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## CONTENTS

### Obituary

- Desmond Clark (1916-2002) 4  
*Graham Connah*

- Note from the Editor 6  
AFSAAP 2002 8

### Guest Essay

- The Zimbabwe Presidential Election: A Personal Experience 9  
*Terence Ranger*

### Articles

- A Consultant's Journal: Reflections on the HIV Epidemic in Malawi 25  
*Elizabeth Reid*

- An Oral History Project: Recording Recollections of the School Boycotts  
c. 1984 to 1987 in Grahamstown, South Africa 38  
*Ryota Nishino*

### Book Reviews

- Martin Banham, James Gibbs and Femi Osofisan (eds), *African Theatre  
in Development* 51  
*Dianne Schwerdt*

- Michael Cowen and Liisa Laakso (eds), *Multi-Party Elections in Africa* 56  
*Scott MacWilliam*

- Sara S. Berry, *Chiefs Know Their Boundaries: Essays on Property,  
Power and the Past in Asante, 1896-1996* 59  
*Martin Chanock*

- Isak Niehaus with Eliazaar Mohlala and Kally Shokane, *Witchcraft,  
Power and Politics: Exploring the Occult in the South African Lowveld* 62  
*Jennifer Badsteubner*

- Dorothy L. Hodgson and Sheryl A. McCurdy (eds), *'Wicked' Women  
and the Reconfiguration of Gender in Africa* 66  
*Kristine Ryan*

- Joanna Lewis, *Empire State-Building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925-  
1952* 69  
*Bruce J. Berman*

- David Pool, *From Guerrillas to Government: The Eritrean People's  
Liberation Front* 72  
*Irma Taddia*

- Nehemia Levtzion and Randall L. Pouwels (eds), *The History of Islam in  
Africa* 74  
*Riaz Hassan*

- Holger Bernt Hansen and Michael Twaddle (eds), *Christian Missionaries  
and the State in the Third World* 76

*Norman Etherington*

Okello Lucima (ed.), Protracted Conflict, Elusive Peace: Initiatives to End the Violence in Northern Uganda 78  
*Cherry Gertzel*

W. John Young, The Quiet Wise Spirit: Edwin W Smith (1876-1957) and Africa 80  
*Paul Cocks*

Ian Leggett, Uganda 82  
Geoff Sayer, Kenya Promised Land?  
Chris Peters, Sudan: A Nation in the Balance  
*Donna Gratton*

Joseph Therese Agbasiere, Women in Igbo Life and Thought 83  
*Elizabeth Isichei*

**Research Matters**

Tales from the Field: Conducting Qualitative Research in Botswana 84  
*Zitha Mokomane*

**Notes**

Australian Author's Book Launch Combines with Celebration of a Victory over Asbestos 88

African Studies in Botswana 89  
*Neil Parsons*

New Journal of Eritrean Studies 92

Art Exhibition to Break the South African Silence on HIV/AIDS 93

Joint Oxfam/Community Aid Abroad HIV/AIDS Programme in South Africa 93

African Studies in Western Australia 94

African Research Institute La Trobe University 95

Institute of Advanced Studies La Trobe University 95

History Department University of Melbourne 96

Adam Matthew Publications 96

Death of Dr Nina Mba 96

**Conferences** 97

**AFSAAP Publications 2002** 99

### Desmond Clark (1916-2002)

African archaeological scholarship has lost one of its leading practitioners with the death of Professor Desmond Clark on 14 February this year. Born in 1916 in Britain, Clark was one of a small group of archaeologists produced by Cambridge in the years just before the Second World War who played a crucial part in establishing prehistoric archaeology as a worldwide discipline. Going in 1937 to Zambia, then called Northern Rhodesia, he set about filling some of the many gaps in the human history of Africa (at that time there being more gaps than actual history). A scholar of considerable ability he was also an indefatigable fieldworker as I found to my discomfort when I spent a particularly hot and humid afternoon with him in the Sierra Leone rainforest in 1966, and I had already had some five years of African field experience.

Best known for his research in south central Africa, Clark also worked in many other parts of the continent including the north-east and the southern Sahara. Pre-eminently he focussed on prehistoric hunter gatherers, particularly those of earlier periods, but his field research and his publications ranged widely through time. He was in fact a prodigious publisher, the third volume dealing with his important excavations at Kalambo Falls, situated on the Zambia/Tanzania border, appearing only shortly before his death. Nevertheless he also found time to write two of the earlier syntheses of African prehistoric archaeology: *The Prehistory of Southern Africa* (1959) and *The Prehistory of Africa* (1970).

The earlier part of his career was spent developing what subsequently became the National Museum of Zambia but in 1961 he became Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, where he remained until his retirement in 1986. From that location he did much to foster African archaeological studies, both in America and elsewhere, and in particular provided training opportunities for African students. He also continued to do fieldwork in various parts of Africa and, after his 'retirement', turned some of his attention to India and China as well. However, his home remained in California, where he is now survived by his wife Betty, who supported and assisted his endeavours for so many years.\*

African and Africanist archaeologists owe a lasting debt of gratitude to Desmond Clark as one of the leading pioneers of our subject. Many of us raised our glasses in his memory and in celebration of his life, when we met at the biennial conference of the Society of Africanist Archaeologists held in May at the University of Arizona. *The Times* newspaper of London made the amazing claim in its obituary of Desmond Clark on 8 March that 'He knew every site and every artefact in Africa'. Well, perhaps not quite, but he knew more of them than the rest of us.

Graham Connah  
School of Archaeology and Anthropology  
Australian National University  
Canberra, A.C.T.

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\* Ed: Who we understand has, sadly, herself also, more recently, died.

## Note from the Editor

AFSAAP members will wish to congratulate Jock McCulloch on the publication of his book on asbestos mining in South Africa, launched in London in May (p. 88) at a joint celebration of the victory of the 7,500 former South African miners and their families against the mining companies for which they had worked. Along with Norman Etherington's history of *The Great Treks and the Transformation of Southern Africa*, (reviewed in the last issue of this journal), and Martin Chanock's major study of *The Making of the South African Legal Culture 1902-1936* (to be reviewed in the December 2002 issue) this makes clear that notwithstanding the reduction of resources for African studies in Australian universities, Australian scholars continue to make an important contribution to our understanding of Africa and its peoples.

2002 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the African Studies of Australasia and the Pacific (AFSAAP) and of the beginnings of this journal. In the quarter of a century since its beginnings as a small sheet intended to keep members of the new Association in touch with each other it has grown to a bi-annual, refereed, interdisciplinary journal on African affairs that aims to provide authoritative, readable and accessible material on a wide range of African affairs, to anyone with an interest in Africa, specialist and non-specialist alike. For this growth we are indebted to our contributors.

This June 2002 issue once again makes this clear. I draw attention here to only a few of its contents. The articles in this issue are concerned with three very different but equally significant crises that face contemporary Africa. Terence Ranger's essay on Zimbabwe will be of interest to everyone who has followed the ongoing political crisis in that country. Elizabeth Reid's reflections on the HIV epidemic in Malawi bring home the enormity of this second, tragic crisis that confronts all of Africa. And while Ryota Nishino's article on the 1980s Grahamstown School Boycotts returns to an earlier period of the South African struggle it relates to a different kind of crisis, which is about identity and history-making and with which Ranger is essentially also concerned. Among the book reviewers in this issue I draw your attention to Dianne Schwerdt who reminds us that Africa is a continent of great creativity, in this case in the theatre; and of the nexus between the artist and society in Africa, so ably articulated by writer Zakes Mda at the Adelaide Festival's Writers' Week earlier this year. I must thank Neil Parsons (p. 89) in the latest of our pieces on African Studies, for making clear to us that African scholarship is very much alive and well in Botswana.

What is also worth noting in this issue, is the recurring emphasis on the part of the authors (in contributions that are very different in terms of subject and approach) on taking the 'reader inside the debates' as Ranger puts it (p. 10) and in doing so providing us with some more direct insights into the contemporary African scene. Ranger does it with his extensive quotations of the Zimbabwe press; Nishino in his interviews with some of those who had been involved in the boycotts; Reid in her journal. Jennifer Badstreubner's review of Isak Niehaus' new study of witchcraft in South Africa ensures I hope that we approach that question from the perspective of communities under pressure. And there is more that readers will find for themselves.

Finally one or two different points. First, I would draw attention to the three new volumes of *Proceedings* of recent AFSAAP conferences edited by Peter Limb and Jean-Marie Volet, Dianne Schwerdt and Sue Kossew and Pal Ahluwalia and Abebe Zegeye respectively (See the AFSAAP Publications list on p. 99). Second I have been asked by the AFSAAP President, Assoc. Professor Ahluwalia, to draw your attention to his note (which follows below) concerning the announcement of this year's postgraduate essay prize which has, unfortunately but unavoidably been delayed. Third, as we move into the second year of this journal in its new and enlarged style and form it is more than appropriate to thank once again the School of Social Sciences and the Division of Humanities at Curtin University for their continuing support for myself and for the journal. And finally, but by no means least, to thank Karen Miller who has ensured that this issue has reached its finished form in the month that appears on the cover, with such professionalism and cheerfulness.

Cherry Gertzel  
June 2002

### Note from the President

The Executive of AFSAAP regrets the unexpected and unavoidable delay in the announcement of the 2001 postgraduate essay prize, which would normally be included in this June 2002 issue of ARAS. Unfortunately a number of administrative delays has made it difficult to do so, and we have written to both postgraduates who submitted papers to explain why. All going well this year's prize winner will be announced at the October conference in Sydney.

Pal Ahluwalia

## **Africa Confronting Globalisation**

The 2002 annual African Studies conference will take place as announced at Macquarie University Sydney NSW on 3-5 October. The conference theme highlights contemporary concerns not only for the continent's role in the global community but also the impact of globalisation on its peoples and states. It is equally broad enough to encompass papers from across the diverse interests and many disciplines represented in African studies. The conference brochure enclosed in this issue of ARAS sets out conference topics already proposed.

**If you have not yet offered a paper it is not too late to do so. Write to the Conference organiser, Dr Geoffrey Hawker, at Macquarie University, whose full postal and email address are below.**

This being the twenty-fifth year since the foundation of the African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific (AFSAAP) this year's conference marks something of a watershed in the Association's history. While AFSAAP is not a large organisation it has nonetheless, since its beginnings in 1978, provided some memorable conferences that have brought together a wide range of people and interests concerned with Africa and African issues. Academics, teachers, government officials, aid and NGO personnel, members of Australia's growing African communities, members of the mining industry have all taken part. In recent years there have been an increasing number of visitors, especially from Africa, who have joined us. We hope that this year will be no exception.

Keep in touch with the development of the programme by visiting the AFSAAP website over the coming weeks.

*Geoffrey Hawker  
Politics  
Macquarie University  
Sydney, NSW, Australia  
Email: [Geoffrey.hawker@mq.edu.au](mailto:Geoffrey.hawker@mq.edu.au)*

## The Zimbabwe Presidential Election: A Personal Experience

Terence Ranger\*

### Introduction

I was in Zimbabwe from 26 January to 12 March 2002 with two weeks away in Australia in the middle of February. I spent my time in the cities because I was warned that it would be too dangerous to penetrate into the countryside, even into those parts I know best. I researched in Makoni district in the east and Matopo district in the south-west. I was warned that Makoni had been declared a no-go area and received first-hand reports that African mourners entering Makoni to attend a funeral were arrested at road blocks and threatened with violence. I heard of a black Catholic priest driving through Rusape with a copy of the *Daily News* on his dash board who was accosted by an eighteen year old girl and slapped across the face for daring to say that he intended to read it; Didymus Mutasa, ZANU/PF Lord of Makoni, justified the use of violence there and went so far as to say that if the MDC (Movement for Democratic Change) were to win the election he would support an armed coup against it.<sup>1</sup> As for the Matopos, it had been arranged that I should be picked up in Bulawayo and taken to a shrine deep in the hills which I had never visited before. But the day before I was due to go Robert Mugabe addressed a rally in the district, proclaiming that 'whites are evil'. My guide sensibly thought that the day after the rally was not the best time for him to take a white man into the hills. So the only area outside the towns which I visited was the countryside around Mutare and towards the Honde Valley, where I spent the first day of the election. But this was as much an MDC area as are the towns and so I spent my whole time in opposition territory. Readers must bear this in mind in what follows.

What I seek to do in this essay is to give some feeling of the controversial pre-election atmosphere in Zimbabwe as I found it at the end of January and again in mid-February on my return from Australia; and to take readers inside the debates among the parties, the churches and civil society.

### The elections and history

If I begin by discussing history you will say that this is because I am a historian. Nonetheless I don't think anyone could fail to notice how central to ZANU/PF's campaign was a particular version of history. I spent four days watching Zimbabwe television which presented nothing but one 'historical' programme after another; the government press - the *Herald* and the *Chronicle* - ran innumerable historical articles. When I retired last year as Visiting Professor at the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) I gave a valedictory lecture entitled *History Matters* and the elections certainly showed that it does. Whereas however I had called in my lecture for a complex, plural history, television and the newspapers insisted on one that was increasingly simple and monolithic. As Professor Brian Raftopolous said to me: 'Twenty years of historiography are being swept away.' We were back with the ZANU/PF history of 1980.<sup>2</sup>

Television constantly repeated documentaries about the guerrilla war and about colonial brutalities; there were nightly discussions of 'heritage' presented by UZ lecturers in literature or sociology, gesturing over piles of history books. The *Herald* and *Sunday Mail* regularly carried articles on slavery, the partition, colonial exploitation and the liberation struggle. I recognised the outlines of many of my own books but boiled down in the service of ZANU/PF.<sup>3</sup> The basic message was spelt out in an article by Godfrey Chikwore in the *Herald* of 16 February, 'Defending Our Heritage. Armed Struggle should serve as Guiding Spirit':

The destiny of any sovereign state like Zimbabwe ... lies in their capacity to defend their own heritages and legacies, be it historical, cultural, or psychological. This is the fundamental, inalienable and unquestionable right of every legitimate citizen .... The 2002 presidential elections should, therefore, see candidates producing manifestos which spell out clearly that they are going to uphold Zimbabwean values and heritage and restore a sense of heritage and a sense of patriotism among Zimbabweans .... The election is a reassertion and reconsideration not only of Zimbabwean heritage and legacy but also the heritage and legacy of Africa, lost since the days of slavery. Zimbabwe is the product of a bitter and protracted armed struggle. That armed struggle should serve as the guiding spirit through the presidential elections and even beyond. The right to

\* Terence Ranger, Emeritus Professor, Oxford University, who has written many books on Zimbabwe, originally taught at the then University of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in the early 1960s. Following his retirement from Oxford in 1997 he returned to Zimbabwe for four years as Visiting Professor at the University of Zimbabwe. Following the end of that attachment he returned again at the beginning of this year to observe the recent presidential election.

<sup>1</sup> The Minister of Education, Aeneas Chigwedere, speaking at a school in Makoni that was being re-named after Maurice Nyagumbo, commented on Mutasa's strategy, saying that, if a woman did not like you, you could not win her affection by beating her up!

