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UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

13th Annual Researching Africa Day Workshop: "Researching Africa: Moving beyond *researcher and the researched"*

3 March 2012

St Antony's College, Oxford

9:00 – 9:30 am **Registration; Tea & Coffee**

9:30am – 10:30 am **Opening Keynote**
Chair: **Prof William Beinart**
Noor Nieftagodien: *Considering Public History and a case for substantive participation of subjects in the process of knowledge production*

10:45 – 12:15 pm **PANELS 1 and 2**

Panel 1: **DEFINING, ACCESSING AND INTERPRETING *ARCHIVES***
Chair: **Dr Jan-Georg Deutsch**

Sabine Dinslage:
From plantation manager to explorer

The paper deals with the presentation of a research project to access, commentate and publish Günther Tessmann's life memories which up till now aren't available to the general public.
The archives of the ethnographic museum of Lübeck, Germany, hold the literary estate of the German traveller and anthropologist Günther Tessmann (1884-1969). Although he was not a trained anthropologist, he may be considered a pioneer of ethnographic field research. The archival notes document Tessmann's education as well as his journeys across Africa (especially Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea) and South America. The notes shed light on the scientific-historical circumstances of his time. Besides, they contain background information on Tessmann's research strategies, his motives and hopes, his research ethos, his attitude towards the indigenous population as well as on the cultural-historical importance of the ethnographic objects he collected. Tessmann´s monographic publications concerning the Fang (Pangwe), the Bafia, and the Baja of Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea, and the Bubi of Fernando Poo are widely recognized. The research project will be an essential contribution to the history of ethnology and anthropology as well as to the colonial history of Africa and the scientific perception of 'the stranger' in the early 20th century.

Luregn Lenggenhager, University of Zurich:
Researching borders and space in Southern Africa: a reinforcement of dominant power structures?

For my PhD I am working on the definition, organization and production of space and borders within the discourse of nature conservation in the border region between Namibia, Zambia, Angola and Botswana. This project emerged in the context of the Kaza Peace Park, a large transfrontier conservation area that will be established in the region over the next years.
The borders of the Peace Park itself, and the national borders that the Park aims to overcome, have been and still are defined by global acting power-holders, be it the NGOs promoting the park or the national states. Their practices and means of defining space are effective and - for me as a researcher- easy to access and to retrace. They can be found on every map, they are reproduced and widely spread by the media and intensely discussed by researchers.
What I argue in my thesis is that there must be more borders criss-crossing in the area and more practices to understand and define space, that are not as visible and accessible for researchers. To include them into the history of the region's spatial complex one needs to be aware of the enormous difference in the practices of creating and promoting space between a national state or a global NGO, and that of the less obvious actors „in the field". This means finding practical and theoretical methods to do research on borders in the region without stressing the already dominant border structures and without falling into the trap of creating new dominant structures through research – my own and others.

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In my paper I will introduce the analogy of a "border archive" in which borders are "stored" like documents in an archive. By examining borders as archival material in their own sense, I constantly question them, to investigate the time and the intention of their 'creation', the role they play and their interconnection with other borders in the complex ordering system of the 'border archive'.
This approach leads to many practical considerations for my research "in the field" which I will concentrate on in my paper. Questions arise such as: How can I do research in four different countries without getting lost in red tape issues? Is it possible to concentrate on a smaller region, like for example the Namibian Caprivi Strip, without being held up by the same spatial structures of political borders again? If not, how can I then define a manageable research area? And, how can the influence of already dominant definitions, organisation and claims of borders and spaces by such powerful actors like international NGO's or national states be minimized in my own reflection upon the spatial ordering while I do research in the region? And finally maybe the most important question: who are the less prominent, less powerful actors "in the field", how can I find them and how can their definitions of borders and space be understand and approached on the same level like the ones of the state and the NGO's?

