



2008

NEWSLETTER & YEAR BOOK



AFRICAN STUDIES CENTRE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



A Word From The Director

As our latest cohort of students on the MSc take their degrees, we have time now to reflect upon the achievements of the year. It has been a busy twelve months, to say the least. Last September we moved into our wonderful new building at 92 Woodstock Road. Our splendidly efficient administrators, Wanja Knighton and Sabrina Souza, took charge of the move and made sure that everything was up and running in time for the arrival of our students in the first week of October.

To mark our arrival in the building, we named the new seminar room for Dr Anthony Kirk-Greene, and the reading room for Professor Terence Ranger, thus honouring Oxford's most senior and much-respected scholars of Africa. We are delighted that both have been able to visit the Centre from time to time during the year. With six academic staff occupying offices in the building, a dozen senior researchers sharing the five rooms on the top floor, and more than 40 MSc students, the Centre is a hive of industry and energy on every weekday during term.

Our core teaching staff of Anderson, Beinart, Pratten, Cheeseman and Neveu-Kringelbach was joined this year by Dr Ami Shah, as Departmental Lecturer (DL). Ami taught on both core courses, and played a very prominent role in supervising student dissertations. She made a vital and rich contribution to the life of the Centre, and we now wish her well as she departs to take up a research position at Duke University. During the year we also created a new, 5-year DL, in conjunction with St Anne's College and the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology. We are delighted that this post, the Evans Pritchard Departmental Lectureship in African Anthropology, is to be filled from October by Dr Helene Neveu-Kringelbach. We therefore needed to replace Helene as Departmental Lecturer in African Studies, and were pleased to appoint Dr Matteo Rizzo, who will take up the post of Atiku Abubakar Research Fellowship at St Antony's College in August and will be with us for two academic years.

It has also been an exciting year for academic visitors to the Centre, although I only have space here to mention a few by name. In Michaelmas we were joined by an Oppenheimer Scholar, Jonny Steinberg, the South African writer. As a Rhodes Scholar at Balliol, Jonny admitted that in his time at Oxford he never ventured further north than the Lamb & Flag. So, we made the most of his first visit to North Oxford, and as well as giving seminars Jonny participated in a book club with our students to discuss his prize-winning work *Midlands*. Another Oppenheimer Scholar to join us was Dr Mucha Musemwa, who was researching the history of social movements in Zimbabwe. Mucha returned to the University of the Witwatersrand at the end of Trinity to take up a Lectureship in History. Another historian to spend Hilary Term in Oxford was Dr Chima Korie, who joined us on a British Academy Visiting Scholarship. Chima diligently used his time in Oxford to work on his book on Nigerian writings from the 1940s. Our North American Visiting Fellow for 2008 was Professor Jean Comaroff, from the University of Chicago, who was with us for Trinity Term and also gave our Annual Lecture. Aside from the tremendous success of the lecture, Professor Comaroff presented a sparkling seminar to our graduate students and very generously gave her time to advise many of our MSc students.



While the Centre is the focus of the MSc programme, the research activity in African Studies has expanded greatly over the past year. Dr Chris Low (ESRC Fellow) and Dr Kate Meagher (British Academy Research Fellow) continued their work with us. We are saying goodbye to Dr Meagher at the end of the summer, as her award comes to an end, but we are delighted that she has secured a Lectureship in Development Studies at the LSE from September. We wish her every success in this new post. Dr Hugh Macmillan has also joined us this year, working with Professor Beinart on a Leverhulme-funded project to investigate the history of the ANC in exile during the liberation struggle. The AHRC-funded project on the Omo Valley (Ethiopia), led by Professor Anderson, commenced in July 2007, and has brought three researchers to the Centre – Dr David Turton, Dr Marco Bassi, and Dr Graciela Gil-Romera. This project will run until the summer of 2010. In addition, John Githongo, who continues to work with the Centre, helped to establish a research project in collaboration with the African Parliamentary Network Against Corruption. This project was led by Dr Nic Cheeseman, employing Dr Joanne Davies as Research Officer, and two of our MSc graduates, Katie McKeown and Charlotte Cross, as Research Assistants. The report, on ‘Parliamentarians and corruption in Africa’, was completed in June.

