

THE AUSTRALASIAN REVIEW OF AFRICAN STUDIES  
VOLUME 35 NUMBER 1 JUNE 2014

CONTENTS

**Editorial**

- Nationalism, Nation Building and the African Diaspora in Australasia 3  
Tanya Lyons, Anne Harris and Jay Marlowe

**Articles**

- Cultural Practice as Resistance in the British Colony of Kenya 10  
**Christina Kenny**

- 'Once Upon a Time there was a Wonderful Country':  
Representations of History in Rwanda 23  
**Deborah Mayersen**

- 'But We Can't Make Them Drink': Understanding Community  
Ownership in the Namwera and Chiponde Afforestation Project 39  
**Jack Corbett**

- 'I have to be my own mother and father': the African Student  
Experience at University, a Case Study Using Narrative Analysis 59  
**Lynda Lawson**

- Narratives of Return Among Refugee-Background South Sudanese in  
New Zealand 76  
**Ryan O'Byrne**

**Opinion**

- Christmas in South Sudan: Fieldnotes from a War Zone 95  
**Ryan O'Byrne**

## **Book Reviews**

- Anne M Harris. *Ethnocinema: Intercultural Arts Education.* **103**  
**Martin Mhando**
- Peter Curson. *Border Conflicts in a German African Colony: Jacob Morengo and the Untold Tragedy of Edward Presgrave.* **106**  
**Matt Fitzpatrick**
- Goran Hyden, *African Politics in Comparative Perspective, Second Edition* **108**  
**Sam Wilkins**
- Daniel Branch. *Kenya: Between Hope and Despair, 1963-2011* **111**  
**Anna Rabin**
- William G. Martin, *South Africa and the World Economy: Remaking Race, State, and Region* **113**  
**Ainsley D. Elbra**

## EDITORIAL

### Nationalism, Nation Building and the African Diaspora in Australasia

Tanya Lyons  
Flinders University  
Jay Marlowe  
University of Auckland

In our last editorial (Lyons, Marlowe, Harris, December 2013) we lamented the imminent demise of Australia's new engagement with Africa with the installment of a new Liberal Coalition government in Canberra. We were not wrong. When the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade assumed responsibility for the delivery of Australia's overseas aid program it spelled the end of AusAID. Among many programs cut from the budget has been the Australian Development Research Award Scheme (ADRAS) funding, one time celebrated as a hallmark of Australia's intentions to further its understanding of the continent and Australia's strategic interests there. During Kevin Rudd's time as Prime Minister and his role as foreign affairs minister, African studies scholars in the region were excited by the potential of this partnership with the Australian government, to finally achieve recognition and a chance at real funding for their ongoing research (see Lyons 2011 and Lyons 2013). Alas, only one round of funding was achieved in 2012 (DFAT, 2012a) and those hoping for a second chance at this opportunity for otherwise scarce grants for Africa related research were understandably disappointed.

But what of those lucky few who did win grants in this first and only round of ADRAS funding focused specifically on Africa? Where are they now? Information gleaned from the official DFAT website (2012b) tells us that the total ADRAS budget in 2012 was nearly \$33 million. For the first time, a special category was set aside for *Africa* and nearly \$7.5 million or one quarter of the budget was allocated for that research. However, an additional \$2.5 million was allocated to research on Africa enabled through some of the other categories of funding including disability, education, scholarships and water and sanitation (see Table 1).

**Table 1 – 2012 ADRAS Funding For African Based Projects**

	<b>Allocated to African projects</b>	<b>Total ADRAS Funding</b>
<b>Africa specific</b>	\$7483204	\$7483204
<b>Disability</b> - on a project based in Malawi and Uganda	\$363,389	\$5,622,507
<b>Education</b> - on a project based in North Africa – Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Yemen	\$400,000	\$2,493, 721
<b>Scholarships</b> - on assessing impact of the Australia Awards in Kenya, Mozambique and Uganda	\$457,408	\$1,072,695)
<b>Water and Sanitation</b> - on a comparative project between Malawi and Bangladesh* (*note assuming only half spent in Africa).	\$1,189,147	\$6,258,982
<b>Mining for Development</b>	n/a	<b>\$2,427,678</b>
<b>Health</b>	n/a	<b>\$4,213,477</b>
<b>Gender</b>	n/a	<b>\$2,493,721</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$9,893,148</b>	<b>\$32762603</b>

*Source: DFAT 2012b*

Overall, a total of nearly \$10 million was spent on research projects related to Africa, nearly one third of the ADRAS budget. This was indeed a significant historical moment in funding for African studies researchers in Australia. Perhaps never to be repeated. However, of this total allocated, how much was awarded to Australian based researchers? As indicated in Table 2 below, over \$3 million dollars, nearly one third of the African research budget was allocated to 7 internationally based research institutes and researchers, while just over \$5.5 million was spread between 5 Australian universities.