<sup>2</sup> Two published pamphlets provide a slightly more considered version of media history: Aeneas Chigwedere, *British Betrayal of the Africans. Land, Cattle, Human Rights. Case for Zimbabwe*, Mutapa, Harare, 2001; Claude Mararike, *Africa's Heritage: Our Rallying Point. The Case of Zimbabwe's Land Issue*, Best Practice Books, Harare, 2001.

<sup>3</sup> There was no reflection, of course, of the more complex history of the liberation war reflected in N. Bhebe and Terence Ranger, eds, *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War* and *Society in Zimbabwe's Liberation War*, 1995 and 1996; and still less of N. Bhebe and Terence Ranger, eds, *The Historical Dimensions of Democracy and Human Rights in Zimbabwe*, two volumes, 2001 and 2002.

choose a president of one's own choice should not be considered as a mere exercise of a democratic right. It is the advancement of a historical mission of liberating Zimbabwe from the clutches of neo-colonialism. Any other wild illusion about it constitutes a classical example of self-betrayal and self-condemnation to the ranks of perpetual servitude. The stampede for democracy should not undermine the gains of the liberation war.

It was obvious that Chikwore believed that Mugabe's campaign - with its repeated emphasis on the armed struggle and the slogan that 'Zimbabwe will never be a colony again' - met his criteria, and that Morgan Tsvangirai's did not. The MDC he said had abolished history, proclaiming its irrelevance in an 'age of globalisation'. They merely promised prosperity and were prepared to 'reverse' Zimbabwe's history in order to get it even if this meant 'turning Zimbabwe into a British and American overseas territory'. 'The Zimbabwean electorate has to be assured', wrote Chikwore, 'that this group has no history that could logically confirm its credibility for the Presidential crown.'

The election therefore was History versus 'The End of History.' Mugabe's campaign speeches often hardly mentioned Tsvangirai; it seemed that Mugabe was really contesting with Tony Blair, whom the *Herald* referred to as 'B.Liar'. When Tsvangirai was mentioned he was constantly abused for not having contributed to Zimbabwe's history and indeed for not understanding what it was; and when Tsvangirai accused Mugabe of aiming to turn Zimbabwe into 'a nation of peasants' Olley Maruma<sup>4</sup> mocked:

For someone who wants to be the president of this sophisticated country full of well-educated people, the audacity with which Mr Morgan Tsvangirai is prepared to brandish his woeful ignorance in public is quite astonishing. The depth of his knowledge of our history is so shallow it is frightening. 70 percent of the black people of Zimbabwe are already peasants. They were transformed into peasants by successive colonial regimes .... Giving them land that was taken from their ancestors is merely trying to bestow them with their former status - independent agricultural producers and traders.<sup>5</sup>

In Chikwore and Maruma I have quoted the most sophisticated exponents of the argument. On ZTV it was translated into something much less intelligent. Once again viewers were shown a vision of a liberation war in which only Mugabe was a legitimate leader and only ZANU/PF an effective army. There were indeed regular invocations of Joshua Nkomo, 'Father Zimbabwe', but his army ZIPRA was never shown on the screen.<sup>6</sup> The radical Zimbabwe Peoples Army, ZIPA, was never mentioned. The repetitions, the exclusions, the use of war-time tragedy for party purposes and the present excesses of ex-guerrillas have had the effect of cheapening liberation history.

MDC responses to the ZANU/PF historical campaign were for a long time purely negative. 'Big Brother has wrenched open the archives', wrote Innocent Chofamba Sithole in the *Financial Gazette* of February 14-20, 'and history cringes into the vulnerable asylum of mere signs and symbols of ink on paper, of recorded image and sound on films. The nation is daily bombarded with grim images of grotesquely mutilated and decomposing black bodies from the liberation war, falling like boulders from the cliff of the television screen.' It was 'an attempt to edit the nation's collective memory in order to rewrite the history of the struggle for independence .... By virtue of being the government of the day ZANU/PF has access to and control over, the recorded signs and symbols that denote and connote our history as a nation .... Central to ZANU/PF's re-election campaign is the political commodification of the legacy of the liberation war.' Sithole concluded that ZTV was producing 'narrowly defined notions of Zimbabwean nationalism':

Amid the choking fumes of the aggressive political campaigns, history lets out a piercing wail as Big Brother relentlessly attempts to weave past, present and future into his person.

While this was effective criticism the MDC was for a long time unable to escape from its image as a representative of globalisation rather than as an heir of Zimbabwe's history; until on the eve of the election this changed. In the *Financial Gazette* for March 7-13 Masipula Sithole<sup>7</sup> mocked Mugabe for trying to monopolise the power of declaring revolutions when he identified the election as 'The Third Chimurenga', a revolutionary upheaval against neo-colonialism. Citing Mugabe's statement from the 1980s that 'the only revolution in Zimbabwe is the ZANU/PF revolution'. Sithole inverted ZTV's propositions - in his version ZANU/PF proclaimed 'the end of history': the MDC had inherited the revolutionary tradition:

The march of history must somehow come to an end after ZANU/PF comes to power. [But] I am declaring that the same logic that drove those men and women assembled at the ZANU Gweru Congress in May 1964 to declare war on the Smith regime is the same logic that leads people now to declare that 'enough is enough' .... Under similar circumstances ... people will pry open the citadels of power no matter how long it takes.

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<sup>4</sup> In the *Herald* of 12 February.

<sup>5</sup> Maruma quotes 'a white academic', David Lan, for an account of how independent producers were turned into peasants. The point is well taken: the real question is whether the current resettlement really is turning peasants back into independent producers.

<sup>6</sup> In Bulawayo I was visited by ex-ZIPRA men desperate to make a video of their war-time achievements so that it could be shown regularly on ZTV.

<sup>7</sup> Professor of Political Science at UZ and a regular columnist in the opposition press. He is also the younger brother of Ndadangi Sithole.

In the same issue of the *Gazette* Ivhu Kulvhu proclaimed 'Let us all go and free Zimbabwe!' The MDC would win 'a victory of the future'. But it would also restore the past:

We will fight tooth and nail to recover the bright colours of Zimbabwe .... We are all descendants of great kings and queens and need to be treated like royalty .... Through the perpetuation of ignorance among the people by rehashing the past Mugabe is trying to ensure a power strangle-hold [but] the people will catch him naked on March 9 and 10 .... History has its appointed time for every living soul and people. For Zimbabwe the time is nigh. This country will never be a colony of dictators again.

While the nation was waiting for the election results on 12 March, Dumisani Nkomo made a sustained critique of ZANU/PF's style of nationalist history in the *Daily News*:

It has become self evident that ZANU/PF has failed dismally to transform itself from a mass nationalist/liberation movement into a ruling or governing party. They appear neither able nor willing to formulate a vision for the future of Zimbabwe. They appear to be more content with living in the past than learning from it. While we salute the gallantry of our nationalist fathers, we cannot afford to pontificate about the past when the country is on the verge of collapse. We should honour ZANU/PF by giving it its rightful place - that is in the political archives and museums of this nation .... Our nationalist fathers have led us out of the Egypt, that land of colonial oppression, but beyond that they do not seem to have a clue of the location of the promised land. The people of Zimbabwe have been to the mountaintop and seen the Promised Land. Nothing will stop us as a nation from marching into the future.

This debate about history reveals that the election was fought not so much between two political parties, but between 'good' and 'evil'. On the one side it looked like a mortal combat between 'patriots' and 'traitors'; on the other side it appeared a fight to the death between 'tyrants' and 'democrats'. It seemed a unique moment. There was at least one observer, however, who drew on history to reveal that nothing much had changed over the last forty years. On 25 December 2001 'Chapwititi' wrote to the *Daily News* from Kwekwe. The letter<sup>8</sup> recalled Sir Edgar Whitehead's use of troops in the African townships, the random violence visited on 'law-abiding Africans', the use of armed police to crush political opposition; and offered a sketch of Whitehead's personality:

Sir Edgar has personal qualities which make him a dreadful danger to the peace and prosperity of Southern Rhodesia. The very quality of his intelligence makes him contemptuous of 'emotional' attitudes and thus uncomprehending of them. And yet emotional attitudes are the stuff of politics. Sir Edgar is inhumanly remote and inaccessible. He has a cold conviction in the excellence of his plans and a ruthless determination to push them through despite all opposition. He has none of the humanity, the generosity, none even of the alarm that the situation requires .... If the situation is to be saved Sir Edgar must be removed from office.

And pointing out that recent headlines read 'Bread Riots Rock Harare' and 'Renewed call to impeach Mugabe' 'Chapwititi' added:

History sure has a tendency of repeating itself!

### **The mobilization of youth and of religion**

The mobilization of youth was also justified above all in terms of history. Following the government's introduction of its controversial youth training scheme, intended to become a compulsory national service, the *Herald* on 28 January 2002 reported that 'the Government will soon make youth training compulsory for all school leavers to instil unbiased history of Zimbabwe.' According to the *Herald*, school-teachers and parents had failed in their patriotic duty. Young people did not know true Zimbabwean culture or history and war veterans would instruct them. When however the 'graduates' from the first Youth Training centre - the Border Gezi Camp - appeared on the streets they received an appalled reception from many, including one 'VeMaromo' in the *Independent* on 21 December 2001 who wrote:

They are so foul-mouthed you wonder if their Zimbabwean culture and history was really part of their curricula. If it was, then we have a bad culture and a horrible history.

Thousands of green-uniformed youth were nonetheless deployed all over the country during the campaign - many more than could have been trained in one centre. They were recruited from unemployed boys and girls in the urban townships - one columnist in the *Daily News* lamented that his own son, saying it was better than doing nothing and earning no money, had joined the youth. They were given basic training in military drill and put under the command of war veterans. Wearing T-shirts marked 'Chimurenga Three', they were sent out to defend and to extend the revolution. They were used as electoral shock troops - to erect barriers on roads, to beat people who could not produce ZANU/PF cards, to attack MDC activists.

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<sup>8</sup> His letter particularly interested me since it quoted a piece I had myself written in the cyclostyled periodical *Dissent* on 20 October 1960 but had completely forgotten. I read it with astonishment



I heard many reports, ranging from West to East Zimbabwe, of their activities.<sup>9</sup> Often those reports were half sympathetic. 'They are the hungriest and dirtiest people in the rural areas', said a headmaster from Tsholotsho in Matabeleland who had a detachment of youth encamped near his school, with little food and no soap. Not surprisingly these tattered and hungry youths expressed great resentment against teachers and civil servants and against secondary and university students. They became the exponents of a 'Cultural Revolution' already begun by war-veterans in their attacks on Councils and District Administrators and civil servants. Many students and faculty at the university told me that their parents had ordered them not to try to come home to the rural areas: 'It is like the 1970s war' the mothers said.

I heard the fullest report about the youth in the Mutare countryside from a human rights activist, working with refugees, who grew up speaking chi-manyika. She and her husband live on a piece of land carved out of one of the small holdings allocated to white ex-servicemen after the second world war. 'You only have a yard. It is of no interest to us', they were told by land occupiers. But the small-holding next door to them *was* occupied by settlers from the Honde Valley; my friends laid on piped water for their new neighbours. They were invited to a tree-planting day at the settlement. In the middle of the ceremony a band of green-uniformed youth arrived and laid on a show. They marched to the shouted commands of an ex-combatant. At the shout of 'Mugabe!' they saluted smartly; at the shout of 'Tsvangarai!' they thrust and twisted imaginary bayonets into his innards. The settlers were embarrassed and irritated, not knowing where the youth had come from or who they were. Thereafter the youth camped in the bush on the opposite side of the road from my friends. They were seen brandishing a huge whip, stopping people on the road and taking them into the bush for a beating if they had no party card. My friend went to the nearby mission station to tell the minister in charge what was going on and to ask his advice: he said that the ZANU/PF boss in the area was a Methodist lay preacher; they went to see him; he drove my friend back to the youth camp. 'You are not to worry this lady' he told them. She said they hadn't worried her: it was everyone else she was worried about. OK, then, he said, 'this lady is my spy. If you do anything bad she will report straight to *me*.' She disavowed any intention to serve as a spy. In the end he told them that she was a minister of religion and would give them scripture lessons! But it was not fear of the Old Testament that eventually got rid of them just before the elections. They chased an old man who was crossing their field and when he fled they captured his two wives and children and shut them up in a hut: the old man went to complain and found an army truck at the police station: the soldiers came and ordered the youth off their patch. Stories like these could be repeated all over Zimbabwe.

This mobilisation of youth was deeply resented by parents – 'You take our children' said one woman to the Governor of Manicaland. 'You twist and break them. Then you give them back to us to deal with'. It was strongly condemned by the churches. I attended the Catholic cathedral in Bulawayo one Sunday. The outspoken Archbishop Pius Ncube was not there but a young black priest preached for almost an hour. He spoke in Sindebele, Shona and English. His text was Satan tempting Jesus on the mountain top. Temptation was being offered in Zimbabwe, he said, especially to the youth. Nobody would give them a proper job or a proper salary. Instead the patrons offered youth just enough to tempt them and to make them dependent. They might even feel a sense of achievement and power, lording it over their elders. But they must put the Cross into whatever they did and then they would see that what they had been offered was from Satan. 'We are going backwards. We used to have lions everywhere who tore and clawed. Now we don't have lions so we are acting like them ourselves'. Illustrating the violence which now reigned, he picked up the heavy wooden drum next to the choir and pretended to dash out their brains.

Less dramatically, the Jesuits issued an 'Appeal to Youth' on 6 February:

Unemployed young people are being recruited for the work of beating, stoning, burning and maybe even killing their own fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters. The present attempts to re-educate and indoctrinate the youth into values which are alien to the African family are an attack on the family and on the rights of parents. Unscrupulous political leaders are training youth in violence, not only for the present but for a life-time.

The Jesuits in Zimbabwe have decided that, in the present crisis of violence and anarchy, we shall do what we can to prevent such violence and when we can, to protect potential victims of such violence. Wherever we are able we shall provide places of sanctuary, places where we insist that no violence shall take place. We shall not be able to physically defend such places of sanctuary against forceful entry by people of violence. However, with the help of God, we hoped to establish a moral force.<sup>10</sup>

The Jesuits were accused by government spokesmen of setting up 'safe houses' for terrorists. Archbishop Pius Ncube had been under regular attack which reached a climax when President Mugabe, addressing a rally in Lupane on 21 February, accused him of frustrating hospital development. 'I don't know whether we pray to the same God with this

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<sup>9</sup> On March 1 2002 the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum reported that youth 'militia groups are still in operation around the country with the size of groups varying from between 20-30 to those that operate in their hundreds. Most bases have been established at schools and growth points ... centres to be used as polling stations.' The report gave details of 113 such bases.

<sup>10</sup> The Jesuit statement was issued as a public statement; it was available on internet and I believe published in the *Daily News*.

man. We will respect him if he remains within the confines of the church but once he shows his political tentacles we will cut them short.'