Tanja Hammel, University of Basel:
Advancing the frontiers of science: Botanizing women's constructions and circulation of knowledge in South Africa, 1820-1920

In September 2011, a research group focusing on the history of science in Southern Africa was initiated by Prof. Patrick Harries, University of Basel. As one of three PhD-students, I spent 8 weeks in South Africa for archival research for a study situated at the intersection of anthropological history and the historiography of science. Women's botanical contributions – e.g. Mary Elizabeth Barber (near Grahamstown), Alice Pegler (Kentani), Arabella Roupell (Cape Town) – are examined in diverse genres of written and visual sources. The intrepid British exploresses' life stories and their botanical collaborations with indigenous peoples (1820-1920) are at the basis of this project. In these contact zones, intercultural encounters led to a bourgeoning circulation of botanical knowledge that will be viewed with "globalised eyes"1. Botanical art provides a nexus for intellectual and aesthetic concerns. Through plant depictions science becomes art, and art can be used as scientific material. When examining the source material, it is, thus, vital to evaluate which discipline information was relevant for. Questions of each individual's role in the scientific exploration of local flora and the establishment of botany as a scientific discipline are to be answered. In short, this transnational PhD focuses on the construction of botanical knowledge and women's role as cultural mediators and 'transculturators'2 in the co-production of local and global botanical understanding. Currently the focus lies on three to four categories of botanizing women: botanical artists, collectors, patrons and scientists.

Panel 2: INTERVIEWS, STORIES, AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION FOR/WITH/ABOUT MARGINALISED POPULATIONS

Chair: Dr Shane MacGiollabhui

Natacha Filippi, University of Oxford:
Oral History: Recovering the Voice of the 'Marginalized' in Colonial Africa?

When I first began my DPhil, I went to Pollsmoor Prison, in South Africa, in order to collect oral testimonies from prisoners and warders alike. My initial motivation—which could, retrospectively, be qualified as naïve—was to recover the voices of the 'marginalized', those voices which had barely ever gone across the prison walls, even though they had so much to reveal about the South African history. I was aware that the memories I was gathering had to be critically analysed, that they were not to be used as mirrors of the past, but considered for the meaning that past events had taken over time. Drawing from Bourdieu's arguments, I viewed these testimonies as reconstructions of 'meaningful' life narratives through the combination, in front of an external observer, of fragments of life. During my fieldwork, despite these preliminary precautions, I was rapidly overwhelmed by a series of methodological and ethical questionings, to such an extent that they almost paralysed my ability to use the interviews as sources for my research.
In this first encounter with oral history, three aspects became particularly problematic. The striking difference, and consequent inequality, between the narrator and the researcher seems to constitute an insuperable obstacle to the establishment of a trustful relationship. This situation contradicts the project of oral history by raising issues of representation and impossible reciprocity which cannot be easily dismissed by the current self-reflexive rhetoric. The second unsettling element stems from the specific context within which I was leading the interviews, namely a carceral institution characterized by ubiquitous power relationships. This setting brings up the question of consent in an

[1] Term coined in analogy to M. L. Pratt's "Imperial Eyes" to emphasize the neccesity to see colonialism and botany in a global context.
[2] Cf. M. L. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London, 1992).

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exacerbated way, a question which can be found in more discrete forms in most oral history projects on colonial Africa. Finally, the paradox lies in the fact that, despite the disillusion deriving from these intricate issues, the social aim underlying oral history, in its strife to recover the voices of the 'marginalized', impedes any simple resignation, and recurrently forces the researcher to confront these ethical dilemmas.
This paper therefore originates in an attempt to come to terms with the difficulties induced by a personal fieldwork, through an analysis of the current debates on oral history. The focus on colonial Africa as a frame for this study lies both in its higher relevance for my own project, and in the striking difference opposing the—more often than not—Western academic and his 'subaltern' subject. In the following pages, I will try to investigate the extent to which the project of recovering the memory of the 'marginalized' in colonial Africa is achievable. After briefly sketching the aspirations and contradictions inherent to oral history, this essay will highlight the fundamental inequality between the 'marginalized' and those who define them and wish to study them, before analysing the issue of consent, hardly present in the existing historiography on oral history.

