** is starting work in the autumn as a staff economist for the Ghanaian finance ministry for a two-year posting under the Overseas Development Institute Fellowship Scheme.

**Peter Williams** has been working on a UN project as a research associate. He was recently named among the 22 best emerging social entrepreneurs in the World by Echoing Green and received an UnLtd award by the UK Millennium Trust - for his work in social entrepreneurship. Both prizes relate to his work with the ARCHIVE Institute ([www.archiveinstitute.org](http://www.archiveinstitute.org)).

Please contact us with your alumni updates.  
Email: [alumni@africa.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@africa.ox.ac.uk)  
Keep up-to-date with alumni news at:  
[www.africanstudies.ox.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.africanstudies.ox.ac.uk/alumni)



# Class of 2008–09



**Richard Anderson  
(Canada)**

"White men were never seen so far up before": C H Binstend and a year with the West Africa Squadron, 1823-1824



**William Attwell  
(South Africa)**

Food versus Fuel? The Bio-fuels Debate in South Africa



**Sarah Brierley  
(UK)**

Ghana's 'vacillating parliament': Constraints on the Development of Legislatures in Democratic Africa



**James Cockfield  
(UK)**

Alternative Narratives of Urban Masculinity: Johannesburg c1950 - 1970



**Nicolo Gnecci-Ruscone  
(Italy)**

Silence Our Beloved Country: The Media and The Kenyan Elections



**Michelle Hay  
(South Africa)**

The Politics of the Cemetery: Social Change and Resistance in Roodepoort West and Dobsonville, South Africa



**Sophie Iles  
(UK)**

'Young Survivors'. The voices of Kimberley's street children on institutional responses to their lifestyles



**George Karekwaivanane  
(Zimbabwe)**

Legal Encounters: State, Africans and the Law in Rhodesia, 1965 - 1980



**Lianxing Li  
(China)**

African Political Parties from Within - A Case Study of Kano since 1998/99



**Manuel Manrique Gil  
(Spain)**

Ideology and the possibility of African Political Theory: African Socialism to Ubuntu compared



**Rafael Marques de Morais  
(Angola)**

Angola: The Transparency of Looting



**Gillian McFarland  
(UK)**

Waves of change? Youth radio and post-conflict reconstruction in Sierra Leone



**Thomas Mills  
(UK)**

The State of War: The Effect of private military firms on state strength in the Democratic Republic of Congo



**Hashi Mohamed  
(UK)**

Wagalla Massacre: Human Rights Abuses Against Minorities in East Africa and its Consequences



**Hellen Okello  
(UK)**

Land Disputes in Post - Conflict Northern Uganda: Unintended Consequences of Land Reform



**Jake Peters**  
(UK)

Retaliation in Civil Conflict: The Post-Election Violence in Nakuru and Naivasha



**Janet Remington**  
(South Africa)

Solomon Plaatje's Decade of Creative Mobility, 1912 - 1922: The Politics of Travel and Writing in and beyond South Africa



**Yusuf Randeera-Rees**  
(South Africa)

Should Africa Court Foreign Direct Investment? Evidence from the Nigerian Stock Exchange



**Aidan Russell**  
(UK)

Home, Music and Memory for the Congolese in Kampala



**Dominique Schafer**  
(South Africa)

Problematizing conventional perceptions of FGC: Towards a more insightful discourse and eradication strategy in Sierra Leone



**Andrea Scheibler**  
(UK)

Unequal Purchase: Commodities, Consumption and Power in Late Colonial Zanzibar



**Lena Siemon**  
(Germany)

Political Empowerment of Women in Cape Verde



**James Smith**  
(UK)

The politics of FGC in Somaliland: grassroots activism, government reluctance and international interference



**Marbre Stahly-Butts**  
(US)

Remembering Gukurahundi through the eyes of Yvonne Vera: Literature as a tool of history and a weapon against 'patriotic history' in Zimbabwe



**Amanda Stone**  
(US)

Facing Reality: HIV/AIDS Education in Ugandan Secondary Schools



**Takayuki Uchiyama**  
(Japan)

Development Assistance to State Capacity Building: The Experience in Malawi



**Samuel Unom**  
(Nigeria)

Bootstraps or Booby Traps: Does Microfinance Lift or leave the Poor? Evidence from Lugbe, Nigeria



**Hannah Waddilove**  
(UK)

The 'Bad Girls' of Zambia? Navigating Identities of Urban Prostitution Beyond Representations



**Victoria Warr**  
(UK)

Female Empowerment in Zimbabwe: Hopelessly reaching for the sky or genuine success story?



**Peter Wright**  
(UK)

Examine the progress of transformation in South African rugby since unification in 1991; and what are the prospects for the future?

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