Where is this research now and will it ever be used to inform public policy in the future? The outcomes from prior rounds of ADRAS grants can be viewed from links on the DFAT (2012a) webpages, however, none of these projects from the 2008-2011 rounds of funding related to Africa. So, it seems we will just have to wait patiently for the final research outcomes and publications that the previous Labor government

**Table 2 Distribution of 2012 ADRAS Research Funds to Australian Institutions (Researching Africa)**

<b>Australian Institutions</b>	<b>Total ADRAS Funding For Africa Projects</b>	<b>Internationally Based Institutions</b>	<b>Total ADRAS Funding For Africa Projects</b>
University of Sydney	\$1732575	International Peace Institute	\$400,000
Murdoch University	\$2097011	University College London	\$363,389
University of Queensland	\$704309	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology	\$375,400
Deakin University	\$404,320	Overseas Development Institute UK	\$773,030
Wollongong University	\$600,000	University of Pretoria	\$520,000
		Nossal Institute for Global Health	\$454,118
		Columbia University	\$279,849
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$5,538,215</b>		<b>\$3,165786</b>

*Source: DFAT 2012b*

invested in, in order for an informed public policy to be enabled. The guiding document for these funds, *The AusAid Research Strategy 2012-2016* (DFAT, 2012c) is however, now redundant, along with many of AusAID's former staff once dedicated to Africa, and there is no guarantee that the current government will even consider or review that research, let alone re-consider implementing some of the recommendations of the *Joint Parliamentary Inquiry Into Australia's Relations with the Countries of Africa* (see Mickler and Lyons, 2013), that the previous government was also unable or unwilling to.

The point of all of this is that Australian researchers on Africa simply cannot expect much in the way of official grants or funding for their projects, unless they can slip them into the categories of current overseas priorities - health systems, maternal and child health, water and sanitation, and public health threats – which as priorities invented by the previous government, may or may not survive current government

cutbacks (this editorial was written prior to the 2013-14 Budget announcements).

The *Australasian Review of African Studies* thus continues to be a valuable resource in African Studies in the region, because we continue to receive high quality research from scholars undeterred by the current lack of enthusiasm for Africa in the hallways of Parliament House in Canberra. Indeed, unlike a number of journals which are slaves to the market forces and the tedious online management of the larger publishing businesses, *ARAS* is completely independent and does not expect its hard working authors to 'pay to publish'. Indeed *ARAS*, now publishing its 35<sup>th</sup> volume continues to be the journal of the *African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific*, and is supported entirely by the subscription of AFSAAP members, both individuals and institutions.

As such, we now would like to extend an invitation to all of those researchers, both in Australia and internationally, that were granted the elusive ADRAS funds for Africa to publish their research in these pages and thus end our wait to see some or any fruits of the Stephen Smith (former Foreign Affairs Minister in the Rudd government) and Kevin Rudd engagement with Africa (see Rudd, 2013).

In the meantime, we would like introduce the current research that graces our pages of volume 35 number 1 of *ARAS*, June 2014. We have titled our editorial *Nationalism, Nation Building and the African Diaspora in Australasia*, because there is a clear intellectual and pedagogical link between all of these articles presented below. It was Samora Machel former president of Mozambique who once stated that for the "nation to live the tribe must die", and it is clearly the case that ethnicity and other markers of identity and culture are factors (not necessarily the cause) in the continuing conflicts and crises we witness across Africa today. Nationalism and nation-building in turn is affected by the increasing size of the African diaspora, which plays its own role in the reconstruction and development of African nations.

Christina Kenny examines the issue of *Cultural practice as resistance in the British colony of Kenya*, with particular reference to the practice of 'female genital mutilation'. Kenny argues that women's bodies and voices were central to the anti-colonial struggles, but they were silenced in the nationalist discourse by the 'defence of circumcision' as a way of maintaining traditional authority and cultural solidarity. It relied upon a 'skewed' description of the practice of female circumcision as a 'trim' or a 'minor nick', rather than a more accurate portrayal of the reality which was much more 'horrific'.

Nonetheless, women were thus actively engaged in political action and their ‘body modifications’ became central to the construction of a national identity and nationalist discourse. Kenny’s article was awarded the Monash/AFSAAP Postgraduate Prize for 2013.