It has been an eventful year in other ways, too. In February, Wanja Knighton took maternity leave, being replaced by Rosaline Monk as our administrator. Rosaline has thrown herself into the work of the Centre with tremendous enthusiasm, carrying on in Wanja’s fine tradition. Wanja’s son, Rosh Murimi, was born on 29 February.

Almost before the 42 MSc students who completed their degrees in June have departed from Oxford, we now find ourselves making preparations for the new cohort who will arrive in October. Thanks to David Pratten’s dedicated work as Director of Graduate Studies, we look forward to welcoming another very strong group of 31 or so students for October 2008 – our fourth MSc intake. Who knows the new challenges that lie ahead?

Professor David Anderson
Director, African Studies Centre



Field Notes From Northern Uganda

Lydia Kemunto Bosire won the prize for the most innovative dissertation in the MSc class of 2008. Here Lydia describes how she went about conducting fieldwork on a controversial subject and in a challenging location.

My research focused on the role of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Juba Peace Process for Northern Uganda. I conducted fieldwork in Uganda in December 2007 and March 2008. My dissertation was informed by 35 interviews with those in the government of Uganda making decisions about Juba, among them the Minister of the Interior, LRA delegates to the Juba process, the Spokesperson of the Ugandan Army, Museveni's Special Advisor for Northern Uganda, the Head of the Office of the UN Special Envoy to LRA-affected areas, and Museveni's Private Secretary and Head of Institutions and Political Affairs. My fieldwork also included two meetings which I helped to organize in my capacity as the co-convenor for Oxford Transitional Justice Research: the first meeting brought together government, LRA, and other stakeholders from the Juba Peace Process in March 2008 in Kampala. The second was a small group discussion held in Oxford with the Prosecutor of the ICC in May 2008.

A number of factors played an important role in the success of the research. I drew a great deal on 'gatekeepers' who were able to make important first introductions to my interviewees. I found it invaluable to be patient and flexible in order to take advantage of opportunities and meet inevitable challenges. Finally, I had to contend with my positionality both as a Kenyan, a woman, and an Oxford student, among other identities. I found it crucial to be aware of how my identities determined whether my interviewees conferred me with insider or outsider status, which in turn affected the kind of information they would be ready to share with me. My fieldwork was crucial in helping me develop my understanding of the role played by the ICC, which I concluded had contributed to the Juba process to the extent that it became a tool appropriated by the Government of Uganda and used for non-justice related political ends.



Luis Moreno Ocampo, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court addresses the Sheldonian
(Credit: Lydia Bosire)

Women and War in Sierra Leone

Zoe Marks was a joint winner of the Kirk-Greene prize for the best overall performance (with Martin Williams) in the MSc class of 2008. Here she explains some of the main challenges she faced when conducting fieldwork in Sierra Leone.

In our MSc research design seminar, Professor David Anderson applauded my dissertation topic, 'Women in the War Zone,' but warned that it sounded more like a DPhil proposal. I was alarmed at the comparison to a three-year project, with just three months remaining for field-research, writing, and completing my 15000 words. Yet, within a few weeks I was landing at Lungi airport, an ancient, Muammar Qaddafi-donated ferry ride away from Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital, to begin four weeks of research on female combatants in the Revolutionary United Front. After paring down my ambitions, my sincere parting words to my supervisor were, 'I'll be happy if I find one woman who's willing to talk to me!' I had heard, and fully expected that former-RUF women were not keen to relive their traumatic and stigmatised pasts.



