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## **EDITORIAL**

### **Violence in Africa and its Consequences: Understanding Africa in Australasia and the Pacific.**

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**Jay Marlowe**

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This issue of ARAS is produced at a time when AFSAAP's membership has expanded exponentially, with this journal reaching its widest audience yet. With over 800 members and online database access, these pages are now being read by people in every continent of the world. Thus it is more than appropriate, necessary and timely to expand the editorial team, and as such it gives us great pleasure to introduce the new team assisting AFSAAP to produce its flagship journal the *Australasian Review of African Studies*.

Dr Jay Marlowe has agreed to work as a co-editor. He has worked internationally as a social worker and is currently a senior lecturer at the University of Auckland within the School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work. Previously, he worked as a lecturer within the Department of Social Work and Social Policy at Flinders University and was a visiting fellow with the Refugee Studies Centre at the University of Oxford. Jay's primary area of research interest focuses upon refugee and migrant settlement and the associated issues that influence people's sense of well-being, identit(ies) and how their experiences relate to the wider society living around them.<sup>1</sup> As such, his primary focus for the journal will be for paper submissions that focus on African settlement in Australasia. Jay was the *ARAS* guest editor for the 2011 special issue on the Sudanese diaspora.

It is hoped that having Jay based in New Zealand will encourage more *ARAS* article contributions from this region as there are significant and growing numbers of African migrants living there. Jay is currently

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<sup>1</sup> Jay Marlowe, "Beyond the Discourse of Trauma: Shifting the Focus on Sudanese Refugees," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 23: 2 (2010): 183-98; Jay Marlowe, "Walking the Line: Southern Sudanese Masculinities and Reconciling One's Past with the Present," *Ethnicities* 12:1 (2012): 50-66.

conducting a study with Refugee Services, New Zealand's principal resettlement agency, into understanding the planning, policy and service provision implications for Somali, Ethiopian and several other communities living in Christchurch after the recent earthquakes.

Dr Anne Harris is very pleased to expand her work with the AFSAAP team as a co-editor of the ARAS journal. She is an American-Australian writer, researcher and Senior Lecturer in Creative Arts Education at Monash University (Melbourne), and has published over thirty peer reviewed articles or chapters in the areas of creative pedagogies, cultural studies and multi-diversities. She writes extensively about arts education, particularly in relation to refugee background learners. Her 2010-2011 community arts education program *Culture Shack* culminated in two weeks of workshops and art-making in Melbourne's western suburbs, using playwriting, animation and hip hop with young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds as a pathway into further education. Currently she is working collaboratively with Sudanese and Afghan young people in Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs, using drama to address social exclusion in Melbourne's high schools with the *Include* program. Her 2010 doctoral study *Cross-Marked: Sudanese Australian Young Women Talk Education* has become the book *Ethnocinema: Intercultural arts education*,<sup>2</sup> and featuring 7 short videos co-created with Sudanese Australian young women from Melbourne. Anne's African-related research focuses mainly within the Sudanese community, and considers questions of gender roles in relation to schooling and education.<sup>3</sup> Readers can find more of Anne's publications on the Monash website at: <http://www.education.monash.edu.au/profiles/harrisan>

Dr Tanya Lyons continues as the Editor of ARAS (since 2009) and has recently been elected as the President of the African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific. Tanya Lyons is also a Senior Lecturer in the School of International Studies at Flinders University, Adelaide. She specialises in teaching African Political History. Tanya Lyons is the author of *Guns and Guerrilla Girls: Women in the Zimbabwean Liberation Struggle*, and co-editor of the book *Africa on a Global Stage*. She has also written about "The State of African Studies in Australia"

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<sup>2</sup> Anne Harris, *Ethnocinema: Intercultural Arts Education*, Springer: The Netherlands. 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Anne Harris, "Neir Riel (Strong Girls): Transgression and Fugitive Spaces in Sudanese Australian Classrooms." *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17:8(September 2011):750-759

(with Elizabeth Dimock) and more recently published a chapter on “Australian foreign policy toward Africa.”<sup>4</sup>

Associate Professor Geoffrey Hawker continues as the co-editor and book’s review editor of *ARAS*. As a past-president of AFSAAP, Geoffrey Hawker is a committed Africanist in this region and is one of the few academics who teaches African studies in the social sciences. He has recently written about “The Rudd Government and Africa: Business as Usual?” and “Zimbabwe: retrospect and Prospect.”<sup>5</sup>

The predominant theme in this issue of *ARAS* is based around violence in Africa. Understanding the nature and consequences of violence is both historical and contemporary, and at the time of writing, popular content for social media networks. Noteworthy and relevant here is the KONY2012 campaign, which in early March 2012 spread like wild fire through social media forums, alerting ‘the world’ to the atrocities being committed by Joseph Kony, the leader of the Lord’s Resistance Army in Uganda. While veracity and appropriateness were both lacking and questionable in this attempt at a global campaign to simply ‘stop Kony,’ it is nonetheless remarkable that an American based advocacy group could inspire the global and ‘socially networked’ community to participate – even if this participation was mainly limited to clicking ‘like’ on the forums, or forwarding the video links to other friends and networks. April 20<sup>th</sup> 2012 was intended as a night of global action to plaster the walls and sidewalks of all major cities with posters declaring STOP KONY2012. This date has passed with ‘much ado about nothing.’ A few posters have been noticed in some suburbs or cities, but the energy of the social media campaign was not (as we all suspected) reflected in real action.