At the same time that Mugabe attacked church critics he wooed other Christians. At a February prayer day in Harare he addressed an audience which included 'hundreds of the Madzibaba Nzira's Apostolic sect members, holding and lifting placards inscribed with ZANU/PF political messages .... They sang a *chimurenga* song as they were toyi-toying.' The new Anglican Bishop of Harare, Kunonga, told Mugabe that he had put all Christians to shame by distributing land: 'Actually, you have been more merciful than God Himself!' Baba Nzira announced a prophecy that Mugabe was 'divinely appointed King of Zimbabwe and no man should dare challenge his office.' Meanwhile ZANU/PF were calling upon spirit mediums to come together and call upon the ancestors in support of Mugabe. 'The last thing that the ancestors of this country would want to know is that the country many people died for was going back to the same British who massacred thousands of Zimbabweans.' (When the MDC in its turn visited Njelele shrine in the Matopos the government-supporting *Sunday News* of 10 February carried a cartoon showing the High God speaking from His cave and saying that 'he doesn't want to speak to British puppets').

While the President and party were prepared to make use of anything that might have popular appeal, whether Christian or traditional, the ZTV history programmes mounted a concerted attack on Christianity; as when Reverend Noah Pashapa argued that Christianity could share in the decolonisation of Zimbabwe and complained on 13 February:

Christians in Zimbabwe today are continually bombarded with blatant characterisations of their faith as unAfrican and a form of mental colonisation by 'white supremacist Western Christian civilisation.' This onslaught confronts us weekly via the television under the guise of the black African renaissance.

### **Understanding the (outcome of the) election**

The now notorious TV programme which launched the charge that Tsvangarai was planning Mugabe's assassination and the allegations that followed produced the best (and most elegant) election slogan of the campaign: a ZANU/PF advertisement which read: 'Which would you vote for? A plot to kill, or a plot to till?' Watching that programme on the last night of my short visit to Perth, WA, it had seemed likely to me that Tsvangarai would be arrested before the election. Back in Zimbabwe, however, things looked less dramatic. ZANU/PF had been saying for such a long time that the MDC were criminals and terrorists; that they had master-minded bank robberies in South Africa; that they had sent anthrax to officials and editors; that the British were planning to use the MDC for post-election violence - in view of all this the assassination allegation came as just one more thing. It was clear that the government had known about it for weeks and had planned the revelation and its exploitation very carefully. It became obvious that Tsvangarai was not going to be arrested before the election: the trap had been laid for use *after* the election.

Of course use was made of the allegation during the election campaign itself. Addressing a rally in Makoni, Mugabe reminded his audience that Chingaira, Chief Makoni in 1896, had been executed by the British. Chingaira's head, said Mugabe, had been cut off and taken to Britain. And now they wanted Mugabe's own head! During the video of Tsvangarai talking to Menashe in Montreal Tsvangarai had said that MDC's funds came from Sweden and Norway among others. This was said in reference to general funding and had nothing to do with the assassination allegation. Nevertheless the *Herald* of 22 February chose to claim that these were:

stunning revelations in which Sweden and Norway are said by MDC leader Morgan Tsvangarai to have provided funds for the assassination of President Mugabe. This, with the express approval of the Americans and other so-called members of the international community, is indeed shocking. We will not brook any nonsense from these countries, now that their motives are clear. We understand now why the European Union sent a Swedish to 'lead' its uninvited 'observers'.

And so, casually, the long and carefully worked for relationship with Sweden was cast aside.

An important question was obviously whether the assassination allegations would have any effect on electoral support for Tsvangirai. Almost nobody appeared to believe them but he emerged as naïve, even foolish, to have walked straight into the trap. Someone said to me in Bulawayo: 'The question is do we vote for an idiot or for that clever old bastard?' Her answer was that it was necessary to deflate the mystique of leadership and that it was necessary to vote for an ordinary, if foolish, man.

A different answer was offered by 'The Scrutator' (Dr Ibbo Mandaza) in *The Mirror* of 22 to 28 February. Mandaza insisted that the key issue in the election had by then become that of 'viability and the capacity to manage the Zimbabwean polity.' The general election in June 2000 had been essentially anti-ZANU/PF; the presidential election focussed attention on the capacity of the candidates - and Tsvangarai looked less and less capable. Moreover, Mandaza argued, 'the opposition party has no formal organizational structures and less so in the rural areas', while ZANU/PF 'has over the period since the general election revived its structures from the cell to branch levels.' It had 'spread its tentacles everywhere, through the revival and formation of new cells, branches and districts in every province. According to one estimate there are as many as 2.8 million office holders in the entire ZANU/PF party structures.'

Mandaza added that 'apathy' was 'much lower in the rural areas'. Adding all this together, he predicted a majority for Mugabe of over a million votes. In the event the announced majority was less than half a million.

One might ask whether Mandaza's analysis – 'it is almost impossible for President Mugabe to lose' - held any water. One answer might be that the 'capacity' factor counted for almost nothing; the propaganda about history and heritage spoke only to the already persuaded; the uses of religion cancelled themselves out. But the revival of ZANU/PF party structures *did* play a significant role. I was told that several faculty of the University of the Midlands carried out research on voter apathy. Everywhere they went they found newly established ZANU/PF branches on the ground. This was enough to make them predict a ZANU/PF win. (Of course, a parallel process was going on: MDC branches in the rural areas were being driven underground or wiped out altogether).

From where I actually saw the election there seemed to be quite a different scenario. MDC supporters - or in many cases it would be more accurate to say Mugabe opponents - knew that ZANU/PF had revived its branches and that the party had taken over control of the rural areas from the state. They knew that many people had been excluded from the franchise - the Zimbabweans overseas; the farm workers whose parents had come from Malawi or Zambia or Mozambique, together with many whites. They knew that violence and intimidation had been widespread. Nevertheless they still thought that they could win and went on thinking so right up to the declaration of results. MDC believed that it could win the elections even in areas - like northern Matabeleland - where its branches had been wiped out. It believed that ZANU/PF violence had been counter-productive and that people were determined to vote against it. It believed that people had become sickened by the relentless repetition of propaganda.

It was these assumptions which seemed best to explain what I actually saw over the weekend of voting. On Saturday 9 March I went out with friends to see voting in rural Mutare and in Honde Valley constituencies. I saw voters coming in to the polling stations cautiously, looking around them to see whether the 'Border Gezi' youth were still lying in wait. I saw them emerge from the polling booth triumphant, saying 'We must tell all the others to come!' A man informed that he would have to go to vote in Sakubva township in Mutare declared that he would certainly do so: 'The time has come to tell the truth'. As news spread that the poll was safe many people who had previously decided not to risk a vote came out and voted. That day there was a joyous air in eastern Manicaland. On the train back to Harare that night a conductor responded to my remark that it was like 1980 by saying: 'It is much more important than 1980.' When I arrived in Harare I heard of a huge turnout and of the queues at the polls. I phoned my historian friend to hear that she and her husband had queued for twelve hours to vote; later that day I met someone who had waited for eighteen hours, her daughter bringing her regular meals to the queue. She was proud of having voted and full of hope. A radical human rights activist was joyful on that Sunday, predicting an avalanche of votes against Mugabe. A Jamaican journalist told me that if he was asked by *Time* magazine to nominate the person of the year he would propose 'the Zimbabwean voter'; he would never himself abstain from voting now that he had seen how important it was to Zimbabweans.

There was so much hope that the announced result stunned people.<sup>11</sup> How did this happen? Were the hopes false? Did the Mandaza analysis prove right after all?

At this point I turn from my personal observations - I flew back to Britain on the day after the voting and before the results had been declared. As the days passed and as I received emails from Zimbabwe I began to realise however that my experiences of the voting had themselves been misleading. The Churches in Manicaland - a wonderfully wide-ranging combination of denominations - issued a statement on 15 March which 'recognised that largely peaceful conditions prevailed in our province during the days of voting', just as I had observed. But it went on:

polling agents and members of support groups of the opposition party were harassed, beaten and detained ... independent observers, including church observers, were also detained ... because of the absence of agents and observers, serious doubts have been raised regarding the security of the ballots both during and at the close of the voting period. A number of listed polling stations did not open during the polling days. A number of unlisted polling stations were opened without due notice .... A considerable number of voters in our province were unable to vote freely.

The figures appended to their report show that both the MDC and ZANU/PF ended up with 48 percent of the Manicaland vote. This was partly due to the overwhelming vote given to ZANU/PF in Didymus Mutasa's stronghold of Makoni North; otherwise it seems likely to have been due to the processes denounced by the Churches in Manicaland.

As for Harare and Chitungwiza, the figure to note is the 47.3 percent voter participation rate. No manipulation could prevent a 75 percent vote for Tsvangarai nor the election both in Harare and Chitungwiza of an MDC mayor and a full slate of MDC councillors. [In Harare the MDC candidate, Elias Mudzuri, polled 262,275 votes against his rival's 56,796; in Chitungwiza the MDC candidate, Mishek Shoko, polled 47,340 votes against 16,953] But the key factor in the presidential election was that half the enrolled urban voters did not cast their ballots. This had certainly not been, as

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<sup>11</sup> Judy Todd sent me an email from Bulawayo: 'So many people have been really, physically sick after hearing the results. It's like a crushing, leaving people feeling leaden, body and soul and mind ... not only has the election been stolen, hope has been stolen too.'

Mandaza asserted, because urban apathy was greater than rural. It was because there were very few polling stations in the urban areas, working very slowly, and because police drove away thousands of would-be voters at the close of the polls on the third day. The Minister for Information, Jonathan Moyo, issued a cynical but realistic comment while the voting was still going on. People should not draw conclusions from the huge queues in Harare, he said. These queues were not a sign of extraordinary enthusiasm but were caused by inadequate provision for the poll. In any case, 'Harare is not Zimbabwe'. The election would be won in the rural areas where there were many polling stations!

The low urban voting rate was indeed a contrast to huge voting figures in rural districts which I had not and could not have visited. In the misleadingly named Mashonaland Central province, which contains the far northern districts of Mount Darwin and Rushinga, those two constituencies supposedly recorded voter turn-outs of 69.2 percent and 71.8 percent. They voted 90 percent for Mugabe. The *Daily News* of 29 January had alerted its readers to the plight of 'Mashonaland Central: an enclave crying out for help':

The countryside is virtually under siege ... the most affected province Mashonaland Central. This has never happened in 22 years of independence, except in the Midlands and Matabeleland during the dissident era ... well-oiled and well-paid thugs operate openly .... The liberation struggle started in earnest in Mashonaland Central in 1971. The province has at least one war veteran, born and bred, in almost every village. Their major shortcoming was lack of education [which] disqualified them from being attested into the national army at independence. They were quickly demobilised and retired to the village .... When President Mugabe came under pressure in 2000 Mashonaland Central became his natural base. War veterans in the area became ready allies, keen to regain lost pride and glory. Their survival and future prospects lay in the new-look violent ZANU/PF .... [There are] pathetic levels of underdevelopment in the province. To most peasants here ZANU/PF is the only source of formal work ... invading farms, flushing out the opposition, mounting roadblocks. The violence in Mashonaland Central is linked to poverty, underdevelopment, limited choices and neglect. It is a statement, a desperate outlet for respect and recognition. It has become away of life.

There was never any doubt that Mashonaland North would vote for Mugabe. The question was how many votes would be counted. In the days after the election we heard opposition allegations of how the huge recorded vote was obtained. Affidavits sworn on 16 March testified that in Rushinga 'all polling agents were chased away on the counting day'. These agents had noted 19,000 voters casting ballots. 27,000 votes were announced. 'The difference is irreconcilable.' In Mount Darwin South 'all polling agents from the 45 stations were chased away by the Police and state agents .... They were vulnerable to the ZANU/PF militia from the Border Gezi camp.' They fled back to Harare. But before they left they recorded that 'most people were told that they should vote on Saturday for ZANU/PF and not MDC because Tsvangarai was arrested and his whereabouts not known.' In Mount Darwin North agents were arrested, detained and tortured.

The detailed voting figures appended to this report give an accurate idea of how the country is divided - despite everything the MDC took the towns, western Zimbabwe and eastern Zimbabwe. Nkayi and Lupane in northern Matabeleland suffered great violence and were the site of very many youth militia camps: Mugabe told the people at rallies that they had made a mistake in the June 2000 general election but that he would welcome them back. They gave a majority to Tsvangarai. ZANU/PF youth announced that they had 'liberated' Bulawayo which I had found edgy and scared when I visited it - far from its usual relaxed self. But Bulawayo repudiated Mugabe in the vote. My guess would be that violence failed to deter Tsvangarai supporters from voting. But it seems to have been the exclusions and the inclusions - the de-registration of so many voters; the closing of the urban polls when so many thousands had not voted; and perhaps the bumping up of voting figures in the rural areas - which determined the issue. [The MDC alleges that half a million additional 'votes' were added to the actual total].

### **Conclusion**

Probably neither the debate over history nor the alleged assassination plot played a key role in determining the election result. Both however are shaping the aftermath. African states have accepted the results while African churches and human rights groups have repudiated them. State leaders accept ZANU/PF history. Yoweri Museveni, for example, despite having been at war with Zimbabwe in the Congo, told Ugandan MPs on 14 March:

We are people in suits by day, but in uniform at night. We fought a liberation war. Don't play around with freedom fighters, you can see Mugabe. Liberation armies are not like these mercenary ones which earn salaries. We fought and we can still fight. Even if Morgan Tsvangarai had won, do you think Mugabe would have accepted? Oh ho! You are playing with fire!

The *Monitor* which reported these remarks on 15 March added that they echoed 'those made by Libyan leader Col. Muammar Gadhafi ... that revolutionaries shouldn't be subjected to elections or hand over power.'

As for the assassination allegation even before the result was announced Welshman Ncube had been arrested and charged with treason. South African entreaties that Mugabe should now form a government of national unity were hopeless. Tsvangarai and the MDC were so demonised during the election that no reconciliation is possible. It seems certain that the government will seek to break up the opposition. The youth militias remain active and the churches divided. Archbishop

Pius Ncube describes the new presidency as 'illegal' and refused to attend Mugabe's inauguration. Two other Catholic bishops did attend, however, and the secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference said that the church 'must reflect the plurality of people and differences and not fan differences.'

Meanwhile ZANU/PF and MDC emerged from the election with two rather different responsibilities. ZANU/PF has to handle a national situation of immediate hunger and of the impending failure of the harvest. MDC has to handle the crises of accommodation and services in Harare and Chitungwiza. It should give them both quite enough to do.

# A Consultant's Journal: Reflections on the HIV Epidemic in Malawi

Elizabeth Reid\*

### The context

The broad statistical picture on the HIV/AIDS crisis across Sub-Saharan Africa is now well known. Over twenty-eight million people, or 8.4 percent of the adult population, are estimated to be living with HIV or AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, of whom perhaps 10,000 have access to treatment.<sup>1</sup> By the end of 1999 sixteen sub-Saharan countries, including Malawi, reported adult HIV prevalence rates of more than 10 percent. The most seriously affected countries in Africa include Botswana, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Namibia. More women than men (55 percent) are infected.<sup>2</sup> The region has over twelve million children orphaned by the epidemic, most under age fifteen. In 1999, about 860,000 children lost their teachers to AIDS.<sup>3</sup> Overall, adult prevalence rates are still rising.