United by circumstance, women formerly with the RUF now depend on each other for friendship and support (photo deliberately cropped to maintain anonymity)
(Credit: Zoe Marks)

The fact that I returned with two notebooks full of 50 ex-combatant interviews is just the epilogue, the dissertation a mere book jacket, to the four weeks, and many friendships, that found me in a time and place in which ethical quandaries are normalised. The lessons learned begin with Krio greetings and a well-tied *lappa* (a piece of fabric-cum-skirt, which won me shouts of, '*Isatu tie lappa!*' in the crowded markets), and end with frying plantains in Oxford to quell my 'homesickness'. The heat-stoked home I found was no greeting card, however. The bullet-riddled buildings I expected to line the streets were mostly levelled, but war-torn spirits were visible in the vacant faces and haunted glances one could catch on *poda-poda* rides and in between silences. Back in England, without the comfort of Sierra Leone and strength of survivors around me, my sense of reality was in temporary disarray, until eventually, a dissertation emerged that I thought my informants could be proud of. And Professor Anderson was right: it did turn out to be the makings of a DPhil — after all, I promised many women that I would come back to meet their friends.



Environmental History in Ethiopia

David Turton is a Senior Research Fellow and has been working on a project on the environmental history of the Lower Omo Valley, southwestern Ethiopia with David Anderson, Marco Bassi, and Graciela Gil-Romera, at the African Studies Centre. Here Dr Turton discusses some of the highlights of his recent research.

During the last forty years I have been working as an anthropologist amongst one of the Omo Valley groups, the Mursi. It has become increasingly obvious to me over this time that most of the questions I am interested in cannot be answered without adopting a regional perspective and without the help of historical and ecological skills I do not possess. I am delighted, therefore, to be working now, for the first time, with a team of specialists from three different disciplines, with a common research objective and with a focus on the Lower Omo as a region. So far, it has been an exhilarating ride!

Another highlight of my work this year has been the completion of a Mursi-English-Amharic dictionary, with Moges Yigezu of the Department of Linguistics at Addis Ababa University and Ulisarali Ulibwi from Mursiland. Until very recently Mursi has been an entirely oral culture and creating the first ever dictionary of the language was a sobering experience. One quickly became aware of the incipient violence one was doing to the language by the lexical and semantic ‘pinning down’ of words and meanings that is required by any dictionary.

This year also saw the completion of a project to set up a Mursi website, ‘Mursi Online’ (www.mursi.org). As the academic year ended, it was a great pleasure to welcome to Oxford two visitors from Mursiland, Ulisarali Ulibwi and Ulirege Rege, who came to learn how to update the website with new content. Their visit, the first by any Mursi to Europe, has been a memorable experience for us all.



Ulisarali Ulibwi and Ulirege Rege with a prize bull at the Royal Agricultural Show, near Warwick, July 2008
(Credit: David Turton)

Policy Impact!

Having successfully negotiated the African Studies MSc, Julianne Parker found that her dissertation research had real policy implications. Here she explains how her dissertation work came to the attention of a wider audience.

After completing the MSc, I moved to Washington DC where I was able to meet with a fistula policy adviser at USAID regarding the research I did for my dissertation on obstetric fistula in Niger. She received my research with incredible enthusiasm and further sent the dissertation to the most prominent fistula policy-makers in Washington, New York, and Geneva. I was subsequently hired by the UNFPA as a consultant on a large-scale 8-country demographic study of fistula administered through Johns Hopkins University. The study is headed by the most prominent fistula experts in both the academic and medical worlds, and is intended to create the first-ever clinical classification of obstetric fistula. My dissertation is now also under review for publication in the *International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, and should hopefully be published sometime next year.



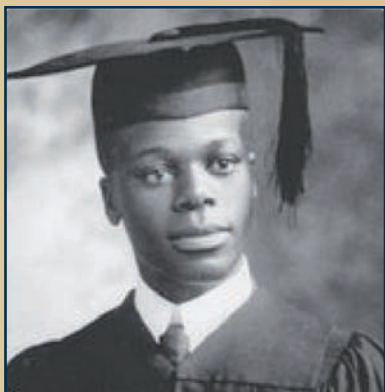
Julianne during fieldwork
(Credit: Julianne Parker)



Africans at Oxford

Africans may be a small minority among the Oxford student body, but the university has over the past century nurtured some of Africa's most prominent people. Here, former MSc student and current D.Phil candidate Justin Pearce traces the history of Africans at Oxford by looking at the famous men – and one woman – who have studied here.