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<sup>4</sup> Tanya Lyons, *Guns and Guerrilla Girls: Women in the Zimbabwean National Liberation Struggle*, (African World Press, Lawrenceville, New Jersey, 2004); Tanya Lyons and Geralyn Pye, eds., *Africa on a global Stage*, (Africa World Press, New Jersey, 2006); Tanya Lyons and Elizabeth Dimock, “The State of African Studies in Australia,” in Paul Zeleza, ed., *The Study of Africa Volume 2, Global and Transnational Engagements*, (CODESRIA, 2007); Tanya Lyons, “Australian Foreign Policy Toward Africa” in James Cotton and John Ravenhill, eds., *Middle World Dreaming, Australia and World Affairs Series 2006-2010*, Oxford Uni Press, 2011/12.

<sup>5</sup> Geoffrey Hawker, “Zimbabwe: retrospect and Prospect,” *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 30:1 (June 2009): 11-25; and Geoffrey Hawker, “The Rudd Government and Africa: Business as Usual?” paper presented at AFSAAP Annual Conference, University of Queensland, October 2009.

Indeed, in an attempt to re-invigorate the campaign, a screening of the 'documentary movie' was organised by the producers on April 13<sup>th</sup> 2012 in Uganda. Ironically, the ten thousand or so Ugandans who attended the event became enraged with its content and 'pelted' the screen with stones. When police fired live ammunition into the air, one person was killed and many more were injured. Margaret Aciro also attended this screening. She is a victim of Joseph Kony's brutality. The image of her mutilated face was used in the film. *The Monitor* reported her as stating the following:

I watched the Kony 2012 video but I decided to return home before the second one (Kony 2012 Part II) because I was dissatisfied with its content. I became sad when I saw my photo in the video. I knew they were using it to profit.<sup>6</sup>

The debates about this campaign and its effectiveness; about the use of social media in a globalised world; about the effectiveness of international military interventions in African countries; and indeed about African solutions to African problems, will continue long after the demise of Joseph Kony and his supporters; and indeed long after 'networked' global citizens have moved onto the next cause. At the time of writing, in late April 2012, Charles Taylor, the former president of Liberia has been found guilty of aiding and abetting war crimes at the International Criminal Court: a message has thus been sent to other former and current leaders of African states perpetrating crimes against humanity. This follows the curious case of a prediction that an African state leader would die in April.<sup>7</sup> Many suspected that Robert Mugabe's days were numbered, due to his 'unexplained' trip to Singapore, and suggestions of prostate cancer. Instead, it was the Malawian President who passed away. While this heralded Joyce Banda's rise to become Africa's second female head of state, it did little to quell the rumours of Mugabe's imminent demise.

What is pertinent to this issue of *ARAS*, is that these media campaigns, whether reporting facts or rumours, or attempting to initiated action (political, military, international etc.), have in this region of Australasia and the Pacific, detracted from the more important and substantial

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<sup>6</sup> Sam Lawino, "Kony 2012 video makers using us to make profit, war victim says," *The Monitor* (Uganda) April 17<sup>th</sup> 2012, <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/-/688334/1387926/-/aw2cd3z/-/index.html>

<sup>7</sup> *The Tribune*, "Malawi: President Banda's cross and the Nigerian connection," Tuesday 17th April, <http://tribune.com.ng/index.php/politics/39337-malawipresident-bandas-cross-and-the-nigerian-connection> (accessed 29 April 2012)

research and analysis that is currently being undertaken by scholars of African Studies. Indeed, this particular issue of *ARAS* publishes a number of articles from keen Africanists, willing to undertake research in this particular field of research, which unfortunately still garners little prospect of gaining credit points towards academic careers in this region.