Mollie Gerver, University of Oxford:
Evaluating the right and risks of African asylum seekers in Israel who reveal their name

The vast majority of refugees and asylum seekers in Israel, including refugees from South Sudan, Darfur, Eritrea, DR Congo and Ethiopia, have yet be given the right to a Refugee Status Determination process. Refugees have conducted interviews themselves and been interviewed by academics, journalists, NGO and aid workers. Yet, a question always arises concerning whether a refugees' identity should be revealed in the event that the refugee has consented and even insisted on publicizing their identity. UNHCR guidelines answer this question by advising against writing the names and revealing the identity of all asylum seekers interviewed for media and academic publications.
The question of publicizing an identity becomes just as challenging when deciding whether researchers, with consent, should reveal names of refugees who have returned, voluntarily or otherwise, to their country of origin. For example, those who have returned to South Sudan may choose in the future to work in Khartoum, a possibility that may put them at greater risk if the fact that they were in Israel is widely publicized. Nonetheless, refugees are aware of these risks, and may still prefer to publicize their names.
Over the course of 2007 to 2010, while interviewing refugees to learn their life histories and reasons for leaving their country of origin, the diverging wishes of asylum seekers concerning privacy and publication became clear. On the one hand, as many expect, most refugees felt that revealing their identity would put them at risk. On the other hand, some refugees felt that publicizing their name and showing their face could evoke possibly greater sympathy for the particular refugee, in addition to community support for refugee in general, thus preventing this deportation. When there are no third parties, such as families, who may be put in danger with the publication of a name, the refugee's right to have his identity revealed can arguably outweigh risks in publication. A re-evaluation of UNHCR guidelines, which currently recommends blanket anonymity, can perhaps take into account under what circumstances the publication of the names of asylum seekers is ethical. This is in order to protect the right of asylum seekers who want to reveal their name, while still protecting the lives and privacy of those who do not.

Nicki Kindersley, University of Durham:
One day there were gunshots in my village: Southern Sudanese autobiographical accounts of wartime displacement

Most Southern Sudanese families have experienced being forced from their homes and villages during the civil wars since the 1970s. In trying to write about and plan for these migrant communities, the media, humanitarian and academic communities have all struggled with what Hammond calls a 'gap of understanding': the violence and population movements happened on a scale and with a complexity that is extremely difficult to convey. The collection and production of the personal 'stories' of displaced people evolved as one way of attempting to make the war comprehensible. These personal stories of experiencing war and exile were engineered by their tellers and edited by their collectors – from aid agencies to academics – as a means of explaining life in the war through 'authentic' eyewitnesses. The refugee 'life story' grew to provide a powerful set format for the interviewer and interviewee, developing a generic vocabulary and structural patterns by the early 2000s.
Through a discussion of the development of this genre, this paper argues that these emotionally powerful and practically concise 'potted autobiographies' have become a self-perpetuating industry bound by broader assumptions of the wartime refugee experience. Being a refugee is a powerful historical concept with its own vocabulary: people have fled in terror from violent conflict, and become displaced, traumatised and uprooted. This narrative conformity is not a passive phenomenon, but an attempt by those involved in narration to establish the 'truth' of exile, and what needed to have been experienced and vocalised to become 'a refugee.' The generation of these stories was shaped on all sides by the conceptual baggage of what being a 'refugee' and 'in exile' should mean.

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This paper argues that the constraints of limited time in finding and discussing personal histories, and the expectations of all parties in producing a 'refugee life story', combine to create a narrative trap. Do these stories actually give very much information about lived experience, or do they demonstrate instead the aggressive rhetorical demands of being an 'eyewitness' in exile?

12:15 – 13:15 pm **Lunch**

13:30 – 15:00 pm **PANELS 3 and 4**

Panel 3: **ETHICS, POWER, AND CONTEXT: Examining the consequences of methodological choices and politicised ethnography**

Chair: **Prof Jocelyn Alexander**

Gavin McArthur, University of Manchester:
Skin that glitters': standing out in Zanzibar

My Social Anthropology PhD (University of Manchester, 2009) is based on 18 months of ethnographic research in Zanzibar and the coastal region of mainland Tanzania. My dissertation describes Zanzibar as a point of origin for multiple and often conflicting 'cultural imaginaries', which emerge from distinct mainland Tanzanian and Zanzibari notions of ethnicity, 'race' and history. The imaginaries I identify both draw upon and produce cultured understandings and expressions of difference between distinct populations living in the isles, between Zanzibaris and mainland Tanzanians, and between Tanzanians and 'foreigners'. I develop upon theories of imagination and performance/performativity to consider how these cultural imaginaries are given expression and transformed through social performance, arguing that the performances I document are plays for power of various kinds in a historically, politically and socio-culturally contested space. Concerned as they are with the question of who rightly belongs in Zanzibar, I contend that such plays for power can exacerbate or mitigate a persistent and sometimes violent ethno-political conflict that has its roots in the 'anti-Arab' ethnic cleansing that took place during the 'Zanzibar revolution' in 1964.