This paper reflects on the dilemmas that this presents for African governments and people; and for those who advise them. It is in the form of extracts from notes kept while on a mission to Malawi in November/December 2001 to strengthen national and local capacity to respond to the human, social and economic dimensions of the epidemic, both causes and consequences. The dilemmas and contradictions which Malawi confronts are similar to those for many other African states, and are now arising in other parts of the world. The challenge is to work out how to respond to an epidemic that is so diffused throughout society; where the epidemic is unravelling the institutions in which the responsibility for governance resides; and where poverty compounds the issues.

### The journal

#### Johannesburg, 18-19 November 2001: The task ahead

I am en route to Malawi to pick up the thread of my work with the National HIV/AIDS Secretariat. The mission is to assist the Government to design UNDP's support for 2002-2006 to help the country manage the HIV epidemic. As I re-read the terms of reference, I note: 'According to recent epidemiological and demographic data, HIV infection rates in the population 15-49 years were 20 percent in 2000, higher in the urban areas'. The last time I was in Malawi, in 1998, the official estimate was 13.6 percent. This is a significant increase.

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world, with an annual per capita income of US\$175, and subjugating gendered traditions. It has a population of about ten million, with an estimated one million orphans. Possibly one in five persons is HIV infected, and many have died. Infection rates are high amongst the educated, the trained and the skilled, those in whom the country has invested its scarce resources; amongst those who own its wealth; those who manage its resources; and those who hold political and juridical power. Trained and experienced people cannot be easily replaced; their archival memories are irreplaceable. Further complications arise because the small pool of those trained or educated that might take over from them is itself infected. If this rate of attrition continues, few will be left to govern; few will decide to invest.

The Mission is to suggest ways of responding to the human, social and economic dimensions of the epidemic, both causes and consequences: it is the How questions we are being challenged to address. But this is not an easy task. The health sector provides a relatively simple illustration. Because of the epidemic, there is an increasing demand for health services. At the same time, health sector staff themselves become sick, take time off to go to funerals, to care for their own family; and for dying. Those who replace them, in a country like Malawi, are usually less well trained and certainly less experienced. As a result, there are increasing numbers of non-HIV related deaths and complications: women die avoidably in childbirth, people die of undiagnosed but treatable malaria, and so on. Where are the entry points for change?

These reflections led me to ask myself whether in circumstances such as those in Malawi highest priority nationally and in the donor community should not be given to keeping those essential to the functioning of the country alive. The available drugs are capable of doing this, if it were just a question of drug availability. I find this thought appealing. But HIV treatment, like HIV protection/prevention, requires difficult behaviour change and extensive technological, medical and communal support structures. There are equity issues. Normally those who access treatment, even subsidised treatment, are those who can afford it, the urban based, men more than women. Treatment cannot be the only

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\* Elizabeth Reid is a development consultant and Visiting Fellow at the Gender Relations Centre, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia. Formerly she was the Director of the HIV and Development Programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

<sup>1</sup> *Harvard Consensus Statement*, April 4, 2001. This statement was signed by 128 Harvard researchers, physicians and economists. The statement argues that the price of HIV antiretroviral drugs is one that the world's richest nations can easily afford to pay and calls for three million Africans to enter treatment within the next five years.

<sup>2</sup> *AIDS epidemic update December 2001*, UNAIDS/WHO, Geneva ([www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org))

<sup>3</sup> K. Subbarao, Angel Mattimore and Kathrin Plangemann, *Social Protection of Africa's Orphans and Vulnerable Children: Issues and Good Practice; Program Options*, Africa Region Human Development Working Paper Series, World Bank, Washington, August 2001 ([www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org))

solution. But it is also true that an epidemic like that in Malawi is less paralysing in the presence of antiretrovirals. By keeping alive those responsible for good governance, the economy and social order, we ward off the encroaching unravelling, and create time for consolidation.

Would a treatment access program with developmental objectives be possible to design? That is, leaving aside for the moment questions of treatment affordability, compliance, infrastructure, skill base and monitoring, would selection criteria be able to be devised? A transparent and accountable system of decision-making would be needed to ensure that the guidelines were followed and that drugs were not filtered off for sale in lucrative markets. This might be possible in some countries, but not in others.

A policy of subsidised or free antiretrovirals however gives rise to boundary questions: does it make sense to limit such a programme to antiretrovirals? TB, malaria, and other life threatening diseases are endemic. HIV-related opportunistic conditions also affect productivity. Worms also. There are conditions that facilitate transmission of the virus: STIs, reproductive tract infections, bilharzia, vitamin A deficiency, etc. Public health conditions limit disease: clean water, proper sanitation, nutrition, basic health infrastructure. Social, cultural and economic factors shape behaviour, access and compliance. Can antiretrovirals be provided without addressing other needs?

### **Lilongwe 20 November 2001: Ethics and the epidemic**

There was no-one at the airport to meet me. The server has been down for days and inertia/incertitude reigned over anticipation. I made my own way to town. So far the Team is a doctor and myself. Neither situation takes me unawares. The email asking me to be Team Leader and to be here by today arrived only six days ago. It stated that there would be a team of four to five. Here are the ravages of the epidemic at work. Staff absences and deaths increase workloads and decrease productivity.

On arrival, I was given the first draft of a study of absenteeism and attrition rates in the Malawi public service which states that the Department of Human Resource Management has not established systems for monitoring absences, deaths or departures. This I know is not true since such a system which monitored staff absences, deaths and departures, irrespective of their cause, as well as the associated costs, for example, staff funerals was set up in 1996-7. This is the data that planners and policy makers need. But the senior staff member who devised the system died and the monitoring system died soon after. Although his dedication as a planner had been deeply felt and his staff were involved, the system was not continued. How are HIV-related changes institutionalised in cultures of silence, inertia and denial?

The study of public service attrition rates illustrates how little capacity to address the ethical, human rights and legal issues raised by the epidemic has been built in Malawi over the past three years. The terms of reference for the attrition study correctly asked that it look into rates of absence and attrition from the public sector. The researchers chose to interpret this as AIDS-related absences and deaths. Without the consent of the families involved, they traced the individual staff members that died in hospital and made retrospective diagnoses from the records to determine whether AIDS was the cause of death. This resulted in the claim that almost 95 percent of the deaths were AIDS-related. Thus a claim about a group becomes a revelation about the infection status of individuals and a serious transgression of the ethical imperatives of consent, privacy and confidentiality.

If the concern is about dysfunctionality in the public service due to increasing absences and attrition amongst staff there is no need to single out HIV-related causes from others. It is the increasing disruptions that are of concern. Whatever the cause, the problem lies in the consequences. No argument was made in the report to justify the re-interpretation of the terms of reference to single out HIV and AIDS from other causes of death. No discussion of the ethical issues of such a study is included. An important para-statal, one that has undertaken previous studies on the impact of the epidemic for UNDP and for the Government of Malawi, carried out the study. The report's conclusions can be applied to the research institution: 'The (findings) show, once again, how difficult attitudinal and institutional change is when it is across the grain of the dominant cultures of a refusal of implication, of silence and denial.'

### **Wednesday 21 November: The competing paradigms of the epidemic**

My team colleague is a former Head of the National AIDS Programme and experienced in working with Government and with the donor community. He is responsible for an antiretroviral treatment access programme at the public hospital in Blantyre and is one of the architects of the national treatment access policy. I have asked him to bring together whatever is known about who gets access, at what cost, to whom, for how long, by gender and urban/rural residency.

The mission is a microcosm of the unravelling. Maybe a third person will join the mission this morning. Maybe we will be briefed by the National AIDS Commission Secretariat today. Maybe we will get an office, a computer, internet access, phone access, transport, some kwacha, contracts to sign, and other items that can make working easier. Maybe we can get an agreed meeting schedule.

I am deeply concerned about our task. But *how* does one build capacity where illness and dying are so everyday? *Where* does one build it, given that the systems are inter-related and inter-dependent? Who does one work with to build it?

Since my last visit, a new National AIDS Commission (NAC) has been appointed and, following global trends, the mandate of its Secretariat has shifted away from implementation to policy development, coordination, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation. Implementation becomes the responsibility of other institutions; HIV becomes mainstreamed. An organisation such as UNDP then works to build capacity to implement in a range of key and interested institutions. Yet my first impressions are that the response to the epidemic has been re-medicalised and re-centralised. Past national efforts supported by UNDP and others to build capacity to understand and respond to the epidemic as a development issue seem to have been lost or over-ridden.

The recently appointed Executive Director of the NAC Secretariat (NAS) is a medical doctor. The Administrative Arrangements for the NAC remain highly contested, with the Ministry of Health arguing that reporting should be through the Minister of Health to the Cabinet, and bilateral donors insisting that it report directly to Cabinet through the Office of the President and Cabinet. These struggles over control, resources and understanding of the nature of the epidemic are found in other countries also. At the heart of this malaise are the competing paradigms of the epidemic:

- the medical versus the developmental;
- treatment versus prevention;
- simplicity versus complexity;
- social engineering paradigms versus facilitating paradigms;
- the centralised versus the flourishingly responsive/chaotic;
- the individual as patient versus the person as socially embedded;
- individual behaviour change versus addressing cultural values and social norms.

Strong impressions:

*The stark beauty of the landscape.* My image is of the surface of the moon.

*Denial.* Last night the doctor and I were assailed by a senior Malawian diplomat quietly but stridently insisting that malaria was worse than HIV.

*A resurgence of Christian evangelicalism and pentecostalism.* I have been prayed over as a gift of welcome. Prayer meetings abound. As do anti-abortion banners and ads with foetuses in the daily paper. This too is linked to the ravages of the epidemic and indicates the failure of traditional churches to accompany people through the painful landscape of the epidemic.

#### **Wednesday evening: Statistics and the way they are used**

Since arriving, I have noted serious inconsistencies in the reported rates of HIV infection. One day it is reported that 20 percent of the sexually active populations is infected. The next, people are told that 8 percent of the population is infected. Then it is 15 percent of the sexually active population. Then there is another figure in the paper.

An article by Rian Malan, 'AIDS in Africa: In Search of the Truth' published recently in *Rolling Stone* but circulating on the internet<sup>4</sup> reflects on the different methodologies which produce different figures for HIV infection rates, mortality and orphan numbers. He cites figures for South Africa: local actuarial models estimate 352,000 AIDS deaths since the epidemic began; the South African Medical Research Council 517,000; the UN Population Division 1.06 million, etc. Malan acknowledges the pressure to inflate HIV data: the need to catalyse a timely response, their role in obtaining national and international funding, competing claims on attention in a globalising world. But he argues that the emphasis on the extent of the epidemic is creating serious social problems. People's minds are being addled by death propaganda. In his Johannesburg suburb, 'we automatically assume that almost everyone who falls seriously ill or dies has AIDS, especially if they're poor and black. But we don't really know for sure, and nor do the sufferers themselves, because hardly anyone has been tested.'

The concern of planners and development practitioners is less with the exactness of the estimates and more with trends, with causes and effects. Further it is important what type of person is dying – mothers of children, key decision-makers, etc. – and what social, security, economic effects these deaths will have. The death of just one or two key persons can cause an organisation or institution to fail. Examples include small business enterprises, the backbone of the Malawian economy; an honest, effective Departmental Secretary; a community leader. We need to understand the epidemic through its effects.

Today we raised with the NAC Secretariat the problems created by the different rates of infection being cited and the emphasis on high infection rates. We talked about the problem of 'death propaganda'. We talked about the '20 percent infected is 80 percent uninfected' way of talking about the epidemic.

We were told an interesting story. The former NAS had decided that, as a strategy for hope, it would emphasise that 80 percent of the population remained uninfected. However, people became quite hostile on hearing this, accusing them of lying: 'We see these people coughing and sick all around us. *Everyone* is infected', they said. 'Do not talk to us of 80 percent uninfected. It is more likely that it is 80 percent or more infected.' This fatalism and despair is the outcome of

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<sup>4</sup> For example, [debate@sunsite.wits.ac.za](mailto:debate@sunsite.wits.ac.za)



relentless death propaganda. It is also the result of a long history in Malawi of the manipulation of social statistics for political ends.

We were joined this morning by a social scientist from the Centre for Social Research in Zomba.

#### **Thursday 22 November: Poverty and the epidemic**

The HIV and development issues that Malawi faces are common to almost all African countries, but are compounded by its poverty.<sup>5</sup> President Thambo Mbeki has been correctly arguing that the way HIV infection *expresses itself*, at the level of individuals but also of communities and societies, is shaped by poverty. Health conditions endemic in many African countries - malnutrition, anaemia, multiple pregnancies, cholera, malaria, TB, measles, E.coli and others – render immune-compromised persons more susceptible to illness and death, may increase susceptibility to infection and may cause errors in HIV tests. Lack of access to education may be a more accurate causal account of continuing spread than are accusations of denial or risk-taking. There may simply be misunderstanding: ‘To an illiterate person, immunosuppression is an incomprehensible concept. The myriad diseases which eventually cause death among AIDS patients do not make the situation any clearer. The perception is that if one person dies of chronic diarrhoea, another of cough, and yet another of meningitis, they could not possibly have suffered from the same condition.’<sup>6</sup>

Yet poverty need not prevent an *effective response*. Uganda is only two African countries above Malawi on the HPI. But through strong leadership at all levels, community solidarity and dedication, and with networks of community organisations and government services that span the country, it has brought its epidemic under control.

#### **Friday 23 November**

In our meetings yesterday, we sought to understand how HIV was being mainstreamed. We met with people who are on the Cabinet sub-Committee on HIV and who are or were Commissioners on the National AIDS Council. What was *striking* was how the knowledge gained through membership of these HIV oversight bodies had not been applied to their own professional work. When asked about mainstreaming, they replied that their staff were taking IEC (Information, Education and Communication) messages, posters and pamphlets to the field. As if HIV is out *there* and mainstreaming becomes IEC done by agricultural extension workers, teachers, water engineers, etc.

This may be one strand of a mainstreaming capacity but in a country like Malawi the burning issues are how public goods, such as education and health services, can be delivered as the capacity to deliver diminishes; how agricultural production can be safeguarded as farmers, extension workers and other agricultural officials fall sick or are distracted; how a justice system can function while its functionaries are being rendered sick and destitute by the epidemic. HIV affects the systems through which its impact must be addressed. Mainstreaming is to manage an institution in the age of HIV and AIDS.

These meetings provided an insight into the limits of HIV oversight bodies. The capacity of their members to understand the epidemic as a permeating development issue must be strengthened and they must be mentored and trained to apply this knowledge to their own domain.

Gender mainstreaming is being cited as a model for HIV mainstreaming. But here in Malawi the differences become clear. In the time of gender, the systems to be engendered were relatively stable, whatever their productive capacity. The aim was to make systems more functional and equitable by making them more gender sensitive and responsive. In the time of HIV we are similarly trying to build the capacity of institutions to address the dysfunctionality caused by the epidemic: increasing electricity blackouts, small businesses failing, increasing numbers of parliamentary by-elections, etc. The difference is that the institutions to be strengthened are themselves adversely affected by the epidemic. Productivity is decreasing as the demands of the epidemic increase. The systems are inherently unstable.

#### **Sunday 25 November: Living with HIV**

Friday evening I dined with some Malawian women friends. I am blessed by the company of women and my work is deeply enriched. It is a tragic loss to the epidemic that their insights, skills and lightness are not drawn much more into the response.