According to the recent survey of African Studies in Australian universities, commissioned by AFSAAP there are only 21 topics/courses available in Australian universities with a ‘pure focus on Africa,’ and only 7 of these focus on contemporary issues in African politics. As seen in Table 1 below, these are:

**Table 1: African Studies courses/topics with pure African focus**

Curtin University	1. Anthropology: South Africa the Politics of Memory.
Flinders University: International Relations	2. <b>Africa on a global stage;</b>
	3. <b>African Politics Global Issues</b>
Victoria University	4. <b>Contemporary Africa and Social Change</b>
La Trobe University	5. African Archaeology
	6. Worlds of the Pharaohs, The Archaeology of Ancient Egypt
RMIT University	7. <b>Contemporary Africa</b>
The University of Melbourne	8. <b>Africa: Environment, Development, People</b>
	9. African Drum and Dance Ensemble 1 and 2
	10. South Africa Under Apartheid 1948-1994
Macquarie University Centre for Middle East and North African Studies; and Politics	11-17. (7 listed topics on Egyptian history). 18. <b>African Politics and Globalisation</b>
Monash University (South Africa Campus)	19. <b>Africa in the Modern World</b>
	20. African music, musical change, social change and performance.
The University of Sydney	21. Ancient Sudan, Kingdom of the Black Pharaohs

**Source: AFSAAP Project 2011 - as listed in Australian Universities’ timetables 2011.**

Given this dearth of African Studies in Australian universities, there must be acknowledgement and celebration of the scholarship that is being produced in African Studies in this region. Of particular note is the encouragement from our colleagues in New Zealand who are also building the bridges to reinvigorate African Studies in the region.

Mamadou Diouma Bah has contributed a fascinating article on understanding violence in Guinea. Entitled “State Resilience in Guinea: Mitigating the ‘Bad Neighbourhood Effect’ of Civil War Next Door,” his article argues that Guinea was able to successfully mitigate violent outbreaks, and stop the spread of political instability and civil war, despite its location in a ‘bad neighbourhood.’ Bah examines a number of hypotheses that attempt to explain how creating national unity, working on the economic management of refugee communities, and strengthening the armed forces through foreign investment, can mitigate against the sources of violent upheaval.

Bah’s article is appropriately followed by John Idriss Lahai’s article on Sierra Leone, one of Guinea’s ‘bad neighbours.’ Lahai purposefully challenges our understanding of violence as experienced by child soldiers forcibly recruited in Sierra Leone’s civil war. Lahai’s own experiences in this context are invaluable documented here, in his analysis of the gendered hierarchies of women’s roles in the fighting forces of Sierra Leone’s civil war. From his perspective a number of gendered battles were fought, and he provides a rich and detailed account of them, and their traditional connections.

Nonetheless, his article is not without contention, and it is from a feminist critique that the *ARAS* editor’s prerogative was to invite David Duriesmith to write a response to his contribution. “‘The other half on gender’ in Sierra Leone’s civil conflict” is a critical response to John Idriss Lahai’s “Fused in Combat: Unsettling the Gendered Hierarchies and Women’s Roles in the Fighting Forces in the Sierra Leone’s Civil War.” Duriesmith argues that the gendered focus on war needs to be on men’s actions as abusers, rather than on women’s actions that may be perceived as having led them to become victims. Centralising the privilege of men, can mitigate against the silencing of this group as perpetrators of violence, when discussing ‘gender’ in Africa.

Following from this, and leading the three critical articles in this issue of *ARAS* on Kenya, Clare Buswell’s 2011 AFSAAP/UNISA Postgraduate Prize winning article “Moral Authority, Power and Women’s Identity in Colonial Kenya” provides an historical analysis of gender and land rights in colonial Kenya. Her article brings to the foreground a gendered analysis of history and argues that moral authority enabled women in Kenya to challenge men and undermine colonial power. Based on important archival research, Buswell concludes that women in postcolonial Kenya can challenge these gendered assumptions and claim

their moral authority to access their rights to land and power, both in the household and wider society.

The second article on Kenya examines electoral violence. Sam Wilkins, in his article, "Citizen and Self: Violence, Identity and Legitimacy in the Rift Valley's Post-Election Crisis," argues that patrimonialism is rife in Kenya and not bounded by temporal lines, and can still rely on ethnic divisions to drive it. His argument draws upon evidence from the 2007-2008 electoral and related violence, which resulted in over 1000 deaths and many more injured. Wilkins examines the issues of identity, ethnicity and politics to understand why individuals would participate in such violence.

The third article on Kenya, written by Scott MacWilliam, can read as a response to Wilkins' article. Entitled, "Identities of impoverishment: ethnicity, tribalism and violence in Kenya," Macwilliam argues instead, that the violence meted out by individuals in these political crises now common in Kenya over the last few decades, is not so much about ethnicity as it is about capitalist accumulation. The violence he argues cannot be explained without reference to the growth of the capitalist nation state, in particular the process of accumulation and how this shapes identities. This is an important feature in the Kenyan landscape, so readily defined by 'ethnicity,' and yet, it is more relevant that issues of impoverishment and land distribution are understood to hold the keys to ending the said violence.

