



UNIVERSITY OF  
OXFORD

# African Studies Centre

2011 Newsletter



# Opening ceremony

The highlight of the 2010-11 academic calendar for us was the formal opening of the African Studies Centre's refurbished building on Sunday, 13 February by Mr Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary-General (1997-2006). We were also honoured to be joined by the University's Vice-chancellor, Professor Andrew Hamilton, and the former president of Ghana, Mr John Kufuor, as our distinguished guests at the small ceremony held in the Centre's new home at 13 Bevington Road.

Throughout his distinguished career in international affairs Mr Annan demonstrated a profound commitment to addressing Africa's most intractable challenges – hunger and human rights, accountability and development, insecurity and inequality. As Secretary-General of the United Nations he brought a strong moral imperative to democratic transition, conflict resolution, peace-building and to the international community's response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Indeed, it was for 'reinvigorating' the work of the United Nations, that Mr Annan was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001. Through the Kofi Annan Foundation he continues to promote good governance and security in Africa, and remains engaged in the peace process he brokered in Kenya, for example, in the wake of the post-election violence two years ago.

**With our new teaching facilities, and with new opportunities to promote scholarship and leadership in Africa we can be optimistic that the African Studies Centre is well-prepared to face its future challenges. As we do so we will look back on Mr Annan's visit and be reminded and inspired by the values and achievements that he represents.**

During the opening Mr Annan said that the African Studies Centre is 'a little corner of Africa' where scholars gather to develop skills. He stressed the importance of taking these skills back to the African continent.

A new scholarship initiative for African students was announced during the opening ceremony. The Eni Scholars Programme enables students from Angola, Nigeria and Ghana to take up postgraduate courses at St Antony's College from October 2011. The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, Professor Andrew Hamilton, said: 'I am very grateful to Eni for creating this scholarship programme with St Antony's. Oxford has a proud tradition of undertaking scholarship on Africa, and encouraging scholars from Africa.'

During the ceremony Mr Annan was presented with a collection of the books published by Oxford's Africanists, which were donated to the library of the University of Ghana where Mr Annan is Chancellor. Later in the day Mr Annan gave a lecture on 'The Future of Africa' to celebrate the lead up to the 700th anniversary of Exeter College at the Sheldonian Theatre.



*Left to Right: Senyo Dotsey, Eugene Adogla, Kofi Annan, Nelson Oppong, Khumisho Moguerane and Kingwa Kamencu.  
(Photo courtesy of Rob Judges)*



# Director's Report

This year was marked by the formal opening of the centre, of course, but also by efforts to develop the centre as the leading international institute for teaching and research in African Studies. New posts, research initiatives and scholarship opportunities have all figured prominently in this agenda.

## Dr David Pratten

Next year will see a number of personnel changes at the centre. After five years of dedicated teaching on the MSc Hélène Neveu-Kringelbach will be switching roles into research to join the Oxford Diasporas Programme. She will still be based at the centre and will be undertaking anthropological fieldwork on mixed Senegalese-French families in Paris. Hélène's role as lecturer in African anthropology will be taken up by Julie Archambault who joins us from the London School of Economics. Julie also works on aspects of relatedness. Her research focuses on the impact of mobile phone technology on social relations in Mozambique. Jonny Steinberg, the award winning author on policing and politics in post-apartheid South Africa, will also be joining us next year as a departmental lecturer and will be developing research initiatives with the Centre for Criminology.

It has been a year of transition in the administrative office too. Wanja Knighton, our centre administrator, was ably assisted during the year by Sarah Forrest, Sabrina Souza, Kingwa Kamencu and our new permanent administrative secretary Marita Gillespie.

On the research front our faculty's success with research funding goes from strength to strength. Nic Cheeseman, along with colleagues in SIAS, has been awarded an ESRC grant to work on the comparative analysis of presidential-legislative relations in Africa and elsewhere. Dave Anderson has started a new project with colleagues at Warwick University funded by the AHRC. Called 'Empires Loyalists: Histories of Rebellion and Collaboration in the British Empire', the project examines the politics of collaboration with British imperialism from the American war of independence to the last wars of decolonisation. We have welcomed Neil Carrier, soon to be joined by Hélène Neveu-Kringelbach, as part of the Oxford Diasporas Programme funded by the Leverhulme Trust. Neil's research will provide a timely study of Eastleigh, the



*Left to Right: Andrew Hamilton (Oxford University's Vice-Chancellor), John Kufuor (Former President of Ghana), Kofi Annan (Former UN Secretary-General) and Dr David Pratten (Director of the African Studies Centre). (Photo courtesy of Rob Judges)*

predominantly Somali suburb of Nairobi. And we are soon to be joined by Gregory Deacon who will be working on Pentecostal churches in Kenya under his British Academy post-doctoral fellowship.

Scholarship funding is becoming increasingly important for us as we try to recruit the very best students to our graduate programmes and as the costs of higher education increase. We have been very fortunate this year in being able to secure nearly £200,000 in funding from the Waverley Fund over the next three years which will supplement and enhance our own funding for masters and doctoral students from African universities. We have also been fortunate in benefitting from the generosity of the Eni Corporation and from the Eni Scholars awards for African scholars to study at St Antony's college that were announced at the opening ceremony in February.

*Overall these initiatives amount to nearly half a million pounds in funding for students from Africa to study at Oxford.*



While our thoughts were turned to the future with these various initiatives, the 2010-11 academic year and our teaching and events schedule was as busy as ever. The MSc African Studies welcomed its sixth cohort in October 2010 of 37 students. With 11 nationalities represented it was very good to recruit about a quarter of the cohort from African countries. The quality of the students was again very high, with many receiving impressive scholarship awards to join us. The cohort participated fully and energetically in the many activities organized through the Centre over the year.

Our events schedule was very full with many highlights. George Bizos, part of the legal team defending Nelson Mandela at the Rivonia Trial, presented the Bram Fischer Memorial lecture held at Rhodes House in February. In June Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall presented the African Studies Annual lecture on 'Worldliness, Citiness, Postcolonial Life and Thinking from the South'. Our annual lectures are now available as podcasts via the university's iTunes U pages (<http://itunes.ox.ac.uk/>).

We also sponsored a range of African Studies events across the university during the year. These included a conference on Sport in Africa, an international symposium on Angola, and a conference on 'Democracy, Populism and Opposition Politics'. We were also delighted to support events organised by our graduate students: the annual Researching Africa Day, which provides graduate students with the opportunity to present their original research, was very well-attended, and the inaugural AFRISOC symposium on 'Pan-Africanism for a new generation' was a great success.

*I must end by thanking all my colleagues for their advice, hard work and commitment to the African Studies programme this past year. The steps we are able to make in planning for the future are only possible because of their expertise and dedication.*



Africa Studies Centre  
annual lectures on itunes

*Left to Right: VC Andrew Hamilton, Kofi Annan, Stefano Lucchini (Senior Executive Vice-President - Public Affairs and Communication Department, Eni) Alessandro Lanza (Chief Executive officer - Corporate University, Eni)*



# ‘Landscape people and parks’: a research project on environmental change in the Lower Omo Valley, southwestern Ethiopia

Dr David Turton

Ethiopia’s Lower Omo Valley is best known as one of the most important sites in the world for the study of human evolution. The earliest known fossils of our anatomical ancestor, *Homo sapiens*, were found here in 1968, making this the oldest landscape in the world known to have been inhabited by modern humans. And yet our knowledge of its recent history remains remarkably superficial. The aim of this three-year project (2007–2010), funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) under its Landscape and Environment Programme, was to investigate human–environmental interaction in the Lower Omo Valley, using historical, anthropological and palaeoecological methods. The project team consisted of one historian (Professor David Anderson, Principal Investigator), one palaeoecologist (Dr Graciela Gil-Romera) and two anthropologists (Dr Marco Bassi and Dr David Turton).