In my paper I consider the origins and promulgation of the 'Africanist' cultural and political ideologies of the Zanzibari state, tracking their emergence during the Zanzibar revolution using original ethnographic data I collected on past and present discrimination and violence against Catholic Goan Indian Zanzibaris. If circulated in my fieldwork site, the data I collected and plan to publish could have further negative consequences for my informants. With fieldwork ethics and the welfare of my informants in mind, I discuss the consultations I have had with them in the process of writing up my research for publication. I also reflect on the 'social value' of researching ethnic conflict, suggesting how such research might very well exacerbate the conflict in question, and further endanger the people most affected by it.

Jon Schubert, University of Edinburgh:
Ethics under fire

As young researchers we face the scrutiny of ethics committees or institutional review boards prior to our departure 'to the field', where we have to demonstrate an awareness of and preparedness for the ethical challenges that await us. The actual ethical challenges of the field, however, are only revealed in the experience of fieldwork; thus, any meaningful discussion of the different questions and situational answers must result from this experience. Based on a critique of the anthropological literature on fieldwork and ethics, as well as the experience of recent fieldwork in Angola, this paper argues that a localised ethic must take its clues from the local population and will almost always fall short of the institutional guidelines we promise to uphold. These, as I would argue inherent, contradictions become even more evident in two current contexts: the resurgence of authoritarian political power (or 'dominant-party democracy') in Africa, as well as the climate of financial austerity in Europe. How do we balance the different interests of possibly multiple sources of funding and 'home' and 'host' institutions with the integrity of our research and our commitments to our research partners? Rather than offering fully formulated and definitive answers, the paper aims to raise new questions to incite us to think further about our roles as researchers in Europe and Africa, and the epistemological consequences of 'ethical' fieldwork.

Julianne P. Weis, University of Oxford:
Title to be confirmed

Panel 4: **POST-COLONIAL RESEARCHERS NAVIGATING NEO-COLONIAL CONTEXTS: Access, reciprocity, and good intentions**

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Chair: **Dr Jonny Steinberg**

Allison Coyle, University of Edinburgh:
Researching Education: Moving between researcher and teacher

As my research focuses mainly on the links between schools in Scotland and Malawi, I find myself caught between the roles of researcher and teacher. Although the Malawian teachers and the learners realise that I am there as a researcher, I am often asked to spend some time teaching, or if I would come back to teach. The schools I visit normally have experience of a partnership or link with a school in Scotland and of hosting Scottish teachers, which arguably changes their expectations of a foreign visitor.

My research relies on interviews with head teachers and other school staff alongside observational time in a classroom. This is normally where the change in roles begins. With an average of 1:100 ratio of teacher to learners, it's easy to understand why I am asked to teach.

At what point do I put down the notepad and put my experience of teaching, albeit at university level into practice. It comes down to access, with limited resources and high class numbers, sometimes the only way to observe a class is to teach it. Whether its 20 minutes teaching a game or an hour going over basic math. Some teachers think it gives me legitimacy, to have stood in their shoe and taught a large class. Further to this, it changes my relationship with the teachers; they want to learn about how children are taught in Scotland and are interested in what I do that is different.

Due to the nature of my research, I find that my visit to any school is given a great deal of attention, most of the community within the school know I am there and sometimes there is a higher attendance at school. The shorter my visit, the quicker I tend to get the information extracted that I needed but then the less time I spend doing anything that is viewed as beneficial to the school. The longer my visit I find that I can spend more time in a classroom which means it takes more time to get the information. However, if I spend more time at the school, I'm normally invited back, where as if I spend the least amount of time possible; this is not normally the case.

Access and time normally go hand-in-hand, with access taking time, normally in a situation where time is limited and costly. It's never easy to decide at what point to stop conducting research, especially when the staff and learners at the school make the effort to assist you in the research, especially if you don't know if or when you may need to go back. One thing is for sure, relationship between researchers and the participants is always going to be complex, more so when there is an educational aspect to the research. So do we as researchers have a responsibility to put our research aside and assist in the teaching or should we focus purely on the research and refuse to assist in a classroom?