The first half of this issue of ARAS thus focusses thematically on state violence, civil violence, and individual violence in African states. Understanding this violence and its gendered and historical contexts is a fundamental component to African Studies in this region. Therefore, it is only appropriate that the second half of this issue of ARAS focuses on some of the aspects of the end results of violence in Africa, and that is the difficulties and issues facing former refugees from African countries, trying to settle and integrate into Australian society.

Samuel Muchoki provides insight into sexuality and sexual health of African-Australian Men with refugee backgrounds from the Horn of Africa. By conducting a literature review and content analysis of 108 articles that focused on African-Australians from the Horn of Africa, this article examines the prevalence with which the themes of sexuality and sexual health are covered. Yet interestingly, only four articles cover these specific issues in detail. Muchoki thus demonstrates that there is a

relative lacuna into the understandings of men's sexuality, sexual practices and how these behaviours may impact their health (and subsequently women's health) within settlement contexts. This focus is particularly relevant as people from refugee backgrounds living in Australia often encounter and must navigate new social and cultural expectations, opportunities and taboos related to sexualities and sexual health. As such, Muchoki recommends a much needed research agenda that looks to further uncover African Australians' experiences of, and perspectives on, a critically important and relatively little known issue.

Mike Oliver's 2011 AFSAAP/Monash Postgraduate Prize winning article examines and critiques the experiences of resilience and school engagement for African high school students who are from refugee backgrounds. His article makes an important contribution by giving voice to a group of adolescent African Australians who are navigating their way through the Australian schooling system. Oliver takes a holistic perspective towards understanding what sustains and encourages hope for many of these students who may describe their experience as living between two or more cultures between home and host countries. He also identifies critical issues that may impact on student's schooling who have had a 'refugee' experience which may place them at a disadvantage when located within a traditional age cohort classroom of students who have been primarily educated within an Australian schooling system. Whilst identifying perceived discrimination and other associated challenges to succeed in schools, this article also highlights the students' optimism and resilience that can help inform inclusive schooling practices, pathways to positive outcomes and hopeful futures.

Returning the focus back to Sierra Leone (see Lahai and Duriesmith's articles), Alec Thornton, Jinnah Momoh and Paul Tengbe's contribution, "Institutional capacity building for urban agriculture research using participatory GIS in a post-conflict context," throws light on a vastly different concern within this region. They productively use an urban agricultural case study in Sierra Leone to address important issues in capacity building since the end of the civil war, in particular finding sustainable ways of addressing rural-to-urban migration. They skillfully weave an analysis of the geographical information system (GIS) and best practice in urban development, while building a greater understanding of internal displacement and its complexities for urban developers. This profile identifies some ways in which this post-conflict nation might benefit from developing technologies (like GIS and GPS technology) and build institutional capacities in urban agricultural practices, while

remaining vigilant to sustainability and other primary needs post-conflict. Their article represents a three-year collaboration involving researchers from Sierra Leone, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia, and offers important methodological and practical implications of these developments for those involved in food production. Their article demonstrates the value of a participatory approach in building relationships between stakeholders, and for real sustainability of program innovation. They also clearly demonstrate the productive links between such methodologies and emerging technologies like the GIS in mapping food production and urban internal displacement.

With obvious links to the issue of sustainability in African development, Thomas Sigler's field notes from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) show how complex these pursuits truly are, and how inextricably aligned with the concerns of internally-displaced persons. The double-demands of ecological sustainability for developing nations and food sources for growing populations seeks, as Sigler skillfully shows, "access to new farmland and salable primary resources." How to balance these competing needs is a concern for all regions globally, but Sigler's insightful field notes from DRC highlight several aspects in more depth than we have seen before. Here, Sigler discusses threats to the Ituri Forest, a global biodiversity hotspot. He attributes post-colonial governance and population explosions which create tensions and competition around these valuable resources and regions. Sigler's field notes skillfully presents a snapshot picture of the intersecting needs and the region's seemingly most pressing threat through food consumption, slash-and-burn agriculture, and mining: and an ever-growing human population.

Basil Ekot turns his lens to offering us an update on Nigeria's fragile situation since the ascension of the new president in 2010. Ekot, a regular contributor to *ARAS*, offers an incisive overview of the instabilities and tensions that have plagued the presidency of Goodluck Jonathan since taking office, most prominently the "Boko Haram [trans. Western education is evil'] menace" – which employs increasingly violent means. Ekot reports that the tensions from this group's bombing and other violent activities are "being felt all over the country." Readers will note with concern the ways in which this report from the field indicates that "the anticipated democratic terrain ...is gradually eroding" and how Ekot predicts further difficulties not only for the president, but for the country, if these attacks are not considered "as a matter of urgency." Such diverse and detailed field reports are an invaluable contribution to knowledge in

building a body of African-generated, firsthand research data for both an African and an international audience, and ARAS readers will read them with interest.

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