*Vegetation survey of 50 x 50m plots to investigate bush encroachment patterns*

Based on oral historical accounts of land use and settlement over the past 200 years, and on library and archival sources going back to the 1880s, we were able to build up the most comprehensive and detailed understanding yet achieved of the recent history of the peoples of the Lower Omo. The palaeoecological research resulted in a 2000-year record of vegetation change in the northern part of the study area, using fossilized pollen samples from hyrax middens – as far as we know, the first time this method has been attempted in East Africa. This was complemented by a study of local perceptions and explanations of bush encroachment in the savanna over the past forty years. Both the long-term and short-term ecological studies demonstrated the value of integrating ecological and local knowledge in the study of landscape change. Different ways of ‘constructing’ the landscape of the Lower Omo (by conservationists, state officials and local people) were also examined, on the assumption that the interaction between people and the environment is determined as much by broader political processes as it is by local ecological ones. A list of publications reporting on these findings can be found on the AHRC’s Landscape and Environment Programme website, at [www.landscape.ac.uk/research/larger/landscape\\_people\\_parks.htm](http://www.landscape.ac.uk/research/larger/landscape_people_parks.htm).

As its name implies, it was hoped that the project would be relevant to conservation policy and help to resolve conflicts between conservationists and local people (two national parks were set up in the area in the 1960s and 1970s). As it got under way, however, it became clear that both conservationists and local people would soon be faced with the most devastating human-induced environmental change in the history of the Lower Omo. This would result from the construction of a hydro-electric dam in the middle Omo Valley, which is due to start operating in 2013. Known as Gibe III, the dam will eliminate the annual flood, upon which all the residents of the Omo flood plain depend, and make possible the development of large-scale commercial irrigation schemes. These schemes are now being implemented, without the collaboration, consent or even prior knowledge of local people. If evidence from elsewhere is anything to go by, this is likely to have devastating human and environmental consequences. We are therefore lobbying the Ethiopian government and the international donor community (Ethiopia currently receives more UK development aid than any other country) in the hope that urgent steps will be taken to avert what looks like an otherwise inevitable tragedy. For background information go to [www.mursi.org/news-items/huge-irrigation-scheme-planned-for-the-lower-omo-valley](http://www.mursi.org/news-items/huge-irrigation-scheme-planned-for-the-lower-omo-valley)



*Cattle returning from drinking at the Omo in the dry season*



# Annual Record 2010–11

The MSc programme in African Studies welcomed its sixth cohort in October 2010. The 37 students participated fully and energetically in the many activities organized through the Centre over the year.

## Vistors 2010–11

### We welcomed numerous visitors to the Centre during the year:

**Dr Helene Maria Kyed** (Danish Institute for International Studies) joined us during Trinity Term 2011. Helene worked on traditional authority in Mozambique before moving into the study of community policing and internal security sector reform in Sub-Saharan Africa. In June Helene presented a paper at the Thursday seminar on 'The Politics of Legal Pluralism: the Case of Community Policing in Mozambique and Swaziland'.

**Dr Jacob Rasmussen** (International Development Studies, Roskilde University & Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Torture Victims RCT) joined us during Michaelmas Term 2010. He works on the Mungiki movement in Kenya with the focus of his research centring on mobilisation, youth, conflict and politics.

**Dr Apuuli Phillip Kasajja** (Senior Lecturer, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Makerere University Kampala) continued his research on the role of the International Criminal Court in Northern Uganda and Great Lakes Region of Africa. He has previously served as the Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Advisor at the Inter-governmental Authority on Development Secretariat, Republic of Djibouti (2008); and Assistant IGAD Facilitator for Somalia Peace and National Reconciliation, Ethiopia (2009). While at the Centre he undertook work on a project entitled 'The Possibility of Establishing a Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Uganda', funded by the British Academy.

**Dr Clive Glaser** (Associate Professor, History Department, University of the Witwatersrand) joined us in Michaelmas Term 2010. He has worked on the social history of youth in Johannesburg, including examinations of sexual practices and crime. He began a new project while with the Centre at Oxford on the history of Portuguese immigrants in South Africa.

## A Place called Home **Dr H el ene Neveu Kringelbach**

When I applied for a nine month Lectureship at the African Studies Centre in 2006, I neither suspected that I would be teaching there for the next five years, nor that this would become my intellectual 'home'. At the time I had just returned from maternity leave to finish a one-year ESRC postdoctoral fellowship and the prospect of beginning a teaching post with a six month old baby seemed daunting. In fact, my little daughter literally sat on my lap throughout the induction session that year, holding William Beinart's hand while David Anderson briefed the second MSc cohort on the painful rituals they would endure over the next nine months. David Pratten proceeded to reassure the students that rituals were, after all, what one had to go through to become a real person, and that there would be room for fun too. By then of course, Wanjia Knighton had already nailed down the complete biography, eating habits and sartorial style of every student in the cohort. I knew then that this was a highly unusual part of the University.

As I move on to a new research project, I find myself taking stock of these five wonderful years at the Centre. I have certainly learned more than I can ever put into words. I have learned a great deal from my colleagues, not only in terms of their different disciplines, but also from watching them teach and build up the MSc. Being in an interdisciplinary environment is stimulating as one gets exposed to a very wide range of ideas; but I feel I have also grown as an anthropologist. Interdisciplinarity encourages one to think about what is distinctive about one's discipline. I have learned more than I ever imagined from students' experiences and research interests. But most importantly, it has been fun. Teaching at the Centre is not just a job, it is a personal commitment. I found myself thinking of

students and colleagues, both individually and as a group, as part of my life. In June every year, the relief of the approaching end of the academic year was coupled with a sense of emptiness, sadness even, as yet another cohort was about to say goodbye. Left behind was the satisfaction that one had contributed to an exciting moment in students' lives, one they were unlikely to forget. There were also the memories of exceptional moments, from end-of-year festivities on the dance floor, student bands and rap songs dedicated to the Centre, to holding a student's hand as she was giving birth.

The new project I am just beginning will involve fieldwork in France, the UK and Senegal, where I will be looking at family-making in diasporic contexts, with a particular focus on Euro-Senegalese families. I had been looking forward to doing fieldwork again and though I will remain based in Oxford for the next two years, I look forward to this exciting – and challenging – moment when a new social world opens up and one has the freedom to explore it. I will be collecting life histories and, through the use of photographs, attending family ceremonies and other festive events, finding out about how converts learn and combine religious practices and what languages people raise their children in. I will also be working with civic associations involved in the rights of bi-national couples and will attempt to find out where the families envisage their future by looking at where and how they buy property. Some of my informants will be Senegalese performers I have already worked with, many of whom are now married to European partners; others will be people from all ages and all walks of life. I hope there will be time to keep dancing, too. Wherever I am, the Centre will remain my Home.



# Mau Mau in the High Court

Professor David Anderson

**On 6 April 2011, four elderly Kenyans shuffled into London's Royal Courts of Justice. They had made the long journey from Nairobi to lodge a claim against the British government for alleged abuses and tortures committed during the Mau Mau Emergency in Kenya during the 1950s. The British Foreign & Commonwealth Office denied the claims, arguing that any liability that might arise has passed to the government of independent Kenya in December 1963. The hearing before Mr Justice McCombe in London's High Court was therefore to decide whether there was any case to answer, and where any liability should lie.**

My historical researches on the Mau Mau rebellion were central to the case. The prosecution's legal team from the firm Leigh Day needed documentary evidence to support the case. It was necessary to prove not just that tortures had taken place, but that the abuse had been the product of government policy.

In December 2010, I requested the release of documents that I suspected the British government had removed from Kenya in 1963, and had since withheld from public scrutiny. Although the FCO at first denied that any papers existed, in January 2011, as a direct result of a witness statement I submitted to the court, the government finally admitted to holding papers at Hanslope Park near Milton Keynes.