Dominic Davies, University of Oxford:
NGO's and cultural imperialism: a postcolonial perspective

Though this paper is perhaps not a direct confrontation of the topics outlined in the call for papers, revolving around how these difficulties are faced by NGOs rather than academic research, I believe that it speaks towards a number of its key issues. Part of the paper's potential difficulty is that the conflicts it wants to analyze arise from specifically autobiographical circumstances: however, one of the threads of the paper's argument would be that an overly self-conscious, self-critical approach is essential when working in an African context.

So, briefly: in the spring of 2010 I drenched myself in postcolonial theory in order to complete my Masters dissertation, a postcolonial reading of Rudyard Kipling, two months early, so that I could complete an internship I had been doing for about 9 months with an international NGO by going to work in Tanzania, in East Africa, for eight weeks over the summer. The NGO in question is READ International, a student-led organization that collects disused textbooks from secondary schools in the UK, sorts through them to find the most relevant and best quality books, and ships them to East Africa where they are then distributed amongst secondary schools in various regions. A legacy of British colonialism, the secondary school syllabus in Tanzania is a dated replica of the British one, with all secondary school education still taking place in English, despite the fact that, especially in the more rural areas, the majority of the Tanzanian population only speaks Kiswahili. Though the idea behind READ is ingeniously simple and powerful, there are clearly difficulties of cultural imperialist or neocolonial effects. This paper largely stems, then, from the conflict between my own reading of postcolonialism, with all the theoretical nuances and complications that comprise it, and a basic humanitarian ethos that seeks to make the best of a bad systemic situation. Specific topics I would discuss include: my own experiences of working closely with the Tanzanian government, dealing with the authority and power bestowed upon me largely due to my white skin, despite the fact that I was only a voluntary intern with limited experience; turning up at schools in rural areas where children had never seen 'Westerners' before and presenting them with some 500 textbooks- how does one prevent the formation of simple connections between 'West' and 'wealth' in their minds, or should these even be prevented?; communicating the ideological foundations of READ International, of a transnational redistribution of resources, of recycling, of global community, to a largely Swahili speaking student population that are themselves struggling to complete their secondary school education because it still takes place in English, a difficulty that READ itself is perpetuating.

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I believe my experience of working in 'the field', though not specifically for academic research, analyzed through an academic lens, yields a number of interesting conflicts and discussion points that intersect with the concerns of this conference.

Anke-Maria Mueller:
"Researching Africa as -white first world samaritan": self considerations to tackle of post-colonial dichotomies in development research

Postcolonial critique along with post-development theory among others refers to the circumstance that rigid dichotomies between a so called (researcher)Self and (researched)Other are likely to be (re)produced in development research in the name of perpetuating an ongoing hegemony of the West3. In the words of Mohanty, representations in research are hence "not a mere production of knowledge about a certain subject. It is a directly political and discursive practice that is purposeful and ideological!"4. Identity constructions of the researcher (My-)Self "White, First World, Samaritan" versus the Other "Black-Third World, Needy" do not arise in a vacuum but have historical genealogies and are inscribed in relations of power. Research that ignores the binary identity logic is likely to assist in perpetuating "asymmetric" relations.
Bearing in mind the own role in this world as obviously being a subject in which hegemonic thinking is inscribed, postcolonial critique in line with deconstruction provides foundation to unmask ethnocentric discourses which invade(d) in one's body, thinking, behaviour and, consequently, in research attempts. Following Jacques Derrida, Spivak asks the question which should accompany research: "The question is how to keep the ethnocentric Subject from establishing itself by selectively defining an Other"5.
It is believed that research without considerations of one's own (Self)position in the World, (unwillingly?) contributes to "epistemic violence"6. Attempts of transferring this aim to research have been made in development research to the subject "Gender-Energy-Nexus" in Uganda (2003/2004), Pakistan (2009) and Afghanistan (2009/2010), thereby applying approaches to provide spaces for articulation of subaltern discourses and paying attention to bipolar identity constructions. Techniques for self-reflection have been applied from psychology and ethno-psychoanalysis, acknowledging subjectivity. In the words of Spivak: "Part of our [my, AMM.] 'unlearning' project is to articulate that ideological formation - by measuring silences, if necessary - into the object of investigation.7" This was (tried to be) practiced by applying techniques of decentration8, using research diaries, -journals and -communities. The concept of "thick description" by Clifford Geertz9 is an attempt to grasp social discourses beyond the own perspective while trying to note down inherent meanings. Using postscripts and maps (in addition to recordings of interviews, observation notes and prior mentioned diary and journal), a thick description furthermore entails reflections about the own subjectivity (again), implying thoughts, interpretations, feelings, atmosphere. Besides the actual subject (Gender-Energy), the researcher was thus made object of research which led to two outcomes. Therefore, one may well ask if relations of power and dominance (Self/Other) can be controlled in research to the extent of producing "meaningful" research findings (here: to Gender-Energy). It would be the aim of the paper to share practical experiences and critically investigate prior mentioned question.