John Kufuor knew he wanted to go to Oxford. In 1959, when the young Ghanaian was studying for his bar examinations in London, his family received a visit from Professor Kofi Abrefa Busia, who two decades earlier had been the first African student to enrol at University College in Oxford. Kufuor told Busia, “If your tutor is still alive and teaching at Oxford then he would be the one I would want to study under.”¹



Pixley ka Isaka Seme
(Credit: Columbia University Archives)

So it was that Kufuor ended up being invited for an interview with Professor KC Wheare, who two decades earlier had been Busia's tutor. Where by this time was rector of Exeter, and it was there that Kufuor enrolled in 1961. Neither Busia – at that point exiled in the Netherlands – nor Kufuor could have known at the time that they would both go on to head the Ghanaian government. Busia returned home after the coup against Kwame Nkrumah in 1966, and became prime minister once civilian rule was restored in 1969. The president at the time was another Oxford graduate: Edward Afuko Addo had read law at St Peter's in the 1930s.

Busia, however, spent only a few years as prime minister before being deposed in a further coup. Kufuor's arrival in the president's office in Accra in 2000 was the first time in the country's 43-year history that power had changed hands by peaceful means.

Nigeria's most famous Oxford graduate, by contrast, is associated with a particularly violent period in that country's history. Emeka Ojukwu, the Nigerian general who led the short-lived secession of Biafra from Nigeria in the late 1960s, had studied at Lincoln College from 1952 to 1955. That same era of burgeoning African nationalism also brought a Kenyan trade unionist, Tom Mboya, to Ruskin College in Oxford, on a scholarship provided by Britain's Trade Unions Council. Mboya was later to serve in Kenya's first independent government.

Botswana has been served by three presidents, two of whom studied at Oxford. Founding President Seretse Khama spent a year at Balliol in 1945, and current President Festus Mogae is an economics graduate from University College.

One of South Africa's early nationalists was also one of the first Africans to study at Oxford. Pixley ka Isaka Seme, who founded the ANC in the early 20th century, read law at Jesus College and practised at the bar in London for a year before returning to South Africa in 1910. While in London he made contact with others, black and white, who were campaigning against racially discriminatory provisions in the Act of Union that consolidated South Africa within its present borders.²

Some two decades later, Bram Fischer's first impression of Oxford was a place that “was bleak and cold, and I felt just as if I were going to prison”.³ Oxford nevertheless broadened the young man's horizons, and the turbulent political atmosphere of 1930s Europe helped to shape him into one of the most prominent Afrikaner dissidents of the century. As a lawyer, Fischer was later to defend Nelson Mandela during two political trials; his own anti-apartheid activity led to his arrest and life imprisonment in 1966.

Piet Koornhof, on the other hand, left Oxford and took up a position in the heart of the Afrikaner nationalist political establishment, becoming a key minister in PW Botha's government in the 1970s and 1980s. After apartheid ended with the first all-race elections of 1994, Frene Ginwala, who had studied law at Oxford in the 1950s, became speaker of the new parliament. Ginwala, incidentally, is one of the few well-known African women to have been educated at Oxford.



It is hardly surprising that Oxonians are among Africa's leading thinkers and academics. Ali Mazrui, one of Africa's most noted writers on African and world politics, did his DPhil at Nuffield. He is currently chancellor of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in Kenya.

Loyiso Nongxa, currently vice-chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa, was South Africa's first black Rhodes scholar when he arrived at Oxford in 1978. He received his DPhil in 1982. Another South African Rhodes scholar, Edwin Cameron, is best known first for his work as a human rights lawyer who championed the rights of people with HIV, and latterly as a Supreme Court judge who became South Africa's first public office-bearer to declare that he was living with Aids.