I was then given authority to review these files on behalf of the prosecution. The collection of documents was simply vast – some 1540 files, comprising more than a quarter of a million pages. Only 500 of these files related directly to the Mau Mau Emergency, but with only a few weeks before the hearing was to begin in London the task ahead was daunting.

With the support of the Kenya Human Rights Commission and Leigh Day, I was able to recruit a group of Oxford graduate students to work through the files with me. For four intensively busy weeks through late February and into March 2011, Daniel Ostendorff, Jacob Wiebel (MSc 2010), Emma Lochery (MSc 2009), Patrycja Stys, Michelle Sikes, Michelle Osborne (MSc 2007), and Yolana Pringle skillfully sifted through the papers, summarizing relevant reports to provide the barristers with a guide to the most pertinent documents. On the basis of this work, I then submitted a further witness statement to the court setting out the detailed evidence of torture found in the documents.

\*Professor Anderson has written a fuller account of the case, and its implications, to be published in the *Journal of Imperial & Commonwealth History*, 40 i (2012). Copies of his witness statements, alongside the statements of the four claimants and Justice McCombe's judgment, can be found on the Leigh Day website, [www.leighday.co.uk](http://www.leighday.co.uk)

When the week of the hearing came, the case received massive publicity. The Times newspaper carried the accusations of torture as its front-page story on three days, also carrying two editorials on the case and giving the hearing very full coverage. Other newspapers then followed, and the broadcast media too gave the story lots of airtime.

The story became even more dramatic when the government conceded that it was not only documents from Kenya that were still withheld by the FCO, but that these were only part of a larger cache of 8,800 files from 36 other former British colonies. As the Mau Mau hearing was in progress, William Hague, the Foreign Secretary, announced the government's intention to release all of these documents into the public domain.

When the judge delivered his verdict, three months later, he found that the British government did indeed have a case to answer concerning abuse and torture allegedly carried out by British officials in Kenya during the Mau Mau counter-insurgency. Justice McCombe described the attempts of the FCO to have the case annulled as 'dishonourable', and his judgment emphasised the importance of the historical evidence in building the case for the prosecution.

Though this feels like a victory, there is still a long way to go before the allegations of the four Kenyan claimants will be judged. The full case will now be heard before the High Court in April 2012, when the whole reputation of the British Empire in Africa will be on trial. So, I am now busy again working through these files in greater depth to compile a further witness statement for the court. And, after that, we begin the task of rewriting the history of British decolonisation .....



## Introducing Julie Soleil Archambault

Julie has been appointed as Departmental Lecturer in African Anthropology.



When I set out to conduct doctoral fieldwork in Inhambane, Southern Mozambique, I had no intention to study mobile phone use. Instead, I was interested in what it might mean and feel like to be a young adult in contemporary Africa. At first, I saw the phone as little more than a useful methodological tool but I soon realised that mobile phone practices, along with discourses on these practices, were both reflective and constitutive of the social dynamics that I had set out to investigate.

Since then, my research has focused on the ways in which young people use mobile phones to better navigate the uncertainties of everyday life and more specifically, on the integration of the new technology within the regional sexual and petty crime economies. This focus ties into my broader research interests in secrecy, appearance and space. I will be convening the core course on research methodology of the MSc in African Studies.

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## Introducing Jonny Steinberg

Jonny has been appointed as Departmental Lecturer in African Studies, Research Associate at the Centre for Criminology and Research Fellow of St Antony's College.



My work thus far has explored various aspects of everyday life in the wake of South Africa's transition to democracy. My books include *Midlands* (2002), about the murder of a white farmer, *The Number* (2004) about crime, punishment and prison gangs, *Three-Letter Plague* (2009) about AIDS and medicine, and *Thin Blue* (2008) which explores the unwritten rules of engagement between South African police officers and civilians. I have also written about Liberia's civil war and its aftermath in *Little Liberia* (2011). I was a student at Oxford in the mid-1990s; I read for a D.Phil in politics at Balliol.

I am currently working on two long-term projects. Three or four times a week I travel to a shack settlement on the outskirts of Cape Town where I am recording the life history of a Somali man who runs a trading store there. He fled Mogadishu as a child in 1991, grew up itinerant and unsettled in various East African countries, and finally made his way southwards down Africa's eastern seaboard when he was in his early 20s. He came to South Africa because he had been told it was the land of milk and honey, and while the money was indeed good, he has also been subjected to serial violent attacks here. I plan to use his story as a frame to discuss a range of African questions, from state collapse in Somalia, to the relationship between formal state institutions and undocumented people, to xenophobia in South Africa.

I am also working on a project that revisits South Africa in the 1960s and explores some of the unlikely habits and mentalities the country's present governors have inherited from that time. I am especially interested in the role that fear has played in shaping South African statecraft both then and now.

Last, but not least, I write a newspaper column for the Sunday Times in South Africa. Having a varied and often very angry audience is a useful if sometimes jarring way to remain anchored in the real world!

I will be teaching on the MSc in African Studies for which I'll convene a core course on themes in African history and the social sciences. I will also supervise graduate work at the Centre for Criminology.

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## African Studies Prizes 2010-2011

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

Leila Bodeux & Laura Brunts

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

Francesca Mazzola

**African Studies Prize for the Outstanding Historical Dissertation:**

Sishuwa Sishuwa

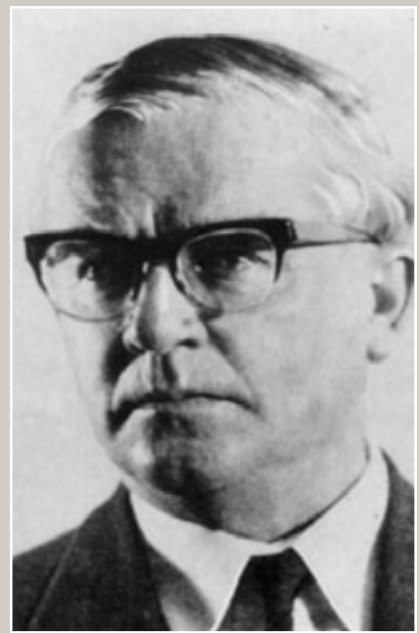




# Bram Fisher Memorial Lecture: Human Rights and the rule of law in South Africa

By Francesca Mazzola

**On the afternoon of Thursday 24 February, I joined an audience of scholars at Oxford University's Rhodes House to hear George Bizos, one of the most prominent human rights lawyers of our time, give the Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture. This lecture is one of the most important events on the African Studies calendar, attended by professors, lecturers and students from all over the university.**



*Left to Right: Dr Mary Bizos, Dr Zola Skweyiya (High Commissioner for South Africa in London), Lord Joffe (who served in the defence team at the Rivonia Trial also), Dr Donald Markwell (Warden of Rhodes House), Advocate George Bizos SC, Dr Nic Cheeseman (Chair of the Organising Committee for the Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture), and Dr Kimon Bizos. (Photo Courtesy of Rhodes House)*

Bram Fischer was a Rhodes Scholar at New College, Oxford between 1931–1934. He read jurisprudence and went on to play a major role in the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa. This annual lecture allows us to celebrate the life of Bram Fischer and the sacrifices that he made to defend human rights and further the anti-apartheid struggle. It also serves as a constant reminder that the rule of law can be used for good and for evil, and that in many countries the battle for human rights has just begun.

This year we were fortunate enough to have George Bizos deliver the lecture. From the 1950s to the early 1990s Bizos acted as counsel for many prominent anti-apartheid activists. He became known for his work investigating the deaths of people held in detention such as Ahmed Timol, Steve Biko and Dr. Neil Aggett. Most famously, during the Rivonia Trial of 1963–4 he was a key member of the defence team, led by Bram Fischer, that saved the lives of Nelson Mandela and nine other senior ANC leaders. He subsequently defended Bram Fischer when he was charged with violating the Suppression of Communism Act and conspiring to commit sabotage. More recently, he represented Morgan Tsvangirai, the leader of the MDC in Zimbabwe, following accusations that he had conspired to assassinate President Mugabe before the 2002 general election.