Mary-Anne Decatur, School of Oriental and African Studies:
Ethics and the social context: Intervention and activism in the field: the case of female genital cutting

My PhD research aims to examine the effects of local and international health campaigns in Tanzania designed to promote male circumcision while eradicating female genital cutting (FGC). More specifically, how do these campaigns impact local understandings of identity and social belonging in communities that have historically practiced both male circumcision and female genital cutting as part of initiation ceremonies? How have these health campaigns impacted initiation ceremonies, social relations and local cosmologies of health? Female genital cutting in particular is an ethically complex and sensitive subject and is illegal in Tanzania for any woman less than eighteen years old under the 1998 Sexual Offences Special

3 Cp. E.g. Said, Edward W. 1989: Representing the Colonized: Anthropology's Interlocutors. In: Critical Inquiry. 15/Winter 1989. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 205-225

4 Mohanty, Chandra Talpade 1988: Under Western Eyes. Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses. in: Mohanty, Chandra Talpade/Russo, Ann et al 1991: Third World Women and the politics of Feminism. Indiana: University Press, p. 53.

5 Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty 1988: „Can the Subaltern Speak?" In: Nelson, Cary/Grossberg, Lawrence (ed.)1988: Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture, New York: Macmillan, p. 292

6 Id., p 280

7 Id., p. 287

8 acc. to Breuer, Franz/Muckel, Petra et al 1996: Qualitative Psychologie. Grundlagen, Methoden und Anwendungen eines Forschungsstils. 1st Ed.; Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag

9 Geertz, Clifford 1983: Dichte Beschreibung. Beiträge zum Verstehen kultureller Systeme. 1st German Ed.; transl. Luchesi, Brigitte/ Bindemann, Rolf .Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp Verlag

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Provisions Act. How can researchers studying genital cutting best respect those being researched, particularly when some research participants may be opposed to the practice while others may ardently support it?
Anthropology as a discipline has become increasingly focused on public engagement and activism (see Goodale 2006). Nancy Scheper-Hughes famously called for a new form of 'militant anthropology' that is politically committed, morally engaged and opposed to cultural relativism as moral relativism (1995:410,415). Less dramatically, Setha M. Low and Sally Engle Merry have argued for public engagement as an important component of an anthropological practice that respects the rights and dignity of all humans (2010:S204). As noted by Low and Merry, however, progressive human rights discourses hold some similarity to the 'civilizing processes' of colonialism and the desire of researchers to avoid colonialist critiques can lead to self-censorship (2010:S213). How do researchers decide when activism is appropriate and who to support or not support through activism? Furthermore, how do researchers decide when intervention of any kind is appropriate, and what happens when not intervening could itself be a form of harm for those being researched?
It would be beneficial for my research to observe female genital cutting ceremonies. However, observation of these ceremonies raises complex ethical issues because I must both protect the confidentiality of those performing the practice as well as consider the harm done to those undergoing the practice. It is possible that I will be faced with various ethical dilemmas, such as whether or not to help a circumciser obtain clean razors. To not help in that situation could mean that the circumciser re-using razors, dramatically increasing the risk of harm to those undergoing the procedure. But, to help the circumciser obtain razors would also mean a potentially problematic level of involvement in the practice on my part. It would be impossible to conduct fieldwork if anthropologists voiced dismay at every practice they disagreed with, but it can be difficult to determine when intervention is appropriate and useful or when it may actually harm those being researched. The boundaries between activism and relativism are continuously reshaped by decisions made in the field. The act of making these decisions is valuable and has the potential to enrich research.