Aaron Sloman, born in what is now Zimbabwe, studied mathematics and physics in South Africa before coming to Oxford on a Rhodes scholarship and completing a DPhil in philosophy in 1962. He went on to become a pioneering thinker in the area of artificial intelligence. From a later generation of scholars, another Oxford-trained scientist who has gone on to prominence is Zimbabwean Arthur Mutambara, a Rhodes scholar at Merton in 1991. He went on to establish a career in robotics in the United States, but has become widely known in recent years as a politician, leading one faction of Zimbabwe's main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change.



John Kufuor during his talk to Rhodes House
(Credit: Keon West)

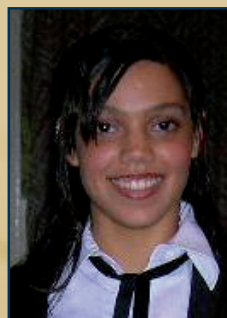
Today, the University of Oxford is one of the world's leading centres for the study of Africa. The African Studies Centre acts as a focal point for graduate level work and faculty research on Africa, organizing conferences and seminars on topical issues. Alongside vibrant doctoral programmes, the Centre runs an MSc in African Studies, inaugurated in 2006, which is already recognised as Europe's most prestigious and successful training programme in its field. Applications from students from Africa are welcomed, and the Centre is proud of the diversity of students accepted to the MSc course. Several scholarships exist which are open to overseas applicants, and the African Studies Centre is currently working hard to secure funding to enable more African scholars to study in Oxford and to continue the rich and important relationship between Africa and Oxford.

1 Ivor Agyeman-Duah, *Between Faith and History: A Biography of J.A. Kufuor*. Africa World Press, 2003.

2 Richard Rive and Tim Couzens, *Seme, the Founder of the ANC*. Skotaville, Johannesburg 1991.

3 Martin Meredith, *Fischer's Choice: A Life of Bram Fischer*. Jonathan Ball, Johannesburg 2002.

MSc Students, 2007-2008



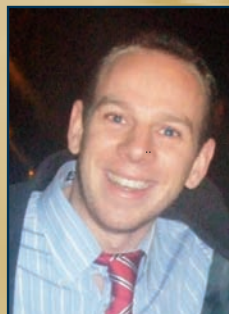
Janie Whitlock
BA Anthropology
(Washington State)
Digging for Prosperity: Mining and
Labour Practices in Chambishi,
Zambia.



Martin Williams
BA Economics (Williams)
The Gold Standard of Governance:
Mining, Decentralization, and
Reconfigurations of State Power in
Senegal.



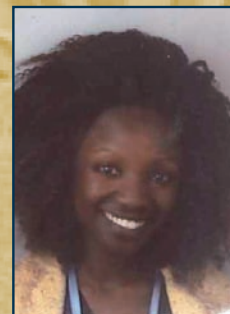
Rachel Adams
BA Social Anthropology, Media and
Writing (Cape Town) Traversing Marginal
Terrain? Student Narratives and the
Challenge of Race and Transformation at
the University of Cape Town.



Malcolm Anderson
MA International Relations
(St Andrews)
The Development of Athletics in
1950s Kenya: Order or Leisure?



Nana Antwi,
LL.M International Legal Studies
(Washington)
Reconstructing narratives of War.
A social history of the Liberian Civil War.



Lydia Bosire
MA Public Administration (Cornell)
Appropriated Justice Soft Power, Hard
Politics and the International Criminal
Court in the Juba Peace Process for
Northern Uganda.



Annabel Charnock
BA Modern History and Politics
(Oxford)
The role of chiefs since Ghana's
return to multi-party democracy
in 1992.



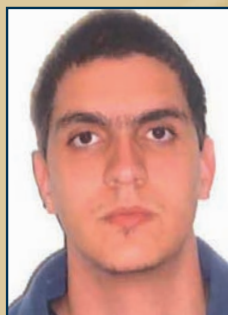
Kupela Clarke
BSc Medical Biochemistry
(Cape Town)
Denying Solutions: Analysing the
use of HIV/AIDS Herbal Remedies
in Zambia. A case study approach.



Danielle Connolly
BA Politics & Study of Religion
(SOAS)
The Postcolonial re-invention of
White Zimbabwean Identities.