For approximately two hours, Bizos took us on a journey down memory lane. He recounted his most significant memories of Bram Fischer. Although Bizos himself is a remarkably distinguished lawyer, he focused on the life and accomplishments of his dear friend. His candid portrayal of Fischer as a man of great honour and integrity was deeply touching. Bizos' anecdotes also revealed Fischer's quick wit and realistic outlook. Fischer was aware of the risks that his political activities entailed; yet he also recognized that immoral laws had to be fought against. Fischer never saw the promised land; he died in prison in May 1978. However, as someone once told Bizos, "Bram Fischer will be remembered long after all of us are forgotten."

Listening to a tireless human rights advocate speak, I was reminded that a lawyer's duty is not simply to uphold the rule of law, but to improve it. Bizos' lecture was both inspiring and terrifying. How could there ever be another person as brave and courageous as Bram Fischer? As the lecture finished, I looked around the room and saw the faces of many of my classmates and professors, and I was reassured: These are only some of the people who will play a role in the advancement of human rights and democracy around the world.



# Redefining Panafricanism for a new generation

Nelson Oppong, General Secretary, Oxford University Africa Society

On June 4, the Oxford University Africa Society (Afrisoc) convened a conference that brought together a number of students, activists and policy makers from Africa, the United Kingdom and the Caribbean to engage with the subject of Pan-Africanism. Under the theme 'Pan-Africanism for a New Generation' the conference sought, amongst other things, to create a forum where the emerging leaders of Africa and her Diaspora could discuss and adopt new strategies for confronting the crises of governance and sustainable development on the continent.

The conference had a presentation and discussion format and covered themes such as leadership and governance, environmental justice and Diaspora relations. The keynote address was delivered by Professor Horace Campbell of Syracuse University. In his lecture, Professor Campbell called on the youth to imbibe the principles of social justice and democratic accountability that were embedded in the early pan-African movement. He noted that in many ways these pan-African doctrines have been misinterpreted, and sometimes deliberately suppressed, in order to undermine their emancipatory power. Rethinking pan-Africanism therefore requires the new generation to uncover these founding principles and apply them to current problems on the continent.

In another presentation on Africa-Diaspora relations, H. E. Garvin Nicholas, the Trinidad and Tobago High Commissioner in the UK,

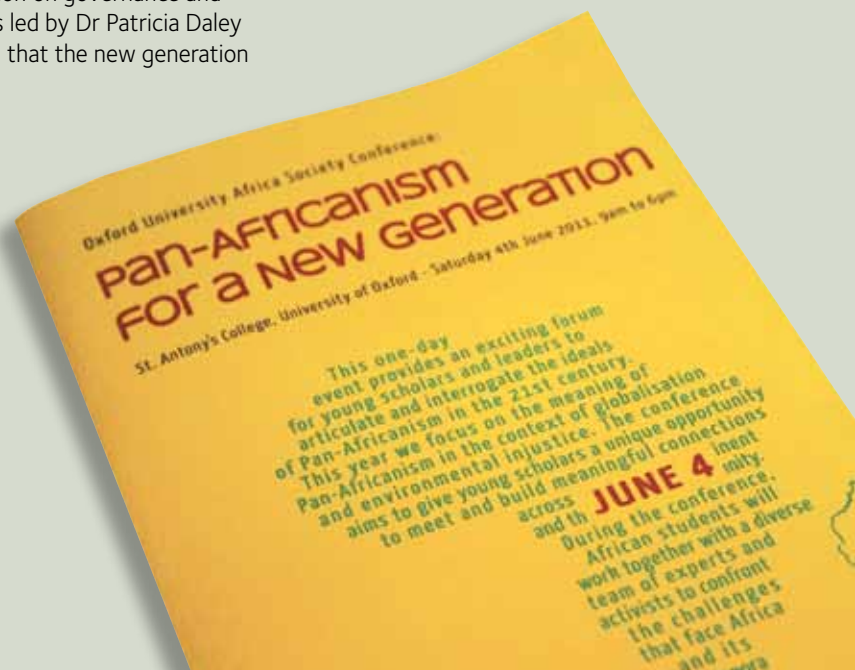
underscored the positive role that Afro-Caribbean relations could play in dealing with the mutual challenges 'Southern' nations are confronted with. He outlined his government's commitment to this goal, especially in the areas of strategic energy support and cultural exchanges, and expressed Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to the Afrisoc pan-African initiative.

The presentations also included an analysis of the Ogoni struggle against global oil companies and complicit regimes in Nigeria who have actively subdued environmental justice in the country. Led by Mr Ledum Mittee, President of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and Chairman of the Niger Delta committee, the session exposed the extent to which weak partnerships among activists, both within and across national boundaries, can undermine the struggle for environmental justice despite their noble objectives. Mittee expressed strong optimism for the future of Africa's resource management if it incorporates the pan-Africanism ideals that recognise the connection between the environment and the social and spiritual existence of people.

The presentation on governance and leadership was led by Dr Patricia Daley who intimated that the new generation

of pan-Africanists must draw and build on the emphasis that early pan-Africanists placed on politics which respect to the emancipatory power of women and youth. Wangui wa Goro, a renowned Kenyan public intellectual, writer and translator, concluded the presentations by pointing out the importance of culture and language in driving a new African renaissance that embraces its place in wider global political, economic and social processes.

The conference reached its climax with discussions about creating an annual meeting point for African students in the UK. The participants affirmed their belief in the Afrisoc vision of a new Pan-Africanism and promised to continue the debate, agreeing that the conference website should be converted into a forum to explore their vision further. The main ethos that emerged from the conference can be expressed in a single sentence: pan-Africanism is an ideal that can be shared by all irrespective of belief, race, gender or sexuality, provided one is committed to social justice and democratic principles.



# African Studies Centre hosts Michael Sata

By Sishuwa Sishuwa

On May 2 2011, Oxford University hosted a day-long conference on Democracy, Populism, and Opposition Politics in Africa organized by Dr Nic Cheeseman and I. The event was held at the Department of Politics and International Relations – who also sponsored the event alongside the African Studies Centre and the Rhodes House – and attracted a wide audience that brought together leading specialists of post-colonial African politics from a broad range of Universities, including Miles Larmer (Sheffield), Stefan Lindemann (Max Planck Institute), Adam Habib (University of Johannesburg) and Tom Young (School of Oriental and African Studies, SOAS).

To crown it all, Michael Sata, one of Africa's high profile and most effective populist leaders and President of the Patriotic Front (PF), the main opposition in Zambia, accepted an invitation to deliver the 2011 Oxford Research Network on Governance in Africa (ORENGA) Special Lecture at the University of Oxford, which fell on the same day. Given every year by a prominent political practitioner from Africa, the Lecture is an important event in the University calendar. Themed Road to Presidency: How to be a successful opposition leader in Africa, Sata was more than qualified to offer the 2011 talk—especially as many of the papers presented at the conference were written about him and his party!

After founding the PF in 2001, Sata led the party into that year's presidential and general elections against ten other contestants. He was crushingly defeated, obtaining only 3% of the popular vote in a poll that was won by Levy Mwanawasa, the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) candidate, and which saw the emergence of the United Party for National Development (UPND) as the leading opposition party. However, five years later, Sata obtained 29%, narrowly losing to Mwanawasa, and his party, rose to become the largest parliamentary opposition, dislodging the UPND. Although parties do tend to be younger in Africa, the speed of the emergence of the PF is unusual. Since he has led the party since its formation, no one was better placed to discuss its rapid rise than Sata himself.