Deborah Meyersen’s article *Once Upon a Time there was a Wonderful Country’: Representations of History in Rwanda*, in this volume discusses the challenges of nation-building in post-genocide Rwanda. She examines the problems of (mis)representations in the accounts of Rwanda’s colonial, postcolonial and post-genocide history. Meyersen scrutinizes a graphic novel published by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in 2011, entitled ‘Once upon a time there was a wonderful country’. Apparently suitable for an audience eight years old and above, Meyersen argues that the publication is one of many examples of Rwandan history which ‘skews’ and ‘selects’ aspects of that history for the purposes of a political agenda. This agenda, we can assume if for the benefit of nation building in Rwanda, a country torn apart by conflict just two decades ago.

Jack Corbett’s contribution to this volume is valuable in its account of community participation in donor funded projects in Africa. Entitled *‘But We Can’t Make Them Drink’: Understanding Community Ownership in the Namwera and Chiponde Afforestation Project*, connecting his article to the theme of this editorial - nationalism and nation-building – is straightforward enough. In his research based in the Namwera and Chiponde Afforestation Project in the Mangochi District of Southern Malawi, Corbett examines the barriers to community ownership of the project. His article explores the implications of top down approaches – from sponsors - to development, and thus ultimately nation-building. In particular he examines the nexus between sponsorship and ownership, and demonstrates, in this case study, that sponsorship is desired, while ownership is required – that is you can lead a horse to water but you can’t make it drink! His article is an important contribution to the debate on foreign intervention in Africa, in particular in relation to the development industry.

Lynda Lawson brings an important story to these pages of the *Australasian Review of African Studies*. It is the story of a former refugee, now living in the state of Queensland, in Australia, and studying at the university. Her article entitled *“I have to be my own mother and father”: the African Student Experience at University, a Case Study Using Narrative Analysis*, explains the journey of students from Africa in navigating and negotiating their survival in this context,

that is succeeding at university, and getting a job after they graduate, despite the many challenges they face.

O'Byrne presents two pieces of work for this issue. His article entitled *Narratives of Return among Refugee-Background South Sudanese in New Zealand* was conducted in 2011 when South Sudan became an independent country. Juxtaposing the participant's narratives of return alongside their experiences of settlement, he provides striking comments about their lack of belonging in New Zealand and how this contributes to the 'promise' of the return. Despite ongoing concerns of tensions with Sudan and internally within South Sudan, these considerations were eclipsed within pro-independence and pro-return narratives. A critical component of this prevailing discourse is the experience of a lack of belonging in settlement contexts – something he notes impacts many refugee background communities and powerfully influences the narrative of return. His second piece arises from his current field work in South Sudan in Pajok village located in the Eastern Equatoria State. Written in December 2013, his editorial responds to the conflict within South Sudan (predominantly based in Juba) that received fairly significant international and media based attention. Whilst recognising the gravity of the situation and the ethnic considerations that inform the conflict, he also problematises this analysis which only tells part of the story. Helpfully, he also challenges the commonly held view that South Sudan is rife with conflict when the place he is writing from and conducting fieldwork is peaceful. O'Byrne thus provides a more nuanced political, economic and historical analysis that is helpful to understand the complexities and ongoing internal conflicts within the world's newest country.

## References

- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2012a) *Australian Development Research Awards Scheme 2012 Funding*, retrieved from <http://aid.dfat.gov.au/research/pages/adras.aspx>
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2012b) *Research 2012 ADRAS Recipients*, retrieved from <http://aid.dfat.gov.au/research/Pages/adras-awards-2012.aspx>
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2012c) *Ausaid Research Strategy 2012-2016*, retrieved from <http://aid.dfat.gov.au/Publications/Pages/research-strategy-2011-16.aspx>



- Lyons, T. Harris, A and Marlowe, J. (2013) African Studies: New Challenges. In *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 34(2) December, 3-6.
- Lyons, T, 2011, Australian Foreign Policy Toward Africa. In J. Cotton and J. Ravenhil (Eds), *Middle Power Dreaming: Australia in World Affairs Series 2006-2010*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Lyons, T. (2013) Education in Australia's Relationship With Africa. In D. Mickler and T. Lyons (Eds), *New Engagement: Contemporary Australian Foreign Policy Toward Africa*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 193-223.
- Mickler, D. and Lyons, T. Eds (2013) *New Engagement: Contemporary Australian Foreign Policy Toward Africa*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.
- Rudd, K. (2013) Foreword. In D. Mickler and T. Lyons, (Eds) *New Engagement: Contemporary Australian Foreign Policy Toward Africa*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.