Last week a Malawian acquaintance told me that his wife went to a workplace meeting on HIV. She came home insisting that the family change their diet to build up their immune systems. My acquaintance asked whether it would not be better to first go and be tested to find out whether they *were* infected. His wife shuddered and rejected the suggestion.

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<sup>5</sup> *Human Development Report 2001: Making New Technologies Work for Human Development*, UNDP and Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 151. Thirteen African countries rank lower than Malawi on the UNDP Human Poverty Index (HPI): (in descending order) Eritrea, Rwanda, Benin, Senegal, Central African Republic, Mauritania, Mali, Mozambique, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Chad, Ethiopia, and Niger.

<sup>6</sup> Givans K. Ateka, ‘Factors in HIV/AIDS transmission in sub-Saharan Africa’, *Bulletin of the World Health Organisation*, 79 (12), 2001, p. 1168.

The papers reported that 16,000 people had gone to be tested at the two NGO testing clinics last year. This is very few of the 20-percent-of-five-million infected. Of these 16,000, 75 percent were men, and the women were almost all widows. The clinic staff felt that married women were too afraid to be tested for fear of their husband's violence or of repudiation should they test positive. It is now government policy to encourage people to be tested. This is an important breakthrough but an implementation strategy is needed. HIV is still a disease of shame and testing is perceived as an acknowledgement of 'naughtiness'. There is a pervasive, paralysing fear of being tested, as shown by my colleague's wife. There are few if any safeguards of confidentiality.

I tried to start a discussion with the NAS about the value of doing research which would better help to understand people's experience of living through such an epidemic, research into people's actual coping strategies, the little 'tricks' or grand stratagems they were using to get through the day. Malawi undertook similar action-research in its national consensus building process undertaken 1997-1998.<sup>7</sup> Such research is an integral part of a national response in countries like Australia.<sup>8</sup> The first phase of the formulation of the Malawi National HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework 'involved community mobilisation and institutional consultations to break the culture of silence and uncover issues surrounding the epidemic'. I was told that KAP studies (knowledge, attitudes and practices) were being undertaken and that these were sufficient unto their needs. The limitations of the methodologies of KAP and similar studies have long been documented in the HIV literature. But these journals rarely find their way into resource poor countries and into the mindsets of their committed professionals and activists. There are few discussion forums; fewer still social research centres. Most researchers in these settings make a living doing consultancy work, base line studies, evaluations and such like, rather than research.

### **Blantyre Friday 30 November: People respond**

This morning's *Nation* newspaper carries the story of Steven Chanunkha, a retired public servant who became concerned about the increasing number of orphans in his village. With his pension money he established an orphanage *network* and AIDS counselling scheme for the people of six surrounding villages. He trains volunteers from the village to care for the 1,800 orphans registered with the programme and to provide counselling and home care for the sick and dying. 'Ignoring these kids is like murder' he says. 'They can be anybody's kids, yours, mine or anybody's.' Occasionally they come to his house to beg for food. 'I share with them the little I have, which is often not enough. But I believe that it is not the amount that matters but the gesture behind the act.'

In the poorest villages and neighbourhoods throughout Malawi there are people like Steven Chanunkha, people of great courage and compassion. In many ways this is what could most truly be called the national response. Yet the links between these people and the institutionalized response are haphazard and tenuous. These last two days in Blantyre we have been meeting with quite a number of HIV NGOs. I have asked about their ability to connect with and support these saints of the response. They reply honestly that networking and collaboration amongst themselves is improving, that MANASO, the Malawi Network of AIDS Support Organisations, and organisations like Cabungo are building their effectiveness, but that their capacity to find and support people such as Steven Chanunkha is limited by their lack of transport, trained staff and funds.

Sometimes the links are forged and miracles happen. On the way down to Lake Malawi I stopped in the village of Salima to see Catherine Phiri. When UNDP held its first HIV and Development workshop in early 1996, Catherine had the courage to attend as an HIV infected person, one of the earliest people in the country to speak her truth. Catherine's dream was to start a group in her village to take care of the children left without care, to help people protect themselves, especially through access to voluntary counselling and testing, and to provide care for the sick and dying. Eventually SASO, the Salima AIDS Support Organisation, was born. Catherine had both the skills and the luck to find people who supported her work and who eventually gave her financial and staff support. She now receives a monthly stipend, which she uses to buy anti-retrovirals to keep herself alive. However, the stipend cheques are often not on time and so her drug regimen is interrupted. In her case the unravelling could lead to drug resistance or lessened efficiency.

Today, SASO supports about two thousand children. Yet to meet children's needs in Salima alone, other support organisations have also been started. Often there is solidarity amongst such organisations; but often there is suspicion, accusations and rumours. Such rifts and discontents can be addressed but so far little capacity has been developed to do so.

### **Lilongwe Sunday 2 December: Horizontal linkages**

Today at breakfast, I was greeted by Susan Hunter, one of the first people to draw the orphans of the epidemic to the world's attention. Susan had heard on the women's grapevine that I was in town. Earlier this year, Susan reviewed the COPE project of Save the Children Federation (US). COPE is Community-based Options for Protection and Empowerment,<sup>9</sup> the name itself is a tribute to the development experience of the programme formulators. COPE began

<sup>7</sup> www.undp.org

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Kane Race, *HAART: Only Solution, Only Cause*, (in draft), National Centre of HIV Social Research, University of NSW, Sydney, 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Susan S. Hunter *Observations on Malawi's COPE Project: Report on a Field Visit and Program Review*, Save the Children/US, August 6 to August 19, 2001.

as an experiment in helping communities find their own strength to deal with the HIV epidemic and its ravages. It works through the existing local government structures and AIDS committees, community organisations, and with volunteers. Its starting point in each community is Training for Transformation<sup>10</sup> and as it develops capacities of leadership and organisation it assists communities to develop their own set of programmes to address in a holistic manner the HIV prevention, care and support needs they have identified. Susan's report states: 'I have reviewed programs in fourteen countries in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, and have rarely felt so convinced of a program's effectiveness ...'. An important claim.

Six years on, and with the knowledge and skills developed through COPE, Save the Children Malawi has been meeting with other NGOs with similar goals and approaches to explore how together they can achieve horizontal linkages of mutual learning, support and complementarity and expand to cover the whole country. They have agreed to establish a national *implementing* partnership that will program to reach all of Malawi's districts with at least 75 percent coverage by 2005. This, they understand, will be the first partnership program in sub-Saharan Africa to take up the challenge of going to national scale to meet the needs of children, families and communities severely affected by the HIV epidemic.<sup>11</sup> This is groundbreaking work. Much of the international rhetoric is now around 'scaling-up' the response and here is a carefully planned and negotiated implementing partnership to achieve just that. Tomorrow the others in the team will be briefed and we will explore ways of working together. Without the women's grapevine, our paths might not have crossed. Horizontal linkages are important in so many ways.

#### **Tuesday 4 December: Accessing HIV treatment**

Perhaps the biggest change in the three years since I was last here is the presence of anti-retroviral drugs. Many of the HIV activists with whom I worked in the past have died without access, but some are alive and thriving, some alive and struggling. Hope has been created. Information on who and how many people have access to these drugs is hard to get. As everywhere drugs are available to those who can afford private hospitals and pharmacies, although the supply might be intermittent or drugs substituted according to availability. There is a government-run programme and a small initiative of Medicins Sans Frontieres (MSF), designed to reduce mother to child transmission, using donated drugs, in one poor neighbourhood in Blantyre. The government programme started in May 2000 in the public hospital in Lilongwe and Blantyre. The drugs were purchased with funds made available by the European Union and the decision was taken to deliver them at cost rather than free in order to finance the purchase of further drugs. The price was originally 10,000 kwacha per month (US\$160 per month) but is now 2,500 kwacha per month (about US\$40) and the government hopes to reduce it to 2,000 kwacha. Each person seeking treatment has to satisfy the oversight committee that they can pay for the treatment for at least one year. There are now about 150 people accessing treatment at each hospital. Mothers in the MSF programme are now demanding access to drugs for themselves so that they can live to take care of their children. At times drugs are demanded for other infected children in the family or for the husband. Thus MSF are finding that the clustering of infection in families is reducing, not the number of people assisted, but the number of families.

I raised with the NAS whether thought had been given to giving priority in access to treatment to those infected persons essential to the nation's social, economic and governance functioning. The response was outrage: 'We would have to choose who lives and who dies, if we were to do that.' I was taken aback by the ferocity of the response since clearly the current treatment policy does that too. The government programme is one of the lowest priced programmes in the world. However the cost is still more than many senior bureaucrats or other officials key to the functioning of the country earn in this poverty struck country. Hence the programme privileges the elite or those few covered by health insurance or private sector employer subsidised schemes.

If there were a more active, development-related component, selection guidelines would need to be established. This would not be easy and their application even less so. This is true but it is not the problem raised by the NAS. For them, the current passive process of selection was morally acceptable; this suggestion abhorrent.

We have an office in the NAS, phone, computer, printer, but no paper. The team is working hard. Trust has been built, our differing skills identified, tasks allocated and the synergy of mutual support is there.

#### **Johannesburg Saturday 8 December: Looking back**

HIV is an epidemic of tensions. There is a tension between increasing people's consciousness of the extent and impact of the epidemic and the avoidance of fatalism and despair. There are the tensions of the competing paradigms of the epidemic and in the ways that, particularly in conditions of poverty, problems are interrelated and difficult to address individually. There are also tensions between a faith that people will come to protect themselves, and the availability of life-saving drugs. In the space between these tensions, hope, compassion and action are born.

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<sup>10</sup> Anne Hope and Sally Timmel, *Training for Transformation: A Handbook for Community Workers*, Books 1 to 4, Mambo Press, Zimbabwe 1999; ITDG London 1999.

<sup>11</sup> Documentation on the Partnership can be obtained from Dr. Justin Opoku, Field Office Director, Malawi Field Office, Save the Children Federation (US), Fax: 265 756 257, email: seus@malawi.net.

# An Oral History Project: Recording Recollections of the School Boycotts c. 1984 to 1987 in Grahamstown, South Africa

Ryota Nishino\*

## Introduction

This article arises out of an oral history project conducted in Grahamstown South Africa in 1999.<sup>1</sup> Following the Soweto uprising of June 1976 Township children boycotted their schools across South Africa including in Grahamstown between 1984 to 1987.<sup>2</sup> Seeking to discover the ‘human side’ of those Grahamstown boycotts and at the same time to examine the value of oral evidence for the history of that period I conducted interviews with a number of former students, teachers who had been teaching in the township schools and parents who had had children at school in the mid-1980s. While the number of interviews was small I found that the recollections of all those who participated in the project provided some valuable insights into their common frustrations during the boycott years. This article, largely using their own words, draws together those insights as a contribution to the growing body of oral evidence relating to that period.

## The background

The environment of South African apartheid through the 1970s and 1980s and more specifically of the Bantu education system within which the school boycotts occurred is generally well known. Student grievances during the 1970s reflected the pressures of an increasing student population as the apartheid state, in order to remedy its labour shortage, gradually opened up vocational education to African students. Between 1975 and 1985 the number of African primary and secondary students grew from 3.7 to over six million. Despite the educational reforms African schools continued to receive far less funding than their whites-only counterparts.<sup>3</sup> At the local level the issues perennially plaguing township schools included over-crowding of classrooms, lack of equipment, poor provision of and political bias in textbooks, lack of electricity,<sup>4</sup> the low morale of teachers and the call for student-elected Student Representative Councils instead of the prefect system. The second crucial factor was the high rate of African unemployment. Grahamstown’s African unemployment rate in the mid-1980s for example was 60 percent.<sup>5</sup> The prospect of joblessness worried both parents and students and acted as a catalyst for student protests.<sup>6</sup> Ultimately, after the Soweto massacre, anger towards the apartheid economic system merged with anger towards the discriminatory political and education policies subjugating Africans to a perpetual underclass status. By the mid-1980s, when 45 percent of the African population were under the age of twenty years,<sup>7</sup> students had become a powerful group with political clout.

Having arrived recently in South Africa, using English as my second language and having no experience of the apartheid system all proved to be to my advantage, and enabled me to build a positive rapport with most of the interviewees. In all some twenty-four people were interviewed, including eight former students at township schools, all but one of whom had played leading roles in the boycotts; nine township school teachers and five parents who had had children attending high school during the mid-1980s.<sup>8</sup> Few projects do not suffer from limitations and mine was no exception. Despite my efforts to ensure a gender balance only two of those interviewed were women, one of the students and one of the parents. The small number of interviews conducted makes any broad generalisation difficult.

I found that students, teachers and parents had distinctive recollections of those past events. They were concerned not only with their personal stories; but also with the reasons why children chose to boycott their schooling for political purposes; and with the ways in which relationships with families, peers, colleagues, neighbours and the wider community were affected when they did. Not surprisingly the dominant image that linked them together related to

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\* Ryota Nishino, who was born and grew up in Japan, went in 1996 to South Africa where he studied for his BA (Hons) degree in history at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa. He is now teaching in New Zealand.

<sup>1</sup> The project was undertaken as part of my History Honours research essay for my BA (Hons) dissertation in History, entitled *The Dynamics of School Protests: Grahamstown School Boycotts c 1984-1987*.

<sup>2</sup> Detailed analysis of the background to and accounts of school boycotts can be found in the work by Howard Barrell, Monica Bot, Colin Bundy, Jonathan Hislop, Peter Kallaway and Bill Nasson. See especially Jonathan Hyslop, ‘School, Unemployment and Youth: origins and significance of student and youth movements’ in Bill Nasson and John Samuels (eds) *Education: From Poverty to Liberty*, p. 82.

<sup>3</sup> Bill Nasson, ‘Redefining Inequality: Education Reform and the State in the Contemporary South Africa’ in Nasson and Samuels, *op cit* p. 55 shows the figures. In the 1985/6 fiscal year, the government allocated R5,044 million to education. Only R917 million (18 percent) went to African education. The South African Institute of Race Relations’ annually published *Race Relations Survey* shows statistical breakdown of government educational spending on each racial group.

<sup>4</sup> At Ntsika High School there was no electricity for Standard 6, 7 and 8 classrooms. Interview with Student D, 24 August 1999.

<sup>5</sup> SAIRR, *Race Relations Survey 1986*, (Johannesburg, 1987) p. 718. The harsh economic situation in South Africa was exacerbated by a drought that hit many parts of the country during the 1980s. This pushed up food prices and curbed the water supply. The drought added to the plight of township residents.

<sup>6</sup> Colin Bundy, ‘Street Sociology and Pavement Politics: Aspects of Youth and Student Resistance in Cape Town, 1985’ in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol. 13, no. 4, April 1987, pp. 312-313; Hyslop, ‘Schools, Unemployment and Youth’, p. 84.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>8</sup> I had aimed at having five interviewees in each category, but it proved difficult to find the full quota of parents. Two other interviewees who contributed to this project did not strictly fit into any of the three categories. All but one of the students had Xhosa as their first language, the eighth, a ‘coloured’ student, Afrikaans. Of the nine teachers four were Afrikaans speakers and all five parents were Xhosa speakers. I was unable to meet a black teacher.

conflict: with the apartheid state; between students and teachers; between parents and teachers; between student factions; and most intensely between students and the state police systems. I look in turn below at the different ways in which students, teachers and parents recalled and explained their experiences and conflicts during those boycott years.

