



## The African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific

Habari kwa ufupi - AFSAAP newsletter

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To contribute to the  
newsletter, please  
contact

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### **Malangatana Valente Ngwenya - Rites of Friendship (Ritual de Amizade)**

AFSAAP would like  
to celebrate the life  
and works of the  
artist Malangatana.

This painting was created at the 1999 AFSAAP Conference held in Perth, at the University of Western Australia. Now in 2013, the AFSAAP Conference will be held in Perth again and we would like to display this painting in public, and fulfill the wishes of the late artist to sell his painting, and enable Aboriginal artists to go on exchange to Mozambique. Interested art buyers should contact AFSAAP President Dr. Tanya Lyons at [president@afsaap.org.au](mailto:president@afsaap.org.au).



A full description of the painting and its story can be found [here](#).

### **Donate to AFSAAP**

AFSAAP kindly accepts donations to assist with the "Africa Visitors' Funds" - this enables us to invite keynote speakers to our annual conferences. Please click here to Donate to AFSAAP's Visitors' Fund <http://afsaap.org.au/about/join-afsaap/>.

### **AFSAAP-IPCS Seminar: Critical Perspectives on Sexual Violence in the Congo**

On 10 October 2013 Melbourne-based researchers Sara Meger and Charlotte Mertens will present two papers and convene a discussion aimed at re-framing the gender components of ongoing violence in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The long running conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo has become known to international audiences for the high rate of sexual violence and rape committed as acts of war. The two papers contextualise this phenomenon and critically appraise the global response.

Meger, a researcher on gender and international relations at the University of Melbourne, will present the first of these papers under the title "**The Fetishisation of Sexual Violence in International Security Studies**", aimed at correcting the view dominant in international relations scholarship that treats sexual violence in war as an isolated, if not aberrant, phenomenon. This paper questions the current fixation in international security studies and in policy on this particular form of gender violence and offers a critique of narrow approaches to understanding wartime sexual violence that ignore the larger social structures in which this violence is taking place.

Mertens, a PhD candidate also at the University of Melbourne, will present a paper titled "**Rape Claims in the Survival Economy of the Kivus, Democratic Republic of Congo**". In an attempt to challenge the dominant discourse on DRC that insists that a clear line can be drawn between military and civilian spheres and portrays people as passive objects of violence and recipients of aid, this paper seeks to broaden the discussion of sexual violence in DRC to include a consideration of the fluidity of the social system of the Kivus and how it might affect the design of intervention strategies and policies. The paper contends that within the survival economy of despair and opportunism in the Kivus, rape claims can be considered as an individual or collective strategy of people to make the most of the opportunities available.

The seminar, the seventh AFSAAP-IPCS seminar of 2013, will be held at the **Institute of Postcolonial Studies, 78-80 Curzon St North Melbourne, at 7.30pm Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October**. *Australia Award Scholars from Africa are encouraged to attend.*

## **AFSAAP-IPCS Seminar: Somalia: From the Colonial Era to its present-day turmoil**

In the final ASFAAP-IPCS seminar of 2013 on the 17th October 2013, Abdiwahid Hassan, Nikola Pijovic and Dr Ali Mumin Ahad will hold a panel discussion of three papers on the historical roots and recent developments in Somalia's ongoing civil war.

The first paper, **Alshabab and the role of Islam in the conflict**, will be presented by Abdiwahid Hassan. Abdiwahid is a lecturer at the Business College, Victoria University, Melbourne. His paper emphasises that while the roots of the conflict in Somalia are tribalism and scarcity of resources, extreme religious views and the Al Qaeda involvement have exacerbated the situation.

Nikola Pijovic, who is currently a PhD candidate at the Australian National University in Canberra working on Australian Foreign Policy, will present the second paper titled **Somaliland and the complexities of international state recognition**. This paper covers the main legal aspects of state recognition and how they apply to Somaliland. It then examines some of the most cited reasons for and against recognition, such as the economic or security repercussions of recognition, and precedent issues regarding state secession in Africa. It concludes with a note on the realpolitik of Somaliland's neighbours and why they and the African Union are reluctant to recognize the territory.

Finally, Dr Ali Mumin Ahad will present his paper on **Colonialism in Somalia: political dynamics in a historical perspective**. Dr Ahad is a former lecturer on International Economics at the Somali National University in Mogadishu. His paper looks at the legacies of the colonial state in shaping the current situation.

The seminar will be held at the **Institute of Postcolonial Studies, 78-80 Curzon St North Melbourne, at 7.30pm, Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October.** *Australia Award Scholars from Africa are encouraged to attend.*

## **Africa Australia Research Forum**

The Africa Australia Research Forum was held in Perth in Late August. (<https://www.africadownunderconference.com/aarf/>). The focus was on mining and agriculture.

## **Seeking Sally Aplin**

Dr Sally Aplin is involved with Sudanese refugees, and is an expert in communication strategies. If anyone has recent contact information for this person, could they please contact Tony Appleyard by email : [johncave12@gmail.com](mailto:johncave12@gmail.com), or the AFSAAP secretary ([secretary@afsaap.org.au](mailto:secretary@afsaap.org.au)). Dr Aplin wrote an article on legal needs of Horn of Africa refugees in Melbourne, which was published on the SORA website.