15:00 – 15:15 pm **Tea & Coffee**

15:15 – 16:45 pm **Interactive Session**

PANEL 5: **Beyond researcher/researched: Transdisciplinary reflections on data collection and research dissemination**

Chair: **Dr Nic Cheeseman**

Charlotte Cross, University of Sussex
Charlotte's research explores contemporary community policing reforms in Tanzania and their links with historical examples of state-sponsored 'vigilantism'.

Jake McKnight, University of Oxford
Jake's research investigates managerial reform in Ethiopian hospitals. He hopes to build a model of organizational change within the hospital and compare this to a model of healthseeking practices. The research phase is complete but the findings relate to a reform that will affect the lives of 80 million people. Accordingly, Jake is interested in ways that the research can be shared with public health actors in Ethiopia.

Lizzi Milligan, University of Bristol
Lizzi's research explores locally-grounded conceptions of quality in free secondary education in Western Kenya. Based on qualitative fieldwork in two rural secondary schools with a range of local stakeholders, findings suggest the importance of context and local voice for the successful implementation of a quality education and critique the gap between policy and practice in Kenyan secondary education.

Stephanie Terreni Brown, University of Edinburgh
Stephanie has been exploring Kampalan shitscapes, or the myriad ways in which shit and power are entwined in everyday life. The research seeks to discover how the city of Kampala is imagined and represented by a range of different actors, and how this affects sanitation provision and development. Shit, and its transformation along its (un)sanitary path, is an

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integral and universal part of daily life; researching shitscapes thus allows the researcher to take a heuristic approach to analysing contemporary urban life.

This panel brings together four alumni of the MSc African Studies programme to discuss their PhD work, the methods they have used to collect data and processes of dissemination. All four of the panel members' research addresses, in various ways, the interactions between institutions and societies in east Africa; as such, we are keen to extrapolate ways that research methods can better interrogate such relationships. Concurrently, we ask how, and indeed if, research results can be made both relevant and sensitive enough to be 'given back' to the communities within which we worked. When grappling with such concerns, feminist and postcolonial theories offer some assistance, and the promotion of reflexivity is one way we are better able to reflect on our experiences of conducting collaborative social science research in developing countries. Ultimately, the session aims to highlight the challenges faced by researchers undertaking this type of work on both sides of the collaboration, but also to foreground examples of best practice.
The panel will open with an introduction from each of the four speakers, during which they will briefly outline their respective research projects:

We will then identify some of the issues encountered that, despite coming from very different academic disciplines, have proved to be troublesome in some way. Researchers must seriously consider the implications of their research during the data collection phase. In particular, the panel is interested in participatory research methods which ensure that 'the researched' are able to address the collection and assessment of data during fieldwork. Lizzi used a range of participatory techniques with secondary school students in her qualitative fieldwork – essay and diary writing, poster design and photo-linked interviews – to encourage participant-driven discussions of quality. Stephanie utilised a variety of qualitative research methods, including shadowing participants (urban planners, development workers and residents), participatory mapping, and in-depth interviews to interrogate imaginaries of 'the urban'. Steph and Lizzi will ruminate upon these methods, and suggest that such practices offer a greater degree of participant empowerment and encourage more fluid notions of the traditional dichotomies of researcher/researched and insider/outsider.
Beyond the fieldwork, however, efforts must be made by researchers to share findings and theory with those who have contributed. The panel also hopes to explore practical methods through which academic work can be repackaged and made relevant to audiences outside of the discipline and outside of the academy. Jake hopes to share his work by writing a paper specifically for the Ethiopian Journal of Health and presenting at annual meetings of hospitals CEOs. This will require adopting a very different kind of academic voice and also a nuanced balance of critique and understanding. Charlotte argues that relationships with 'the researched' remain important both practically, in terms of the likelihood of a return to the fieldsite for future research, and ethically, as many of those who participated in the research are keen to know, and in some cases expect to benefit from, the findings. However, reporting back is problematic when findings could damage local social relationships, implicate some participants in illegal activities and potentially damage the good relationships that had developed between the researcher and participants.
The panel will conclude with a discussion of the various methods mentioned and questions from the audience.

16:45-17:00 pm Closing remarks: Dr David Pratten