### The students

Grahamstown student groups followed their national headquarters' expressions of concern over the state of education in South Africa. In doing so they not only challenged the state; they also contested their teachers' authority and redefined the student-teacher relationship and ignored parental control. As one of them recollected their mood:

they [students] were totally *gatvol!* I think that's how it [school boycotts] started.<sup>9</sup>

Initially unified in beginning the boycott and sharing the common goal of dismantling apartheid, student factions were nevertheless divided by their political allegiances: Grahamstown's majority group, the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) was affiliated with the United Democratic Front (UDF), to which the ANC belonged. The second group, the Azanian Students Movement (AZASM) was aligned to the Black Consciousness groups. Differences in operational methods deepened the rift even further, and often resulted in street fights. The suspicion of *impimpi* (state informers) further exacerbated intra-student conflicts. Students whose families were involved in the Black Local Authority (a council level body set up by the apartheid regime) were targeted as prime suspects. Students whose personal belongings (such as clothing and stationery) suddenly improved were suspected of receiving payment from the government in exchange for information. Once a student was labelled as an *impimpi*, he or she was ostracised from the community.

Frustration with what they saw as a generation gap made students' interaction with parents a cradle for strife. Their parents believed that change would come from above and that the boycott was detrimental to reform. Students maintained that their parents' generation's passivity nurtured apartheid, and that only active campaigning could end apartheid. Hence in answer to the author's question as to what students and she herself recalled of her generation's attitudes towards their parents, the only young woman in my group replied:

Ja, definitely [laugh], they didn't understand. There's a broader cause at stake. They don't understand they were being conservative .... And therefore it was our duty to make sure they understood. If we wanted to get out, we'd have a meeting, and not to go to classes. That's the only way they were gonna take us seriously. That's the only way we were gonna deal with them.<sup>10</sup>

Faced with what they saw as their parents' conservatism and unwillingness to listen, students simply proceeded with action and lived away from home; although another of the group remembered that perseverance had been the way to persuade his parents to change their views:

I would come out of detention. And the security people would give you a letter saying that I would distance myself from any political activity, and I won't be attending political meetings. And I will sign it. My mother and father will sign it. And tonight, I am talking on the stage! Tomorrow they'll come and pick me up again [laugh]. So, it was determination and consistency that made them understand that there was no way in turning this light of ours [away from politics], y'know.<sup>11</sup>

The students' most violent clashes, as the events that followed the declaration of the State of Emergency in July 1985 showed, were with the state. By then the students had grown 'street-wise' and changed their place of operation from the schools to the streets in response to which the state authority sent in *kitskonstabels*.<sup>12</sup> The latter were ill-prepared and under-trained for the task of quelling street violence. The students' response demoralised them as well as the South African Defence Force (SADF) soldiers.

Student militancy and the state response grew more brutal as the boycotts progressed and as students vented their frustration by taking revenge on the state apparatus. The students interviewed had found it stressful to live away from parents and to confront the police and the military, but were proud to have taken part in bringing apartheid to its end; as is clearly shown by the following account by one of them of how they sought to undermine the military:

How stupid the government was to build phone poles on one side and electric wire on the other side with poles parallel to each other. To bring these cops down, y'know, there's steel-belt tyre. When you burn that, you get little wire that is inside there.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Student F, 19 August 1999. 'Gatvol' means 'fed up' in Afrikaans. I have identified interviewees by letters in this way to preserve anonymity.

<sup>10</sup> Interview with Student C, 23 August 1999.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Student F, 19 August 1999.

<sup>12</sup> Afrikaans for 'instant constables'. 'Kits' stands for 'instant' in Afrikaans. During the 1980s, the South African government required many police officers patrolling the townships. Kitskonstabels were ancillary police officers to supplement the roles of the police officers. They were mainly recruited from the townships. They were released to the townships after a very short period of training.

Ja, now with that little wire we take the ladders and climb up to the other pole and tie that wire there, level with the neck of the soldiers, the level of the neck of [laugh] the cops, y'know. And, we used to tie *fast* to the other end of the pole, and pull it, so it was *tight, tight, tight* .... And we'd sit on the other end, and toyi-toyi, y'know.

And, they'd come there with hippos ... on high speed .... And we sit and wait. And it comes! And that wire would just go on to the guy's neck [snaps fingers]. And, he'd be on the floor [snaps fingers]. Just like that, *kwappa!* And stupid enough, his friends will not stop and wait for him or go pick him up. Because they knew, 'coz should one of them get out, it's petrol-bomb. So they would just fire at anything to scare us away .... Then, we just throw stones on the one on the floor [laugh]. I enjoyed it! Y'see, it was a payback time. I mean, we didn't have guns. We didn't have anything to fight them with. But we had our brains. That's one thing that they did not steal from us.<sup>13</sup>

In this situation students found themselves in a peculiar position. Despite asserting their independence from their parents they still needed parental protection when in difficulty, as one former student remembered when describing how his mother had confronted two police officers who had been following him to his home:

So my mum stood up and said, 'If anything happens to my son .... I'm going to *really really* nag you to take you into the court until you come back home with my son .... I've never in my life wanted you to come into my house. So, I'd like you, gentlemen, to leave the house now. But you must know one thing, if my son gets hurt or anything, I'll actually have you responsible for that'. So they said, 'No, we wanted to talk to him because we wanted to offer him a bursary.' And then my mum, 'No, you're not offering a bursary. My son has applied for bursaries. And that's the bottom-line. He never actually approached you for bursaries.' So, and then they left, and the policeman before he left the door, 'Gonna get you, gonna get you, m'boy' .... Then, they left. And, I must tell you I was very scared.<sup>14</sup>

### Teacher perspectives

The teachers bore the brunt of the boycotts. They were caught between the students and the government, always feeling that the government was watching them while the longer the boycott continued the less their control of and authority over the students became. The Department of Education and Training's (DET) policing role created suspicion between teachers as the DET and the Police worked closely monitoring their behaviours. Two teachers referred to their difficulty in trusting one another while another recollected the pervasiveness of suspicion even though he had trusted that there were be no *impimpi* on staff. One recalled a colleague telling him about an incident to do with the strange behaviour of a newly-posted Afrikaans teacher:

[The principal] said to the staff in general, 'please - whatever is said in this room is confidential - it's not to go beyond these doors'. And, this odd guy turned to [the colleague] and said in Afrikaans to her, 'What must I do now? Because the security police had asked me to tell them everything that happens here.'<sup>15</sup>

Teachers' recollections were not that the actual boycotts had been based on students' consensus and awareness of the educational and political issues (as the former students argued) but on coercion and fear. They believed that students who had refused to co-operate with the leaders had been alienated and labelled as *impimpi*. One teacher recalled:

I did find that there was a lot of intimidation present in classrooms. Many children wanted to work. And the kids were actually forcibly removed from the classrooms. The teachers were intimidated. I actually think the junior pupils did not understand what it was all about.<sup>16</sup>

She remembered the methods of getting students to join the boycotts:

Toyi-toying in front of classrooms, opening classroom doors, glaring at pupils, sitting in the classrooms, sometimes banging the doors, and stampeding into classrooms - and it was just impossible to teach.<sup>17</sup>

Another teacher remembered differently that:

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with Student B, 19 August 1999. 'Hippo' is nickname for army vehicles. Many South African military vehicles resemble the shape of the animal of that name. The laughter and smile on the student's face and the excited tone of his voice reflected his sense of achievement.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Student E, 1 September 1999.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Teacher A, 6 August 1999. While suspicions of state informers amongst the teachers always existed the evidence remains hazy; never really going beyond the level of intelligent guess.

<sup>16</sup> Interview with Teacher C, 25 August 1999.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

There were a lot of times where I felt that, much as I am loath to admit an agreement with what the government was saying at that time. That the thing is that there were a lot of times the boycotts were just orchestrated irrespective of anything. It affected kids' lives badly. They didn't finish their schooling.

As a teacher I found that very frustrating. I always tried to see more than one point of view and when the police and the media were saying there was widespread intimidation, the impression that they were trying to give was that the people with guns and threats and all sorts of things [were] forcing everyone to do something. But it was more subtle than that.<sup>18</sup>

The teachers acknowledged their difficulties in coping with the educational standstill and loss of professional esteem and especially their loss of confidence. As one of them put it:

[D]uring the boycotts they were not obedient .... The child would leave and go home without the permission of the teacher. So that I began to lose my confidence. Because if I am a little bit strict, I'd be in trouble. If I punish the child, the other children would sympathise with the child .... I could be stoned during the boycott.<sup>19</sup>

Their daily routine altered radically as, every day, teachers went to teach knowing that classes would be boycotted. As the sense of fatalism crept into their minds and eroded their morale so they adopted different coping mechanisms:

We drank from morning till night. Because, y'know, if boycotts started at ten, so the school is out. Before we go toyi-toying we went to the bar. We bought a helluva lot of drinks. And we went on toyi-toying, drunk as lords - most of the time.

After the boycotts, at meetings we had, these guys were just complaining, complaining .... It was just politics, politics. Some of them crying - so hardened they were: 'we must try and do this' and we still taught nonsense. We were drunkards .... And tomorrow, it's back to school.<sup>20</sup>

Another teacher had a different escape valve:

It affected us. It demoralised you. You felt useless - I felt useless. Many a time, I felt I didn't want to be at school any more. In fact, I had an escape route. I would take leave for a year and go and study something. I went back to Rhodes University - just to get away from school - in 1984 .... Just because I felt, by improving my qualifications, I would feel a better teacher, y'see. Because, really, I was totally disillusioned with teaching as a whole.<sup>21</sup>

Guilt and anomie haunted another teacher:

I don't know if others told you about the games of volleyball and table-tennis that we played. That was a personal conflict - many times. Coz you felt 'this is wrong that I should be here playing some *stupid* game like volleyball or table-tennis - being paid to do it - while a nation is suffering. But what else must I do?' We went to school every day. But we did nothing. We reported there at eight o'clock or something, and we left at about twelve o'clock. And we were paid actually to sit and do fuck-all. Eventually you couldn't even read or do anything. It did a lot of damage to the psyche from that point of view ...<sup>22</sup>

Those teachers sympathetic to the students' cause had a greater ethical conflict: They wanted to teach to the best of their abilities, to derive satisfaction from teaching, and they wished the best for the students' future. When they were met with rampant student absences and refusal to work, their morale was further lowered.<sup>23</sup>

### Parents' perspective

Parents with children at school initially responded to the boycotts in confusion and dismay.<sup>24</sup> Students and parents differed enormously in the value they placed on education. Parents had invested their income in their children's education; they regarded educational success as the only way out of poverty in the township. The school boycotts shattered their hope. Parents wanted the children to end the boycotts and return to school. Students maintained that achievement in the apartheid education system was tantamount to endorsing and augmenting the unjust apartheid regime and so saw parents' views on education as pro-apartheid. Unable to elicit information about the boycotts from

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<sup>18</sup> Interview with Teacher A, 11 August 1999.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Teacher I, 26 August 1999.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Teacher G, 17 August 1999.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Teacher D, 20 August 1999.

<sup>23</sup> I was unable to meet a black high school teacher, but two of the teachers interviewed were former black primary school teachers.

<sup>24</sup> Students' social role changed into that of children once they were in the family context and youth in the community context. Hence the terms children, youth and students were used interchangeably especially in the discussions with the parents.

their children, who refused to explain for fear of spies in the township and that inquisitive parents could be informers, the parents therefore had little insight into student activities. School boycotts were a taboo subject in the family:

As a parent, I was not really involved in students' politics because also they did not trust us as parents to be involved in their politics .... There were *impimpis*. They were rife those days. And if you involved yourself too much in their politics, and then they tended now to be suspicious and regard you as *impimpi*.<sup>25</sup>

Parents recalled the stresses between the children and the parents. They had been afraid of asking their children about the boycotts; sensing an oppressive atmosphere of student militancy and threats of violence upon themselves they preferred silence to interference:

Nobody was standing, I mean, on their way [sic]. Because they were very angry of what they were demanding, then. Even they were in the position to kill if you are standing in their way. Then, so the parents couldn't call the children in order to ask them what, it was better to watch what they were doing and listen to them.<sup>26</sup>

As another of the parents who acknowledged that he had never seen an instance of children committing physical violence on parents, put it:

Threat was there. If you talk to them those days, you can't talk about what's happening at school. So you just talk about things happening - not politics with them. They, they will think you're standing in front of them. You can't ask them 'why don't you go to school?'. No, you can't say those words. They will kill you.<sup>27</sup>

As student militancy escalated and parents lost their authority over their children so the students' power could be observed also in the exchanges at the parent-teacher-student meetings:

[I]t was really really very tough to convince the students, and they were watching every word you are saying. They're watching you. And if you said anything that would annoy them, then surely that evening they would visit you and find out from you exactly what we were saying in that meeting.<sup>28</sup>

Yet parents grew more worried about the physical safety of the children as many of the latter changed their dwelling places frequently to escape the state authorities and spies and the physical isolation and lack of contact made their stress more severe. Following the declaration of the State of Emergency parents began also to sympathise with the children's cause. Gradually, as they witnessed their children being physically assaulted by the SADF, *kitskonstabels* and the police force, parents grasped the issues surrounding school boycotts and many responded by supporting the children's efforts:

Our first motive was - when the death was happening we started to go to one of the funerals of the students .... So we thought it was high time that we must go to the people and listen what was really happening - what was the motive of the children to be shot.

And, from there we heard that the children were just refusing to go to the classrooms - and they had their gatherings outside the school yard - and the police came and shoot [sic]. So if, we said to ourselves, if the police just shoot the children at random, so it is our duty to pull our legs up.<sup>29</sup>

One parent remembered how her neighbours helped the students when they allowed the students to hide under their beds from the police search:

[t]he way I supported the children whenever there is a conflict between the children and the police, I remember those days they were using teargas. I would let my doors open, so that when the children are running they can have a place to hide in my house. And I would open the taps so that they can have some water to cover their nose for the teargas. So then, by that I was supporting.<sup>30</sup>

Ironically it was the violence against students by SADF, *kitskonstabels* and the police force during the State of Emergency, which often resulted in students being shot dead, that in part resolved student- conflicts with their parents. Those events raised parents' political awareness, their anger towards the state and their sympathy for the students. Once they identified the common enemy, their fissured relationship turned to understanding.

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<sup>25</sup> Interview with Parent D, 12 August 1999.

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Parent C, 30 August 1999.