## **ASPI report: China's resource boom and the Australian-African relationship**

ASPI has published a report on the first Australia-Africa Dialogue held in Zambia entitled "Fuelling the dragon: natural resources and China's development" (August 2012). ([http://www.aspi.org.au/publications/publication\\_details.aspx?ContentID=349&pubtype=-1](http://www.aspi.org.au/publications/publication_details.aspx?ContentID=349&pubtype=-1))

The report finds that Africa and Australia both know the resources boom may not last forever and so we shouldn't squander the opportunities that it offers. The Conference was attended by Senator David Feeney, the Hon. Julie Bishop MP and a number of senior DFAT Officials. The proposal received further support, including from Kevin Rudd and Julie Bishop, at the Africa Down Under Conference held in Perth in August 2012.

A more recent Australia-Africa Dialogue event was held on 10-12 July 2013, in Bunker Bay, Western Australia (<http://www.aspi.org.au/events/recentEventDetail.aspx?eid=501>). This diplomatic event was closed to the media, however we can expect a similar report to be published on this conference. Key participants said it was a stimulating discussion and completely relevant to AFSAAP's aims and objectives.

## **African accent 'voice over' work**

A video company called Room3 has contacted AFSAAP seeking 4 speakers for a voice over campaign for a well-known charity about Disability Inclusion and Education in developing countries – specifically Sierra Leone. They are now in the process of trying to find children to help out with the promotion.

They need English speaking youths with an African accent: two girls age 15-19 and two boys age 10-15. Recording will only take around 20 minutes each and will likely be in

the Melbourne CBD. There are about 3 short paragraphs to be read out and it is only the voice recording, not video.

Room3 will pay \$100 to each child who participates plus a copy of the film. If you are interested, or know anybody who is, please contact Room3 creative director Erin Johnson at erin@room3.com.au

## **AFSAAP Supports Agriculture Research Day**

Through AFSAAP's support scheme for Australia Award Scholars from Africa, we were able to sponsor the recent Agriculture Research Day in Perth on 28 August 2013. The program for the day is attached. It was a very successful day with 53 students and young scientists attending, of which 19 were Australia Award Students, and approximately 36 students were from Africa. About 16 senior people from the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), the Australian Food Industry Science Centre (AFISC), the Syngenta Foundation and the Crawford Fund attended, and Rob Delane the Director General of the Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia gave a welcome on behalf of his Department. A total of 17 students and young scholars gave talks and the standards of presentation and content were uniformly excellent. The talks were chaired by three senior professors from Perth Universities. The students really enjoyed their day, and there may be another forum held in November at Murdoch University. A copy of the proceedings for the full conference will be available at the end of the year. Further information can be gained from emailing the organiser Dr J. Ridsdill-Smith james.ridsdill-smith@csiro.au

## **The High Cost of Congolese Gold – OSISA report**

The Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) has just published this report available in a variety of e-formats <http://www.osisa.org/other/economic-justice/drc/high-cost-congolese-gold>. The report focuses on the lives of the miners and their families – highlighting how hundreds of thousands of people live in grinding poverty in the midst of the richest mineral resources in the DRC, as corrupt political, military, commercial and traditional elites syphon off most of the funds that should be fuelling socio-economic growth and development.

## **Research Council for the Problems of African Countries (Moscow)**

On May 27-30, 2014 in Moscow the Research Council for the Problems of African Countries and the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences will hold the 13th African Studies Conference titled "Society and Politics in Africa: Traditional, Transitional, and New." The Conference will take place at the Institute for African Studies and the Institute for Linguistics of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The working languages are Russian and English.

Please find attached the Third Call for Papers Announcement of the Conference of Africanists "Society and Politics in Africa: Traditional, Transitional, and New. The

Organizing Committee would appreciate your familiarizing the interested colleagues with this Announcement.

## **Kwame Nkrumah International Conference (Vancouver)**

AfSAAP members are invited to attend the 3rd Biennial Kwame Nkrumah International Conference, to be held at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The conference dates are August 21-23, 2014.

Please see the attached call for papers for details.

## **Registration is now open for the 36th AfSAAP Conference - African Renaissance and Australia**

**27th-29th November 2013 Murdoch University, Perth**

The Conference Organisers are busy planning the final program for the Postgraduate Day on Wednesday 27th, and the 2 main conference days Thursday 28th and Friday 29<sup>th</sup> (<http://afsaap.org.au/conference/forthcoming-2013/>). Please make sure that you register before October 30th to ensure your participation, and if you are presenting, to ensure a place on the program.

**The AfSAAP AGM will be held on Friday 29th November at 9am** at Murdoch University. Please contact the [secretary@afsaap.org.au](mailto:secretary@afsaap.org.au) if you have any items for the agenda. Please note that all EXECUTIVE Roles will be up for nomination, and all AfSAAP Members are eligible to nominate for these role – President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Post-Graduate Representative.