Stephen Costello
BA International Affairs
(New School)
Stocked Arsenal and Dirt Roads:
Tanzanian Military Confrontations
in Changing the Discourse of
Humanitarian Intervention.



Gustavo de Carvalho
BA International Relations
(Brasilia)
The politics of 're-hatting' peace
operations in Africa: the case of
Burundi.



Ngozi Edeagu
BA History (Nigeria)
The organization and activities of
Igbo Hometown Associations
in Lagos.



Alex Free
BA Comparative American Studies
(Warwick)
Challenges for the expansion of
primary education: a case study
from rural northern Cameroon.



John Gibbons
BA Geography (Oxford)
Post-apartheid's environmental toll:
The dilemmas of coal for South
Africa, with special reference to
Eskom.

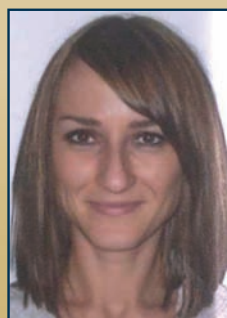




Peter Williams
MSc Architecture (Columbia)
The Temporal Landscapes of HIV/
AIDS in South Africa: Settlement,
Housing and Health in Durban.



Cosanna Preston
BA Political Science (Alberta)
Bringing the Public Back In: A Critique of
the Nigerian Anti-Corruption Agencies.



Silvana Toska
MA Arab Studies (Georgetown)
"Identity Conditionality" of Aid:
Arab Aid and Investment in Sudan.



Toni Weis
MA International Relations
(Sciences Po/FU Berlin)
Shaping the Discourse on Africa:
The Concept of 'Solidarity' in East
German Relations with SWAPO.



Jamie Gruffydd-Jones
BA Philosophy and Psychology
(Oxford)
Buying Back the past:
Contradictions in New Labour
policy to land reform in Zimbabwe.



Anne Heffernan
BA History and English
(Georgetown)
The Ralushai Commission and a
South African Witch-hunt in Legal
and Historical Perspective.



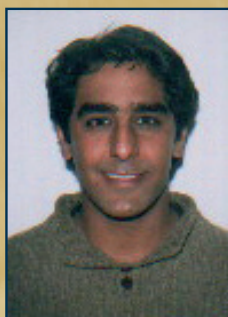
Kofi Hope
BA Political Science (Toronto)
Radical Rural Women, a Church
and an Empire: A trans-national
ethnography of two NGOs working
in Zambia.



Wambui Kamiru
BA Development Studies (Maryland)
Memorialising the Kimathi Family.



Diana Kiluta
BSc International Securities & Investment
Banking (Reading)
Kenya's policy process since 2002. The dawning
of a new era?



Arjun Kohli
MA Religious Studies (Edinburgh)
Feeling Kenyan: Indian Migrant
and National Identities in Kenya,
1890-1970.



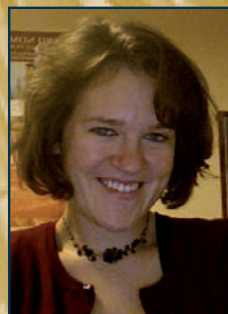
Ashley Leech
B.A. Political Science/English
Literature (Pennsylvania)
Writing Gender: Representations
of Women in Margery Perham's
Personal Papers.



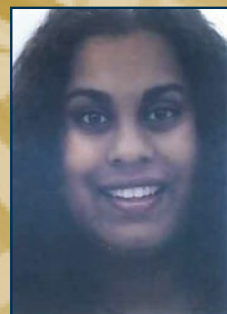
Emma Leonard
MA International Relations
(St Andrews)
"The most forgotten conflict in the
world". Donor policy towards the
conflict in northern Uganda from
1986 to 2006.



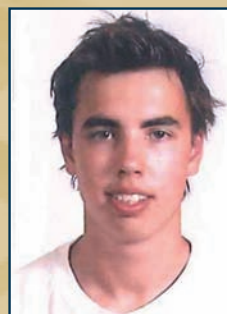
Yanfu Liu
BA English literature (Shandong)
A Step Forward? A review of the
Ethiopian Democratization Process.