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Parent B, 30 August 1999.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Parent D, 12 August 1999.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Parent A, 27 August 1999.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*



Depending on whether or not they were politically involved parents also came into conflict with each other. Apolitical parents revealed a kind of resentment towards the leaders who had acquired education and were in a position to get involved in politics, whilst other parents were struggling to make ends meet. Illiteracy had contributed to the gap amongst the parents: between the educated minority and the uneducated majority.<sup>31</sup> The adults in Grahamstown Civic Association (Graca) for example were suspected of giving political incentives to children to organise boycotts. The meetings between Graca-leaders and parents were held privately so as to avoid police attention.<sup>32</sup> This meant the lack of opportunity for them to meet collectively to resolve the wide mistrust amongst parents in public. In fact, Graca members spent an enormous amount of time and energy convincing others that they were in the same boat as any other parent struggling to understand the issues, and persuading the children to return to school. The majority assumed that Graca supported the students. Graca members recollected that they had had little chance to explain their situations:

[Apolitical parents] were accusing us of influencing the students. The fingers are pointed at Graca. But as I see it they would not do it openly they would just whisper it amongst themselves .... We are still saying that we had nothing to do with the activities of the students and they made their own decisions confidentially. They would sit at their meetings until late at night. And on the following day, you would see a certain activity taking place. And there was nothing we could do about it.<sup>33</sup>

Parents' relationship with teachers also deteriorated, when initially the parents blamed the teachers' lack of discipline for failing to keep their children in school for their classes. In that case a series of teacher-parent meetings enabled teachers to talk to parents about teachers' experiences after which they began to work closely together and succeeded in 1987 in getting students back to school.

### **Conclusion**

The aim of this oral history project was to listen to some of those who had been involved in the school boycotts that had taken place through the mid-1980s in Grahamstown; to give space to their voices. My hope was to make a contribution to the literature, to open up a new 'human dimension' in post-apartheid assessment of the liberation movement. The recollections recorded here draw on still vivid memories of those past events indicating that the experiences and lessons of the boycott years have undoubtedly remained in their minds. They are memories of frustration, insecurity and conflict and mistrust that had affected all three groups, although in different ways. While the number of interviews conducted was small I nevertheless see them as contributing to a better understanding of the dynamics of the boycott movement as it grew in Grahamstown in the 1980s and the ways in which student protest against the state in turn influenced and redefined their relations also with teachers and parents.

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<sup>31</sup> Interviews with Student H, 2 September 1999, and with Parent E, 12 August 1999.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Parent A, 27 August 1999.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Parent D, 26 August 1999.

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### Two New Volumes on African Theatre

**Banham, Martin, James Gibbs and Femi Osofisan (eds), *African Theatre in Development*, Oxford, James Currey; Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1999. pp 182, b/w photographs, p/b. ISBN 0-85255-599-7 (Oxford); 0-253-21341-X (Indiana).**

**Banham, Martin, James Gibbs and Femi Osofisan (eds), *African Theatre: Playwrights and Politics*, Oxford, James Currey; Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press; Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 2001. pp 294, b/w photographs, p/b. ISBN 0-85255-598-9 (Oxford); 0-253-21458-0 (Indiana); 1-86814-367-8 (Witwatersrand).**

The books reviewed here are the first two volumes in a new annual series on African theatre whose editors Martin Banham, James Gibbs and Femi Osofisan see their aim as being to respond to those 'practitioners, teachers and students of African theatre [who] have long sought to establish a forum for discussion, debate and exchange of ideas and information' and who have made courageous efforts in the past to respond to such needs.

The new series is intended to 'complement existing work, (such as *South African Theatre Journal* and *African Theatre Review*) and to create a truly pan-African context of material and interest'; aiming to provide 'a focus for research, critical discussion, information and creativity in the vigorous field of African theatre and performance'; and promises a major topic per issue presented in a language and format accessible to all readers interested in African theatre and its relation to contemporary African life. Each volume will offer a diverse range of articles, theatre reviews and book reviews as well as the text of an unpublished play in each (selected by Osofisan). There is also the welcome promise of material on, for example, experimental theatre within and sometimes outside Africa about which there is often little or no information available outside the local context. Regional experiences of Development Theatre are to be reported on, as are the workshop processes inherent in such programmes. Interest in the written text as well as those not so formalised, as it were, in print, has therefore dictated the balance in content in *African Theatre*. The Foreword to the second volume clarifies the point: there is 'an almost equally strong emphasis on plays in performance, on drama festivals, and on groundbreaking theatrical initiatives [as] the variety of work being done and the circumstances under which it is produced continue to amaze ...' (p. xi-xii).

Playwright and novelist Zakes Mda, (in South Australia for the Adelaide festival Writers Conference in March 2002) built his reputation on his work in African theatre, particularly development theatre, as well as on his success as a novelist. He says of the role of the playwright in development theatre: 'any person who stands behind a pen (brush, camera, or saxophone for that matter) must be as effective as any person who stands behind a gun in the service of progress' ('Commitment and Writing in Theatre: The South African Experience', *The Classic*, South Africa, 2.1: 15). The nexus between artist and society in Africa is not in fact in doubt and these first two volumes of the series subscribe to a view of theatre as both entertainment and as an art form that serves 'progress'.

*African Theatre in Development* focuses entirely on Development Theatre. It includes papers on theatre as liberation tool; staging; propaganda; mass education; and the role of theatre in revolution. The opening paper, Carolyn Duggan's 'Strategies in Staging: Theatre techniques in the plays of Zakes Mda', discusses Mda's adaptation of Brechtian Epic Theatre to African Development Theatre and is ever mindful that the education and empowerment of the people is the over-riding purpose of all development theatre. 'Propaganda and Mass Education' by James Gibbs turns the spotlight on the influence of Alec Dickson's pioneering work in drama as a means of changing 'the social atmosphere' through community development programmes in the Gold Coast. Dev Virahsawmy's work is at the centre of Roshni Mooneram's detailed exploration of post-colonial Creole theatre in development in Mauritius. Virahsawmy's work is also critiqued in the second issue of *African Theatre* which features the English version of his play *Toufann: A Mauritian Fantasy* (originally performed at the Africa Centre, London, in 1999).

Two essays on theatre in Eritrea, one by Campbell *et. al.* and another by Jane Plastow (who is also the Reviews Editor for *African Theatre*) report on regional work in Development Theatre. Both give a strong sense of the context in which the development teams work and offer honest appraisals of the successes and failures associated with work of this kind. Chuck Mike writes on the work of the Performance Studio Workshop in Lagos; David Kerr on an Arts development seminar in Harare; and Jan Cohen-Cruz on a practice and policy seminar in London. There are also papers on arts and development in Ibadan and other Nigerian workshops (Jumai Ewu, Frances Harding). Frances Harding, as do the other writers, draws attention to the 'primary objective' in working with villages being not to create a drama 'but to create one...based on the personal experiences of the people living there ... to deepen understanding of problems in the village from the perspective of the villagers' (p. 102). Reports on workshops tend to allow a closer than usual glimpse at village life. The usefulness of such a collection of material in one accessible place is self-evident.

'Noticeboard', a small section compiled by James Gibbs, offers a succinct round-up of what has been happening theatre-wise - where, when, who and how - which is particularly useful, especially so for those of us who are out of the loop of such performances and productions, and as a way of highlighting recent collaborations, workshops and tidbits of news primarily within but also outside Africa. Publications are brought to our attention along with productions of note (for example: Bandle's 1997 adaptation of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*; Jude Kelly's Anglo-Swiss-Nigerian production of Soyinka's *Beatification of Areaboy* in Jamaica).

Including a previously performed but as yet unpublished African playscript creates immediate interest for those wanting access to what is being produced on the stage but not always on the page. The play in this first volume is Agbo Sikuade's *Babalawo, Mystery Master*, a snappy six-scene six-hander directed by Penny Boreham and recorded by the BBC Africa Service in 1997. A health issue and the desire for offspring who survive is cleverly handled in a comic piece that pokes fun at conservative problem solving. A little lateral thinking and a blind eye lead to a satisfactory ending all round. There is a lively review section - indicating how much is being written on African theatre and the quality we can expect - which is well worth reading. Reviews by David Kerr are particularly incisive.

The second and more substantial volume reviewed here explores, as its title indicates, the relationship between theatre and politics. It is organised into discrete sections: three articles focussing on theatre, playwrights and politics; the plays of Femi Osofisan; Ghanaian playwrights Joe de Graft and Mohammed Ben-Abdallah; Language and Politics: Island Plays; Puppets and Politics: Horse and Bamboo Productions; Follow up: Theatre in Development; Noticeboard; Dev Virahsawmy's *Toufann*. There is also a review section, divided into Theatre Reviews and Book Reviews, which brings this volume, a good third longer than its sibling, to a more than satisfactory close.

The authors draw attention early to the 'general political nature of theatre' noting that 'African playwrights, including those currently operating outside the continent, remain acutely aware of the political dimension of their work' (p. xi). Sudanese playwright, political activist, teacher and publisher, Khalid al Mubarak Mustafa in 'From a Playwright's Notebook' writes of finding one's work at odds with the view of those in power. Eckhard Breiting examines 'Bole Butake's Strategies as a Political Playwright' opening with Butake's comment: 'You have to be very careful about what and how you are saying it, because this country is very unpredictable' (p. 7). Butake's work, Breiting concludes, 'has tried to strike a balance between popular theatre activism and formal theatre' and the playwright himself is well described by Bongani Linda as a 'cultural combatant' (p. 16). In 'Ife Convocation Plays as Politics' Foluke Ogunleye examines the way in which many of the annually performed Convocation Plays have 'provided sturdy political comments on the Nigerian situation' (p. 19) over the past quarter of a century, often in the face of opposition. However, there is a call made for such plays to venture 'beyond the confines of the ivory tower' (p. 25) to a much wider audience lest democracy in Nigeria remain 'at best, epileptic, malnourished, a mere mirage on our political horizon' (p. 24).

Sam Ukala's 'Politics of Aesthetics' examines Osofisan's plays 'in relation to the aesthetics of the alternative theatre and the crucial issue of mass appeal and mobilisation' focusing on what Osofisan has called 'new patterns of dramaturgy, derived from our "African traditions"' (p. 33). Victor Ukaegbu's essay looks in some detail at the intercultural adaptation and performance of Osofisan's *Once Upon Four Robbers* by the Jawi ('let's talk') collective at Northampton with particular reference to its flexible adaptation of an African play script to a western setting, the work's similarity to Brechtian theatre, the use of a multiracial cast and the notion of performance as 'a meeting ground of cultures'. Ukaegbu concludes that '[c]ultural and political identities may be dangerous bedfellows but they travel well together, especially in theatre. They generate the creative tensions that have sustained intercultural theatres through history. They create contested sites, but, most significantly, they encourage the appropriations and transmissions of "other" materials by theatre practitioners and audiences' (p. 56). Awo Asiedu reviews a performance of the same production commenting on the technical difficulties associated with intercultural theatre as evidenced in the performance.

Joe de Graft's contribution to the Ghana cultural revival, re-evaluated by Obi Maduakor, is complemented by James Gibbs' detailed critique of Kofi Agovi's profile of de Graft himself in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. Anthony A. Aidoo and James Gibbs take a brief look at 'Mohammed Ben-Abdallah at Fifty' and Gibbs discusses *The Land of a Million Magicians* in a short, separate essay which is then followed by a lengthy interview with Ben-Abdallah ('Both my writing and my politics spring from the same source'). Jane Wilkinson's interview with Dev Virahsawmy, alluded to earlier, ranges across Shakespeare and the playwright's 'translation-adaptations', Creole ('It is fast becoming the symbol of a supra-ethnic identity in a plural society') and Mauritian politics. It is joined by her interview with Michael Walling, artistic director of Border Crossings, on 'Staging Shakespeare Across Borders' in a section that focuses on language and politics and serves as a timely introduction to discussions of *The Tempest*, *Toufann* (a rewriting of *The Tempest* included in the last section of the volume), Aimé Césaire's *Une Tempête* and the (mis)fortunes of *Théâtre Volland* in Réunion (a French theatre company said to have gone on 'biting the hand that fed them .... Is it right to expect a theatre company to reflect the ideology of those that control its purse-strings?'). Sam Ukala's paper is on *Harvest of Ghosts*, a puppet theatre piece on oil pollution in the Niger Delta and the 'judicial killing' of Ken Saro-Wiwa and other Ogoni activists that grew out of the collaborative efforts of Ukala and the members of the Horse and Bamboo Theatre. Remarkably informative about the process of collaboration it is supported with technical commentary on staging and costuming as well as excellent photographs of masks and puppets used in performance.

'Follow-up' revisits the theme of the earlier volume on Development Theatre with a piece on the 'Making Sense Project: Promoting Entrepreneurship by Theatre and Radio in Southern Africa.'

Both these volumes make this new series a worthy new forum for and by practitioners and critics, which is commendable for its vision and breadth of coverage. The 'mix' of critical commentary combined with interviews and autobiographical statements offers worthwhile insights into the many and disparate issues and contexts driving theatre in Africa today. The generous number of reports on regional experimentation and the inclusion of sometimes difficult to access photographic material related to local productions will prove useful to the research student as well as the interested reader. On a note of personal preference, I liked the reader-friendly structure of the second volume for the way it encouraged cohesive reading and reflection, albeit over short stretches of time. Perfect for browsing and/or study. Forthcoming titles include *Women in African Theatre*, *South African Theatre and Performance* and *Francophone African Theatre* and contributions have already been called for. Attractively produced and equipped with a useful index the new series is a welcome addition to the increasing number of informative studies in this field.

Dianne Schwerdt  
Department of English  
University of Adelaide  
Adelaide, South Australia

## The Global, National and Local in African Elections

Michael Cowen and Liisa Laakso (eds), *Multi-Party Elections in Africa*, Oxford, James Currey; New York, Palgrave, 2000. pp x +387 incl. Index. ISBN 0-85255-844-9(h/b) and 0-85255-843-0 (p/b).

Since the late 1980s international and domestic pressures have led to a substantial re-emphasis upon elections as part of the structure of political authority in many countries, including Africa. Loan conditionality as well as local opposition to authoritarianism have forced governments to remove barriers to the formation of political parties and other voluntary associations, as well as reform electoral practices. Concurrently studies of elections in Africa have once again flourished, much as they did during the late colonial and early independence period. Whether Africa as a whole is now part of what Samuel Huntington has called the 'third wave' of global democratisation or even democratic consolidation instead of just back-sliding into reshaped authoritarianism and more capitalist barbarism is now the subject of numerous books and articles.<sup>1</sup>

This detailed and informative collection is based upon a project funded by the Academy of Finland, the Nordic Africa Institute in Sweden and the Finnish Department of International Development Cooperation (Finnida), coordinated around the Institute of Development Studies, University of Helsinki. The project covered elections, national and local, in fourteen out of approximately forty sub-Saharan countries which experienced multi-party elections in the 1990s.<sup>2</sup> The volume of one introductory essay by the editors, a revised version of their earlier *Journal of Modern African Studies* article, twelve case studies and an innovative appendix statistically examining political business cycles in Africa makes a considerable further contribution to electoral studies.

The variety of disciplinary backgrounds of the contributors is one reason why the essays form an impressive entity. The cohesion is also enhanced by the collection's treatment of three lines of argument, tendencies which have informed previous studies of elections in Africa. Encouraged by editorial advice the contributors have largely avoided earlier pre-occupations with the standard 'African exceptionalism' direction, which so often seem pre-occupied with explanations focusing upon tribe and ethnicity. Secondly, elections are here considered as part of democratisation as a process, rather than an outcome, so that each essay is especially strong on the history surrounding a specific election. Thirdly, rather than elevating the local as a discrete level or arena, often privileged as an embodiment of 'grass-roots' or community action against national politics as elite expression, the essays emphasise how locality, the local, is connected to the national and the global.