But inviting Sata to Oxford was a challenging, if exciting, experience, which summoned various organisational skills and negotiating strategies. I had first met Sata in Zambia after he accepted my request for his co-operation as I hoped to study his political career during the MSc. After I arrived in Oxford, I maintained constant contact with Sata, building trust and rapport. This certainly helped when it came to inviting him to come to Oxford and share his political experiences, as he was co-operative throughout our exchanges, though occasionally brash and dismissive.

In the lecture, Sata acknowledged the various factors that militate against opposition parties in Africa, such as weak party machinery, scarce resources and



*Keynote Speaker Michael Sata with conference organiser Dr Nic Cheeseman*

the overwhelming advantage that ruling parties enjoy over their opponents in terms of access to state resources which gives them a distinct advantage in electoral competition. He explained that the PF's dramatic rise in such an environment owed much to the party leadership's constant critique of government policies as well as its ability to build useful coalition strategies and working alliances with other political parties and autonomous bodies such as civil society, the church, the independent media and trade unions.

Different people who attended the Conference offered their assessment of Sata's lecture at the end. Abdul Raufu Mustapha, a lecturer in African Politics at Oxford University said Sata "seemed to be very genuine about his concern for Zambia". Justin Pearce, a postdoctoral research fellow at SOAS observed that in the academic world researchers spend a lot of time discussing and debating politics, often in quite an abstract way, "So it was most refreshing to receive a visit from Michael Sata: someone whose lengthy career has been spent in the world of Zambian politics and who was able to speak in the first person of his experiences. It was very interesting to hear his vivid account of the challenges he has faced over the last decade and how he has tried to get around them."

Much of the credit for the Sata lecture must go to the African Studies Centre and the Department of Politics and International Relations who generously funded the cost of Sata's trip, and to the Rhodes House who accommodated the PF leader.

*Michael Sata won the Zambian presidential election in September.*

## Researching Africa Day Ian Cooper and Leslie Fesenmyer

The 12th Researching Africa Day was held at St. Antony's College, Oxford, on 14 May 2011. Its theme was 'Critical reflections on research practice and knowledge production in Africa', with panels organised on positionality, negotiating access to information, research ethics and data analysis. Papers were presented by graduates studying history, political science, sociology and anthropology at various universities in the United Kingdom and Europe, with an opening address given by Dr David Pratten of the University of Oxford and closing remarks by Dr Henrik Vigh of the University of Copenhagen. Seventy delegates attended the event, which is now Britain's largest research methods workshop for graduates studying the African continent.

Papers covered an extremely wide variety of national contexts but focused upon transferrable approaches to research, including data interpretation, negotiating access to elites and incorporating ethics into research design. Lively debate was provoked by a number of these contributions, with delegates particularly challenging the methodological justification for undertaking multi-site ethnographic research and strategies used for obtaining evidence in closed social environments. The next Researching Africa Day is scheduled to take place at the University of Oxford in Trinity Term, 2012.



# The Study of Angola: Towards a New Research Agenda

The Study of Angola workshop, convened by Prof. Manuel Ennes Ferreira (ISEG) and Dr Ricardo Soares de Oliveira (Oxford), was held at St Peter's College, Oxford University on the first and second of July 2011. As sub-Saharan Africa's third largest economy, one of its major oil producers, and key regional player, Angola should have elicited a considerable amount of academic work. However, difficulties of access on account of the war that lasted from 1975 until 2002, unfamiliarity with the language and the discouragement of research resulted in serious gaps that are only now starting to be addressed. This means that crucial dimensions of this pivotal African state, as well as their relevance for comparative research, are either misunderstood or virtually unknown. Other than the decades of delay in scholarly research per se, the academic structures taken for granted in the study of contemporary Africa are relatively weak, whether in terms of frequent academic encounters, research collaborations, or institutional dialogue.

This conference brought together social scientists and historians, including Africanists from the broader Oxford community, to discuss the study of modern and contemporary Angola. Organized in partnership with SOCIUS-ISEG, the Economics Faculty of the Technical University of Lisbon, the conference benefited from the strong support of the African Studies Centre at Oxford University, St Peter's College, the Camoens Institute of Portuguese Studies (KCL), the Foundation for Science and Technology (Portugal) and Lusitana University of Angola. Those attending included academics from Angola, North America and Europe. Discussions revolved around issues such as petroleum and political economy, the challenges of postwar reconstruction, the social and political legacies of the war, colonial legacies, and Angola's international relations. The conference had three major goals: 1) assessing the state-of-the-art of Angolan studies; 2) delineating a future research agenda that results in both country-specific studies and the inclusion of Angola into cutting-edge comparative research; and 3) creating a network of researchers that will deepen collaborative work.



**Ricardo Soares de Oliveira**  
University Lecturer in Comparative Politics,  
St Peter's College

# First African Studies to receive their doct

## International Perceptions and African Agency: Uganda and its donors 1986-2010

Jonathan Fisher (2006-2007)



My thesis attempted to explain why Western donor countries, particularly the US and UK, have consistently been so supportive of Uganda's Museveni regime since 1986 in spite of its controversial reputation for democratic backsliding, corruption and regional militarism. My interest in this subject developed while studying on the MSc in African Studies (2006-2007) where I wrote my dissertation on donors' use of aid cuts ('political conditionality') to 'force' democratization upon recalcitrant one-party states in Kenya and Malawi during the 1990s. While writing-up my fieldwork findings, some of which were gathered during a 2007 visit to Malawi funded by the African Studies Centre, I became conscious of a major inconsistency in donor implementation of this political conditionality agenda. For while London and Washington were suspending aid to Kenya and Malawi to show their apparent distaste for those nations' political settlements they were disbursing almost unprecedented amounts upon a not dissimilar regime in Kampala, Uganda. Indeed, despite being referred to as a 'de facto one-party state' by many scholars under both its 'no-party' (1986-2005) and 'multi-party' dispensations (2005-), Uganda became – and has remained – a firm donor favourite and has escaped major censure for its more controversial activities (including invading neighbouring Congo, imprisoning a major opposition candidate on the eve of an election and raiding the part donor-financed national budget to fund political campaigns) where other governments in the region have not. Therefore, when I began work on my (ESRC-funded) DPhil in 2007, I was keen to try and account for this discrepancy: what is so special about Uganda under Museveni and what does Uganda's experience reveal about the nature of donor-African relations?

Under the expert guidance of my supervisor, Professor David Anderson, I sought to explore two major questions: 'why has Uganda benefited from such uncritical international support and what role has the Museveni regime itself played in bringing about this situation?' The thesis also compared Uganda's experience to those of Ethiopia, Kenya and Rwanda to demonstrate the broader relevance of these questions. I came to agree with most commentators, including Graham Harrison, Jeff Haynes and Robert Pinkney, that donors have taken a lenient approach to Uganda because they perceive it as valuable as an economic success story, an ally in the 'War on Terror' and a guarantor of regional stability. I emphasised in the thesis, however, that these perceptions are just that: perceptions. They do not necessarily reflect reality nor are they formed without input from Africa, as some inadvertently suggest. Indeed, the principal conclusion of the thesis is that these three donor perceptions of Uganda have been actively constructed, moulded, managed and bolstered by Kampala itself in an effort to shore-up international support. Using a variety of 'image management' strategies, I suggest, the regime has succeeded in convincing its donors to see it as a valuable ally worth supporting. The same is true of the Rwandan and Ethiopian governments, I suggest, but not of the Kenyan. Ultimately, therefore, the thesis contended that Uganda has carved out a subtle but substantial degree of agency in relations with donors and this raises important questions for scholars and policy-makers.