Emma Lochery
BA Philosophy, Politics, and
Economics (Oxford)
When Citizens are Rendered
Stateless: the Kenyan State's Somali
Screening Exercise.



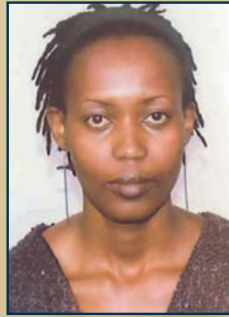
Lourdes Madigasekera
MSc Ethnicity & Multiculturalism
(Bristol)
Debating 'Race', Identity and
Politics in the Western Cape:
The Cape Muslims and the 1994
Provincial Election.



Patrick Mair
BA Modern History (Oxford)
The Hostage Crisis of May 2000: An
Analysis of the UN Mission in Sierra
Leone.



Anaïs Menard
MSc Political Science
(Sciences Po)
Voicing Grievances: The continuous political exclusion of youth in Sierra Leone.



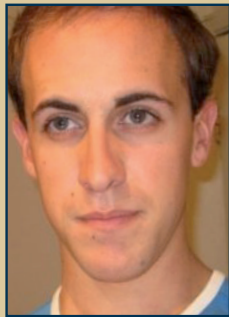
Caroline Mose
BA Development (Moi)
Skuodi Ya Watu Kumi na Mbili: The Discourses, Negotiation and Art in Underground Hip-hop in Nairobi, Kenya.



Zoe Marks
BA Government, African American Studies (Georgetown)
Women in the War Zone: Roles and Representations of Female Combatants in Sierra Leone.



Paul McWilliams
BA History (Stirling)
Tapping a Nation's Resources: Anglo American and Black Economic Empowerment in South Africa.



Luke Norris
MSc Global Governance and Diplomacy (Oxford)
Reframing the Myth of Wild Africa: Representations of Africa and Africans in Wildlife Films about the Adamsons.



Babatunde Oseni
BSc Political Science (Ibadan)
'The Godfather', Party Politics and Democracy in Ibadan, South-Western Nigeria.



Alice Motion
BA Modern History (Oxford)
The human lions of Singida: murder and resistance in colonial Tanganyika.



Jessica Reveri
BA History from Yale (2004)
Harvesting Farmers' Leadership: The People's Land Management and Ecosystem Conservation (PLEC) Project and a Participatory Approach to Biodiversity Conservation in Southern Ghana.



Eirik Nilsen
BA International Relations (Oslo)
'What did you learn in school today? The development of Tanzania's education system'.



Yvette Stephens
BA Geography (Liverpool)
The Definition of Success? The British Military Intervention in Sierra Leone.



Julianne Parker
BA Art History (Brigham)
Social Practices and Public Health Initiatives Surrounding Fistula among the Hausa in Niger.

Thomas Evans
BA Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (Oxford)
Informal Water Providing Enterprises as Coping Mechanisms: The Case of Dar es Salaam.

Awards

In the 2007-2008 academic year the following prizes were awarded to students completing the MSc in African Studies.

Kirk-Greene Prize: Martin Williams & Zoe Marks

Terence Ranger Prize: Julianne Parker

Most Innovative Dissertation Prize: Lydiah Bosire



Recent publications by African Studies Centre staff



David Anderson, Daniel Branch, and Nic Cheeseman ed.
Election Fever: Kenya's crisis
Journal of Eastern African Studies Special Issue, 2, 2008

William Beinart

Transhumance, Animal Diseases and Environment in the Cape, South Africa
South African Historical Journal, 58, 2007



Hélène Neveu Kringelbach

Le poids du succès : construction du corps, danse et carrière à Dakar
Politique Africaine, 107, 2008

Hélène Neveu Kringelbach

Cool play: emotionality in dance as a resource in Senegalese urban women's associations

In H. Wulff, ed. *The Emotions: A Cultural Reader*. Oxford: Berg, 2008.