I submitted the thesis in January 2011 after a rather hectic Christmas of writing bibliographies and footnotes and had my viva (which I passed!) in March. Now I am undertaking a year as an ESRC Postdoctoral Fellow in Birmingham University's International Development Department which is both exciting and rewarding. During this year I will be presenting papers on my DPhil research findings at international conferences, working on a donor-funded book chapter on the 2011 Ugandan elections and preparing articles for submission to journals. Birmingham is very different to Oxford and this has its advantages and disadvantages (some of the former being a Starbucks on campus and colleagues who enjoy frequent trips there, one of the latter being the lack of a Bodleian or Rhodes House!). Though I miss Oxford, I am nevertheless learning a lot from working alongside my new colleagues and am looking forward to publishing parts of my thesis with their help and advice in the near future.

# MSc graduates celebrates

## "Control, ideology and identity in civil war: The Angolan Central Highlands 1965-2002"

Justin Pearce (2006-2007)



It was a humid day at the start of the cacimbo, the Angolan dry season, when I arrived in the salty air of Luanda for the first time in May 2001. A few weeks shy of a decade later, North Oxford's plane trees looked exceptionally green during the hottest spring in years as I walked away from the African Studies Centre on Bevington Road, just having completed the viva (that's Oxfordian for thesis defence) for my DPhil on the local politics of the Angolan civil war.

Let that sound like a very long doctorate, the DPhil itself took me three and a half years, not ten. My arrival in Luanda in 2001 was as a journalist for the BBC. The two years that I lived there spanned the end of a civil war that had been going on since 1975: it came to an end when the UNITA rebel movement, fighting a war of attrition for the past ten years, collapsed after its founder, Jonas Savimbi, was killed in a fire fight with the Angolan army. For me, the best part of the job was getting away from Luanda to parts of the country where no journalists – in fact, no one apart from local people and soldiers – had set foot for many years. My aim was to record people's stories of the war, which meant in effect the stories of their lives over 25 years that many of them had spent in areas controlled by UNITA. Had they been captured to fight or work for the rebel army? Who among them was a willing supporter of UNITA, and why?

As I listened to people's stories I realised there were complexities I would never to be able to convey in any number of three-minute radio packages. The most intriguing statement of all was from a woman I met in a bomb-wrecked town on the sand flats of south-eastern Angola: 'I used to be a member of UNITA – now I am a member of the government,' she said. Since she was neither a soldier, nor a party activist, nor a politician, not a bureaucrat, she was using the word 'member' in a very particular sense that I wasn't sure I understood.

It was my curiosity about the relationship between UNITA and the people who lived under its control that led me to return to academic study. As I start, applied for Masters programmes, the African Studies Centre in Oxford offered me first a place on the MSc, and then a bursary courtesy of the Southern African Students' fund. As I explained my dissertation plans to my supervisor, Professor Jocelyn Alexander, her response was 'that's a DPhil thesis you're talking about, not a master's dissertation'. That wasn't a challenge that I could let go, and a bursary from the ORISHA fund allowed me to take my research further by enrolling for a DPhil in politics.

As I foraged in Oxford's libraries, I discovered both how little had been written about Angola since independence, and how none of the theoretical literature on civil war offered an obvious entry point to the questions about political belonging that I was wondering about. In 2008 and 2009 I was back in the grasslands and bullet-flecked towns of central Angola, asking questions of anyone who was prepared to talk to me: peasants, priests, destitute unemployed guerrillas, former activists still talking the language of socialist internationalism. The lack of journalistic deadlines meant I could let the conversations wander, often in a direction quite different from what I had anticipated. Just as important as the events that people recounted were the words that they chose. I was investigating the recent past using language that remained scarred and imperfect from the conflicts of that same history.

Ten years after arriving in Angola, I'm more sceptical than ever about universal truths, but satisfied that I've got a bit closer to understanding the social and political dynamics of the war. I've begun to think in new ways about ideas like citizenship and nationhood and people's relationship to political movements, not only in Angola. I fear the radio listeners have long since allowed their attention to wander.



## From Professor Terence Ranger

Professor Terence Ranger's year was dominated by the publication in September of his book, *Bulawayo Burning. The Social History of a Southern African City, 1893 to 1960* (James Currey, Weaver). He launched the book first at the University of Illinois in Urbana during their conference in October on 'Making History: Terence Ranger and the Study of Africa'. He also gave a Faculty Open Lecture – 'From Spirit to Body. Change in Zimbabwe's Religious History'. While in Illinois he received notification that he had been chosen the American African Studies Association Africanist of the Year. He launched his book at an Oxford seminar on 4 November. Later that month he launched it in Harare and Bulawayo. He spoke to sixth formers from all the schools in southern Matabeleland about the history of nationalism at the Edward Ndlovu Memorial Library in Gwanda. In February 2011 he spoke about his book in Cambridge.



## A Graduate Attachment at the British Institute in Eastern Africa

Adrian Browne (2009–2010)



Emerging from the MSc in late June 2010, my release into the outside world was eased by the knowledge that in the September I was to have a new, albeit temporary, institutional affiliation. I had been offered an opportunity to gain practical experience of research on the Graduate Attachment Scheme of the British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA), based in Nairobi.

The BIEA exists to promote research in all the disciplines in the humanities and social sciences within the wider region of eastern Africa. Graduate attachments are aimed at recent graduates with an interest in further studies in Africa. They offer the opportunity to gain practical experience of research. Our job title was, depending on who I asked, either 'attachee' (which sounded odd), 'attaché' (a bit diplomatique), 'research assistant' (inoffensive) or 'student' (which reinforced a comforting delusion). As the term 'attachee' indicates, we attachees were attached to the Institute, but we were, by design, detachable. And often we were elsewhere by Acting Director Professor David Anderson and his replacement Dr. Ambreena Manji in October 2010.

From early October to November, I attempted to insinuate myself in a quite different institution. For five-weeks I was on a secondment to the British High Commission in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, where I was put to work writing a briefing paper for HMG's representatives in Dar on the country's oil and gas sector. It was an interesting time to be in Tanzania, with presidential and parliamentary elections held in October. Though I was staying on the pristine Msasani Peninsula and therefore away from most of the action, I was in reach of a number of oil companies' offices where I learnt about the nascent industry's challenges. And I did escape the city for a short research trip to the south-eastern port town of Mtwara. The port was constructed originally as part of the infamous late mid-1940s Tanganyika Groundnut Scheme which aimed to produce vegetable oil. The area is now witnessing an even bigger – but hopefully more considered – injection of investment at the moment as a British company seeks to exploit natural gas reserves that lie offshore close by. Mtwara, I heard, is poised to become 'the Aberdeen of East Africa'.

November and December were spent back in Nairobi, assisting Professor John Harrington in research into biosecurity in Kenya, followed by a couple of months among dirty old documents in Uganda. I was based at the Kabarole District Archive which resided at Mountains of the Moon University's Centre for African Development Studies in Fort Portal. There we began the reorganisation and preparation of the physical archive for digitisation. We removed paper clips, dusted documents, and read out choice excerpts from colonial correspondence as Uganda voted, and Big Men just got bigger.

Nearing the end of my attachment in March 2011 I started looking into a new potential research project/all-consuming obsession. The BIEA generously supported two weeks of my fieldwork for my own project on the history of ethnicity in the Kingdom of Bunyoro. I got carried away though, and spent two months on wild-eyed 10-hour archival binges and similarly marathon interviews in the oil-rich areas near Lake Albert where I had worked for an educational NGO between 2007 and 2009.

I returned to the UK in June and took up a role as a researcher/writer for *African Energy*, a London-based publication. The politics of oil in eastern Africa remain my focus and the job offer was a direct result of the opportunities I was given through the BIEA.



## My Life in Law

Hashi Mohamed (2008–2009)



Hashi Mohammed with ICC Judge Sang-Hyun Song

Many months had elapsed since completing the job application. Waiting in yet another reception area with other anxious candidates, it struck me how privileged I was to have made it this far. With 500 applications on average accepted to each set of Chambers, only two are selected. As if these seemingly insurmountable statistics were not enough, rejections are dispatched during – not after – the

process. A boost of confidence can be snatched at any moment; this cruel and brutal system is said to separate the best from the very best. Aside from the scarce positions, the expenses of just coming to the Bar (£15,000 tuition fees for one year of Bar School) is enough to put most people off.

But as my story shows, it is not impossible. I was born to an illiterate Somali mother in Kenya and a father who died in a car accident when I was just nine years of age. Arriving in the UK shortly after, without my mother, I struggled to learn a new language, adjust to a new culture and all the while salvage what was left of my childhood. The eighth of 12 children, I attended poor-performing inner-city schools for the majority of my life. The odds were clearly stacked up against me.

Following an undergraduate degree in Law and French, I secured a freelance job at the BBC as a junior producer and sought to do a Masters at the African Studies Centre the following year. My time at Oxford was about consolidating my knowledge of Africa, knowledge without which I was convinced I could not become a good barrister – if I wanted to focus on human rights issues in Africa. A year after Oxford I was sitting in the reception of 39 Essex Street Chambers (39ES), a prestigious set. My contemporaries at the Bar were largely alien to me. Statistics from the Sutton Trust indicate that three out of four top judges, and more than two-thirds of top barristers have been educated at private schools, which now account for 7 per cent of the school population. By any stretch of the imagination, this is not representative of the wider population. Finally, in August 2010, I found out that I had secured a pupillage starting in the autumn of 2011. But I still had a year to make the most of before commencing.

Shortly after winning The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn Mooting competition (a mock legal appeal, with a real Supreme Court Justice judging the final) I secured an award that took me to the International Criminal Court (ICC) at The Hague. This is where war criminals, almost exclusively from Africa, are being tried for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

I was fortunate enough to spend three months at the presidency of the ICC, with Judge Sang-Hyun Song. I was given an insight into the background of the court, the challenges it faces and how it functions. Naturally I had many questions, most of them formed from reading Dr. Phil Clark's extensive research on the court, both in the field and at The Hague. The first permanent international criminal court in the world is still very much in its infancy and maturing slowly. Formed in 2002, with no convictions to date, it often claims to be above political matters whilst blatantly engaging in them on a daily basis.

One of the biggest criticisms has been the fact that all the active cases are only concerned with Africa. Dr. Clark came to The Hague during my stay, and I was able to discuss my thoughts with a new and more informed outlook. His talk at a conference at the Grotius Centre, an academic institution at The Hague, was much discussed in the building for weeks following his departure.

Less than two years after leaving Oxford, I have already been able to draw extensively on the knowledge and expertise gained at the African Studies Centre. Moreover, my stint with the ICC has made me appreciate the privilege that we ASC students enjoy: to be given the opportunity to interact personally with academics who are also leading figures in the field.

## An Economist Abroad

Martin Williams (2007–2008)



For the last two years I've been working in Accra as an economist in Ghana's Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI), through the Overseas Development Institute Fellowship Programme. Being an economist is a slightly unusual career path for students from the MSc African Studies; the MSc isn't exactly heavy on partial-equilibrium tariff simulations, structural modeling, or – let's face it – math in general.

My background is in economics though, and I was always the token economist in the class. This had some upsides. For example, when Professor Paul Collier asked the class, 'What is the cost of a civil war?', my qualitatively minded colleagues gave nonsense answers like 'long-term damage to political institutions' and 'lots of dead people'. But good economist that I am, I was able to answer that the real cost of a civil war is 'the area of that triangle between the two lines you just drew on the whiteboard'. Professor Collier was pleased.

In my current job I do policy analysis and research across more or less the whole range of MOTI's activities, in collaboration with my Ghanaian colleagues. I help write reports on topics like the comparative structure of countries' cotton value chains, restructuring a state-owned timber plantation, policies for infant industry promotion in Chile, and bilateral trade between Ghana and whatever country is sending a delegation to Accra next week.

I've also done some economic and legal analysis of international trade and investment issues. I had always been academically interested in trade, economic globalization, and global governance, but it was a different matter to actually be asked to build a model to predict tariff revenue loss or evaluate the compatibility of a proposed treaty with World Trade Organization rules.

Thankfully my colleagues at MOTI have helped me learn about these issues and, more importantly, learn how the civil service in Ghana functions – and sometimes how it doesn't. While I think the MSc gave me a subtler appreciation for institutional histories and political dynamics than most economists, my daily life in the Ministry is more like a Dilbert cartoon or 'The Office' than anything described by our beloved Chabal & Daloz.

That's sort of a joke but I think it's also a useful observation for academics studying governments—one that is often missed by those who only see institutions from the outside. With all due respect and apologies to Oxford, it is the importance of seeing how the policy process works from the inside that makes working at MOTI the best learning experience I've ever had. Along the way, I hope that I've made a small contribution towards the Ministry's work.

Outside of work, I've enjoyed living in Accra. It's a very relaxed place and I've gotten involved in the local music scene, playing saxophone with jazz, highlife, and gospel bands in a few venues around town. I'm a bit sad to be leaving Accra this fall to start a PhD in Government at the London School of Economics. That said, I can't wait to be a graduate student again.

## Ghana Review

Sarah Brierley (2008–2009)



For the politically inclined there is never a dull moment in Ghana. The Obama visit, chieftaincy coups, oil revenue skirmishes, cabinet shuffling and reshuffling, and when things get calm you can always rely on ex-president Flight Lieutenant J.J. Rawlings to add his controversial two pence worth (or should I say pesewa?). Moreover, Ghanaians love talking politics. When the World Cup began in June of last year the verbose Ghanaian simply had too much to discuss.

Since graduating from the Masters in African Studies in 2009 I have spent most of my time living and working in Ghana. While writing my Master's thesis on the Ghanaian National Assembly I became fascinated by the country's intense party politics and vibrant public personalities, and developed a longing to better understand the political dynamics of one of Africa's most celebrated democracies.

Given my desire to return, I leapt at the chance to be a researcher on the African Legislatures Project towards the end of 2009. My work mainly involved administering semi-structured surveys with MPs and Ministers who told me again and again how difficult their job of driving around in the latest model, 4x4 Mercedes really was, as I smiled sympathetically. In early 2010, I was lucky enough to gain an alternative perspective on the domestic political situation when I began working with the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD) where I gathered public opinion on Ghana's Constitutional Review process. My experience at CDD—a fully Ghanaian outfit—helped to immerse me in Ghanaian social life, through events such as monthly 'Appy Hours' where professional hierarchies dissolved as colleagues danced to the latest highlife songs and indulged in 'small chops'. Having completed the project with CDD I needed a more long term position and was very fortunate to begin a new job as a Researcher with the World Bank in Accra over the summer.

At the World Bank I worked on a cross-regional broadband project that aims to increase broadband penetration in post-conflict and landlocked West African countries—where internet penetration currently hovers around 5%. My work with the World Bank helped to put into context what I had learnt during the Masters about aid, accountability and relationships of power. Most importantly, I saw from the inside how hard it is for African governments to shape their own future when the weight of infrastructural and financial resources lies on the other side of the table. Having said this, many of my colleagues, most of who were from the continent, impressed me with their willingness to encourage open agendas. Ultimately, my desire to conduct my own research on issues of accountability in Africa's newest democracies saw me leave the World Bank in order to take up an exciting opportunity as a PhD candidate in Political Science at UCLA this autumn.

My days in Ghana were easily some of the happiest of my life. And I continue to find the Ghanaian laid-back while up-front attitude totally refreshing. I left Ghana with a lighter heart, a clearer head and a life-long passion for plantains!



# Alumni Updates

## Class of 2005-06

**Meghan Treleaven** has moved back to the US where she will be teaching Science at Marymount School on the Upper East Side.

## Class of 2006-07

**Ariana Berengaut** joined the U.S. Agency for International Development in April as a speechwriter for the head of the Agency, Dr. Rajiv Shah.