David Pratten

The Politics Of Protection: Perspectives On Vigilantism In Nigeria
Africa, 78, 2008



African Studies Centre staff were also involved in a wide range of media activities over the last year. David Anderson and Nic Cheeseman appeared on TV and radio to discuss the crises in Kenya and Zimbabwe, while William Beinart was a consultant for 'South Africa Revealed', a 2 hour documentary screened on the Discovery Chanel.



Alumni Updates

Keep in touch with everyone at African Studies by sending your alumni updates to alumni@africa.ox.ac.uk

Class of 2005

Maja Bovcon is continuing her studies as a DPhil student at the Politics Department, University of Oxford. Over the last academic year, she has carried out fieldwork in France and Côte d'Ivoire as an integral part of her doctorate research. Since her return from Abidjan at the end of March, she has been organizing material from the fieldwork and writing up her thesis.

Meghan Treleaven has returned to teaching primary school. She is teaching year seven in maths and science at the American School in London for next year.

Rudie Yordanov is currently studying for a DPhil under AHRC sponsorship, investigating the Soviet Union's involvement in Somalia and Ethiopia in the 1960s and the 1970s.

Graham Harvey is still in the deep bowls of London's private banking crowd. Work has sent him to almost every continent except the one he knows anything about – Africa! Rowing remains a consuming hobby - with most weekends spent coaching in Putney.

Kelly Rosenthal is reading for a DPhil in Social Anthropology on South African political culture and practice, and also co-ordinating a teaching exchange between the Universities of Fort Hare and Oxford, with help from the African Studies Centre!

Kim Chakanesta is currently a Senior Researcher at a risk consultancy firm in London.

John James is working as the BBC correspondent in Ivory Coast. He has recently helped to provide a home for former classmate Maja Bovcon during her D.Phil fieldwork in Abidjan.

Class of 2006

Bukola Kpotie has been awarded a fully funded place on a PhD programme at the University of Texas, Austin.

Mathieu Gasparini is still working on his PhD, looking at "cocoa politics" in Côte d'Ivoire.

Brennan Scott is about to start studying for a PhD in African History at the University of Wisconsin - Madison.

Christopher Mahony has been working for the UN on justice sector reform in Sierra Leone as part of the legacy of the Special Court for Sierra Leone for the last 4 months. He is now back in New Zealand playing professional rugby for Auckland and will be back in Oxford to continue his DPhil in politics in October.

Ariana Berengaut is researching genocide for the Committee on Conscience at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. Prior to joining the Museum, Ariana worked on Barack Obama's presidential primary campaign as a member of the speechwriting team.

Doug Abbott has been spending the past year playing rugby in Queensland, Australia and working as a renderer on building sites! Doug is returning to the U.K in August to commence a graduate position at Schroders the Investment Management Firm.

Elizabeth Milligan is a researcher for Ipsos MORI, conducting both quantitative and qualitative research about a range of political and social issues. In her spare time, she is involved with a charity called Kenya Education Partnerships (branch in Oxford) and will soon be spending 3 weeks in Uganda as a researcher.

Justin Pearce enrolled for a DPhil in Politics at Oxford after completing the MSc in African Studies, and is currently conducting field research on the relationship between military control and political identities in the Angolan civil war.

Salman Alibhai is currently working as a Program Officer for an international development NGO called the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). Salman is based in Ottawa, Canada, and manages a number of cross-sectoral development projects, in health, education, and rural development across Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Robtel Pailey is special assistant for communications to the President of the Republic of Liberia, H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. She is responsible for the content and design of publications, managing the President's broadcast/recording studio, managing the Presidential website (www.emansion.gov.lr), coordinating efforts to develop a Diaspora Engagement Strategy for government, and some speech-writing, among other duties.

Jacob McKnight has been working as a research consultant at Said Business School as part of a project looking at improving vaccination rates in Ethiopia for the last year. He will continue this work as a DPhil student from October 2008.

Marissa Doran is currently Director of Strategy for ActBlue, the United States' largest source of funds for Democrats, and serving on the Steering Committee for the Obama Campaign.

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