**Robtel Pailey** will begin a Ph.D. in Development Studies at SOAS in September 2011 as a Mo Ibrahim Ph.D. Scholarship recipient.

## Class of 2007-08

**Ashley Leech** has been working as a consultant for Christian Aid in Nairobi for the past year. She started by working mainly on their Community Based Care for Orphans and Vulnerable Children programme, a multi-country project in Kenya, Uganda, Zambia and Nigeria. Ashley is now helping them carry out baseline studies in five countries in Africa for a DFID programme focused on improving health outcomes of women, children and people with HIV.

**Cosanna Preston** is now working in Nigeria as the Head of Strategic Planning and Research with C&F Porter Novelli, a public relations agency. Cosanna and her partner have also started a new venture letting a room to researchers and students so people can avoid the horrendous Lagos accommodation prices. If you're ever in Lagos and need a place to stay then email: Cosanna at [cosanna.preston@gmail.com](mailto:cosanna.preston@gmail.com).

**Emma Leonard** has moved to the US to start a PhD in Political Science at Penn State University.

**Steven Costello** is working for Solidarites International, a French NGO, as the Field Coordinator for Malakal, Upper Nile State, South Sudan, where they conduct emergency response water and sanitation projects for IDPs and refugees.

**Toni Weis** married Julianne Parker (MSc 2007/8) on March 29 at City Hall in New York City. A reception for friends and family was held at Exeter College, Oxford on September 3 (see photo).

**Tunde Oseni** co-authored a book *Reluctant Transitions: Nigeria's Democratic Struggles Since Independence* (Lagos: Treasure Vaults).

**Rachel Adams** joined McKinsey and Company Johannesburg and is developing and managing a new leadership development programme. Rachel was also awarded the Archbishop Tutu Leadership Fellowship at the beginning of this year, alongside 22 other young Africans.





**Malcolm Anderson** is now the Events Coordinator at the London based think tank the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). Malcolm is also a registered athlete representative with the Ethiopian Athletics Federation and Athletics Kenya, an extension of his work for Running Across Borders, a non-profit organisation he co-founded after completing his studies in 2008.

**Alex Free**, has been offered a full LSE scholarship to pursue a PhD in the Department of Media and Communications.

## Class of 2008-09

**Tom Mills** is working in Iraq, Dubai and the UK, for a start-up operation called Alfagates, who provide support to the growing oil and gas sector. They act as the intermediary between local and international organisations and hope to spread the business to include Eritrea, Sudan and other sub Saharan countries in the future.

**Leo (Lianxing Li)** is working for the China Daily newspaper.

**Martin Williams** is moving to London to start a PhD in the Government Department at LSE.

**Janet Remington** won the 2011 Oxonian Review poetry competition for 'Snake in the Cosmos'.

## Class of 2009-10

**Chris Hopkins** has been working as a management Consultant with Deloitte.

**Kathryn Brooks** is an Associate Consultant at africapractice.

**Mike Bowerbank** left his position with the Department of Homeland Security in April 2011 and moved to Stuttgart, Germany to work for US Africa Command in the Outreach Directorate, Partnership Division as a Partnership Operations Specialist.

**Sam Waldock** is now in Zambia working for DFID. Sam married Amy Purser on July 2nd 2011.

**Jacob Wiebel** married Rediet Feleke on 9 July 2011 (see photo).

**Henry Donati** is moving to Ghana to work for DFID for two years after a year working with them in Glasgow.



Please contact us with your alumni updates. Email: [alumni@ox.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ox.ac.uk)

Keep up-to-date with alumni news at: [www.africanstudies.ox.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.africanstudies.ox.ac.uk/alumni)

# African Studies

## Class of 2010–11



**Eugene Adogla, Ghana**  
BA International Relations  
(Stanford)

Trickle-Down Theory: Tall Tale or Truth? Evidence from Mobile Phone Airtime Retailers on Oxford Street in Accra, Ghana



**Esi Agyeman, US**  
BA Psychology (Smith College)

The "Buganda Factor": Contemporary Conceptions of 'Federo' in Uganda



**Faeza Ballim, South Africa**  
BA History (Witwatersrand)

The making of imperial British control in Jubaland, 1885-1895.



**Leila Bodeux, Belgium**  
BA and MA EU Politics EU Politics  
(Free University of Brussels)

The political opposition to the Congolese government within the Belgian Congolese diaspora



**Lucy Bradlow, Australia**  
BA History (Monash)

Difficult to stay, hard to leave: Refugee Resettlement and Return, the Experiences of Sudanese Australians



**Laura Brunts, US**  
BA Comparative Politics (Columbia)

Watchdogs of Democracy: A Comparative Study of Election Monitor Groups in Africa



**Chris Day, UK**  
BA Modern History (Durham)

Cutting the queue: the 1988 elections in Kenya



**Senyo Dotsey, Ghana**  
BA Geography and Rural Development (Kwame Nkrumah)

Beyond orthodox theories? Perspectives from faith-based NGOs in Tamale, Ghana



**Denise Dunovant, US**  
BA Human and Social Geography  
(University of South Carolina)

From Farm to City (and Back Again?): War, Violence and Urban Internal Displacement in Northern Uganda, 1986 – 2011



**Jessica Fullwood-Thomas, UK**  
BA Sociology (Warwick)

The medicalisation of reproductive healthcare in resource limited settings: impacts on the experience and outcome of pregnancy and childbirth



**Sarah Gillis, Canada**  
BA Hons International Development & Globalisation (University of Ottawa)

Sovereignty, Security and Statecraft: Government Responses to the "Zimbabwean Problem" in Botswana



**Roopa Gogineni, US**  
BA African History (University of Pennsylvania)

Dateline Mogadishu: Challenges to Journalistic Autonomy in Contemporary Somalia



**Paula Jackson, South Africa**  
BA African History (Cape Town)

Land Reform in the Western Cape, South Africa



**Rowan Jackson, South Africa**  
BA Financial Management (Durban),  
MPhil Development Studies (Cambridge)

An examination of small-scale farmer participation in sugarcane production in South Africa



**Pieter Koornhof, South Africa**  
BA Accounting and Finance  
(Cape Town)

Saving Stamps, Retailers and the South African Poor



**Annette LaRocco, US**  
BA Politics (Barnard College)

'The Trust means life to us' - Local Perspectives of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Khwai Village, Botswana



**Abigail Ludwig, US**  
BA Comparative Politics (Princeton)

WOZA, GALZ, ZACRO and the Prison in Zimbabwe



**Dugald Macdonald, South Africa**  
BA Business Science and Marketing (Cape Town)

At a Crossroads: Zimbabwean migrant township artists in Cape Town



**Tyler Matthews, US**  
BSc Political Science (US Military Academy)

African Peacekeeping: Experiences from Mogadishu and Darfur



**Francesca Mazzola, US**  
BA Political Theories (Stanford)

Institutionalizing Childhood Malnutrition: A case study of the integration of ready-to-use therapeutic food in the fight against childhood malnutrition in Malawi.



**Alex Moss, UK**  
BA Modern History (Exeter)

The Making of Post-Colonial Order: The Africanisation of the Ghanaian Police Force, c. 1954-1968



**Melba Mwanje, UK**  
BA Human Sciences (Oxford)

Angola is a woman's name: Beauty pageants and nationhood in post-conflict Angola



**Diana Njuguna, Kenya** BA Finance (University of Nairobi), BSc Accounting (Oxford Brookes), MSc, Accounting and Finance (University of Central England Birmingham)

Are Private Equity Investors Still Steering Away From Investments in Sub Saharan Africa? Case of Kenyan based Private Equity Funds



**Alex Noyes, US**  
BA Government and Anthropology (Connecticut College)

Securing Reform? Power Sharing and the Control of Violence in Kenya and Zimbabwe



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