Confronting the 'exceptionalism' tendency ensures that most of the case studies follow the sound premise that in Africa, 'as elsewhere in the world, a detailed analysis of elections is part of the understanding of the possibilities and constraints of democratisation.' (Editors, Chapter 1, p. 1). The purpose of studying elections is to find out what matters if and when elections matter. No opposition parties won elections in the period studied, a striking contrast with what occurred so widely at the first multi-party elections in the early 1990s, where the ruling party was changed in almost

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<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave. Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman, Oklahoma and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991; Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa. Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge, CUP, 1997; Cowen and Laakso, 'An Overview of Election Studies in Africa' in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 35, 1997, pp. 717-744; Kenneth Good, 'Autocratic Elites and Enfeebled Masses' in *African Studies Review and Newsletter*, vol. XXII, No.1, June 2000, pp. 44-53.

<sup>2</sup> The countries are Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (Michael Neocosmos), Ethiopia (Eva Poluha), Ghana (Anthony Kwesi Aubynn), Guinea-Bissau (Lars Rudebeck), Kenya (Cowen and Karuti Kanyinga), Malawi (Harri Englund), Namibia (Ina Soiri), Nigeria (Adebayo O Olukoshi), Sudan (Atta El-Battahani), Tanzania (Tuulikki Pietila, Sanna Ojalammii-Wamai and Laakso), Zambia (Jeremy Gould), and Zimbabwe (Laakso).

half of more than thirty-one party-regimes. Despite the seeming failure of elections as a means of changing governments, elections may express and contribute to important changes underway in countries' political economies as successive chapters in this collection show. The point is neatly counter-posed by Adebayo O. Olukoshi's detailed consideration of several elections in Nigeria between 1993 and 1998, which concludes instead that these only produced 'A Transition to Nowhere'.

Dealing with the 'democracy as outcome' argument guarantees that each study ties the colonial and post-colonial heritage of elections in specific countries to the prelude to and conduct of particular polls. Thus each of the essays sits outside what has been described as the Nuffield tradition of electoral studies, through which polls are examined as an outcome of a near-discrete event.

Examining the third tendency of earlier studies, regarding the character of local electoral politics, became especially important as the project progressed. Research repeatedly detailed how politics at the local level could not be 'simply conflated with the well-trodden issues of communality, especially those of the ethnic or "tribal" as sources of political identity' (p. vii). Further the local could not be easily separated from the national, given an especial virtue for being distinct from 'high politics', nor from the global. This is an important theme of several essays and is given extensive treatment by Cowen and Kanyinga for the 1997 national elections in Kenya.

As with so much in this path-breaking collection, two other conclusions seem especially important for future electoral studies in Africa and elsewhere. Firstly, while the shift from single to multi-party elections has an ambiguous relationship with democratic consolidation, the effect is not just a matter of whether there is elite circulation. Enlargement of political space in this form may also be associated with the advance of local, primarily indigenous capital in regions of a country where this did not occur in the earlier single party era. Hence there is a need for a political economy understanding of the process of democratisation, a point stressed by several contributors.

Secondly, the increase in the number of parties contesting elections while seemingly anti-authoritarian may also be associated with limiting other political spaces. Electoral and parliamentary 'cretinism' can so dominate political action, including for opponents of authoritarianism, that wider political forms wither or are actively blocked. This in turn may fuel and also partly account for the widespread so-called apathy of the citizenry often associated with low voter turnouts, so neatly examined by the essays of Poluha, Englund, Soiri and Laakso on Ethiopia, Malawi, Namibia and Zimbabwe respectively.

*Scott MacWilliam  
National Centre for Development Studies  
ANU, Canberra ACT*

## Relating Land Tenure to Power and Authority in Africa

Sara S. Berry *Chiefs Know Their Boundaries: Essays on Property, Power and the Past in Asante, 1896-1996*, London, Heinemann. Social History of Africa Series, Portsmouth NH 2001. pp xxxix +225, Maps and tables. ISBN 0-325-07002-4.

This is an elegantly written and thoughtful book on what is a central question in African social studies – the relationship between the kinds of rights (if that is the appropriate word) in land, and the kinds of political and social authority in African societies. It is this relationship which needs to be emphasised at the start of any account of African land tenure because too often, and most particularly in the paradigms of the World Bank and other neo-liberal economists, the reform of land tenure is treated as a matter of economics rather than politics. The arguments induced in favour of individualisation and marketisation of tenure are related to its expected economic benefits. But if we understand the relationships between land tenure and power and authority we might be able to think more clearly about how the marketisation of land could transform African politics. This would be very useful, and more of it needs to be done. This is also a valuable book in that it looks at urban as well as rural tenures, a subject which, given the very rapid rate of African urbanisation, is still sorely in need of attention. An irrelevant clouding image of customary rural life overhangs much consideration of African tenure systems, obscuring the problems of landholding, land values and secure access to living space in African cities. (I found Chapter 4 ‘On the Suburban Frontier: Stories of Dispossession, Development and Indirect Democracy’ unique and most illuminating).

It is relatively easy to take neo-liberal economic analyses of land tenure as representative of Western thinking about property and as a kind of straw man against which to assert the complexity of, and reasons for, the social practices that make up the ‘systems’ of social relationships around land in African societies. It is unfair to say that Sara Berry does this, but she at times comes a little close. As she says, the study will illuminate, (and it does) ‘the limitations of arguments that conceptualise property as a set of rules and enforcement mechanisms’ and that it must be viewed as a ‘set of social processes ...’ (p. xxii. See too fn. 16). But few legal, social science, politics or even economic scholars have taken so limited a view of property relations and their place in and effects on social and political relations. As Berry writes, the core of the disputes about property relationships in Africa now is not a simple economic question but a very broad political one concerning ‘the inability or unwillingness of postcolonial regimes to separate the production and appropriation of wealth from the pursuit and exercise of power.’ (p. xxiii) Arguments for well-defined property rights are not only arguments about the power of individuals to make rational choices (i.e. those not distorted by social obligations) in a market system. They need more to be arguments about the conditions under which democratic politics and political freedom can be realised. Relating African property systems before, during and after colonialism to African politics since independence is a daunting project, but one which needs to be advanced without simplified oppositions between Africa and a ‘West’. Particularly when neither western legal systems (taken as a whole) and nor, especially, western social ideas about property relations, which are complex amalgams of economic, political communal and familial ideas, have much relationship to neo-liberal models of property relations.

Is it crucial to state weakness in Africa that the state has failed to become the final arbiter of property relations? It may be that it is this, rather than ideas about individualism and markets, that is the core difference between most African and most Western states. Is this a reason for state ‘failure’ or simply a symptom? Is the idea that land can be ‘sold’ at the core of pre-colonial cultures, or the outcome of the interplay between colonial rulers, traditional leaders and a people under threat from colonial land depredations? On what legitimate bases can claims to land be asserted and proved? Berry’s book is of particular interest in the way in which she shows how, rather than one set of legitimate claims replacing others as political regimes changed, the bases of legitimation proliferated, and came to be asserted side by side or cumulatively. ‘Formal leases and documents do not replace oral history as sources of evidence concerning claims on land; instead both were adduced and debated, in and out of court ... adjudication turned on simultaneous and contradictory processes of codification and proliferation of narratives about the past ...’(p. 10). This inability of the state to establish a single overriding criterion of claim may be at least as significant as the supposed opposition between ‘individual’ and ‘communal’ tenures. (See also pp. 50-51 on the multiple versions of custom and precedent and their ‘performative’ aspect). Of course neither major western legal system, common law or civil law, establishes certainty through rules, which litigation always shows to be open to varying meaning. Both western legal traditions have (with some differences) been orally oriented, and hold people to oral contracts about which court cases multiply. But in the case of land transactions the primacy of the written transaction and the written document have long been established. Multiplicity of claim is squeezed out by this process. Whatever the surrounding discourses about the equity of property in the society at large, evidence of ownership in particular cases is drastically limited. This is not the case in Asante, as Berry shows.

Both law and custom are best understood as they are deployed in specific instances and the kinds of research and study that this book represents are ideal. Apart from its own highly valuable insights the book also introduces a wide literature and this makes it an even more valuable resource. The book is full of subtle observations not simply on Asante, but also on many of the major current debates in the social sciences. It is my own particular obsession that leads me to highlight

one of the issues in the conclusion. Berry remarks acutely on the 'fine line between specificity and essentialism' (p. 199). And, as she writes, '(T)he point is not that social relations are generically more important to the creation of wealth in Africa than in other parts of the world' (p. 199). In her concluding remarks however she says that 'What distinguishes Asante, and perhaps other African societies, from the exclusivist ethos of liberal political economy is ... the frank acknowledgement that individual accomplishment is inseparable from interaction with others ...' (p. 200). This is a conventional conclusion in African studies, and one for which I see no reason. I do not see the 'exclusivist ethos of liberal political economy' dominant in any real society, and those 'western' societies in which it is assumed to dominate show all the signs of greater success in developing social solidarity than other parts of the world. 'Communalist' rhetoric often goes along with the most fractured and violent social relations and is, perhaps, symptomatic of them. African studies in general needs to face up to this paradox.

*Martin Chanock  
Law and Legal Studies  
La Trobe University  
Bundoora Victoria*



# Understanding Witchcraft in Contemporary Africa

Isak Niehaus with Eliazaar Mohlala and Kally Shokane, *Witchcraft, Power and Politics: Exploring the Occult in the South African Lowveld*, London, Pluto Press, 2001. pp v +246. ISBN 0 7453 1558 5 (p/b).

Witchcraft, notwithstanding expectations of its possible demise in the late twentieth century, in fact bloomed in many parts of the world; and by all indicators continues into the new millenium as a major force in community dynamics. In Africa it is in fact today a spectacular example of the complex dynamics that occur when local expressions of cultural knowledge expand to encompass and integrate globalization into grounded social worlds. Witchcraft seen in this way is an often accurate mimesis of the sometimes occult and opaque flows of global forces; and for this reason alone opens up critical and innovative modes of analysis regarding agency and resistance. Employed by many societies both in and outside of Africa as a mode to comprehend changing circumstances and, in particular, negative circumstance, understanding witchcraft becomes therefore an important dimension in the wider scope of research involving communities under pressure.

Isak Niehaus' approach to the subject seeks to combine symbolic analysis with grounded political and social theory. It is an ambitious attempt to bridge what could be called a split in African witchcraft studies between those works that follow a socio-political line and those opting for symbolic analysis. This combination has been largely absent in contemporary works, even one as influential as Geschiere's *Modernity of Witchcraft*.<sup>1</sup>

African experiences are fore-grounded throughout Niehaus' book testifying to his long-term presence in the area and the influences of dynamic South African historiographies, such as Charles van Onselen's epic *The Seed is Mine*.<sup>2</sup> His analysis stands largely inside the agents' understanding and not at a Eurocentric remove. For example, on the subject of power the author's starting point is the indigenous conceptions of *puso*: to reign, govern and dominate and *maatla*, meaning power and strength. Niehaus examines how these two localized concepts of power diverged to critically impact upon witchcraft accusation. Only in Chapter Three's examination of a witch's magical familiars does the analysis significantly diverge from this standpoint. These strengths would be heightened by direct quotes from the people he interviewed. Perhaps the author thought quoting disruptive to the text's flow but I believe the addition of personal voices of accused witches and witch hunters would only have enriched the work.

In Chapter Two Niehaus introduces the term ecology to denote the complex relationship between witchcraft and the changing social and cultural environment. While the author does not in fact make full use of such a richly laden concept as ecology of belief nonetheless the imagery conjured by this analytic model underscores how witchcraft permeates every facet of life and death. The ambitious historical project of this chapter attempts to come to terms with shifts in the demographics of Green Valley - from the Sotho and Tsonga battles and the Shangaan migrations, to the impact of an assortment of racially-based schemes enforced by the Apartheid government. He also traces the routes by which Christianity first faltered then flourished in Green Valley.

Drought, locust and commando worm plagues in combination with heavy taxes and the land stealing practices of white agri-barons in the late 30s and early 40s drove many into a permanent cycle of migrant labour in distant mines and factories. The Betterment scheme, for example, wrecked havoc on the social structure of agriculturally based small hamlets, breaking the Setlhare chieftdom into the Bushbuckridge Native Reserve. The book details how during this time a new code for moral life emerged from a hybridisation of Christianity, traditional taboos and the destructive effects of the Apartheid regime. This code would have a profound effect on how people thought about and responded to witchcraft, both altering modes of accusation and amplifying anxieties about witches.

Chapter Three deals with the relationships and behaviours of witches and their familiars. Niehaus establishes that a witch is dangerous precisely because he/she occupies an unstable position between the cultured social life of the *motse* and the dangerous bush unmediated by human moral order (a common theme in most forms of witchcraft). Through detailed case studies he explores the meanings of two relatively new additions to the Green Valley witches' entourage of familiars; the baboon-like *tokolotsi* that Niehaus equates with uncontrolled sexual desire, and the *Mamlambo*,<sup>3</sup> a snakelike creature that brings its owner illicit wealth. Niehaus sets out a persuasive argument for the Mamlambos' main significance as a manifestation of the desire and reason for selfishly hoarded wealth. The only qualifier I have with this section is that more attention might have been given to exploring the linkages between local indigenous concepts of magical snakes like the *Mmamokebe* and the *Nzonzozo* and the 'imported' *Mamlambo* snake.

Chapter Four approaches the fascinating subject of the interplay of whites and witchcraft. During the transition to democracy there was an expectation that whites would become envious of blacks because of the shift in power. These

<sup>1</sup> P. Geschiere, *The Modernity Of Witchcraft. Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa*, Virginia, University of Virginia Press, 1977.

<sup>2</sup> C.V. Onselen, *The Seed is Mine: the Life of Kas Maine, a South African Sharecropper, 1894-1985*, New York, Hill and Wang, 1996.

<sup>3</sup> This magical snake originates from Nguni cosmologies and in the AmaXhosa context is written as maMlambo (the Ma prefix denoting mother).

expectations fuelled new associations between whites and witchcraft. The importance of Niehaus' work here lies in his demonstration of the way in which whites were drawn deeply into the idioms of witchcraft; that they did not, as appears in many other accounts of colonial and post-colonial encounters, stand outside as a remote destructive force. On the contrary, in this book, whites are portrayed as an integrated part of a very African landscape. This allows a much more powerful account of the interrelationship of whites and blacks in South Africa, not only in the form of black voices and white voices but also in its consideration the effect of less concrete yet very real supernatural events. Such occult logics play a powerful though largely unexplored role in, and as a carrier of, South African history.

Niehaus contests the view that witch accusations arise from attempts to intimidate political opponents, arguing instead that hunts arise directly from an understanding of witchcraft as a mystical force and as an explanation of misfortune. He sets out how the erosion of traditional authorities by Apartheid radically altered the terms and definitions of witchcraft. The crucial shift from witchcraft directed against communities, such as droughts, to attacks on individuals reflected the loss of community cohesion. Accusations became free floating as chiefs as community representatives no longer intervened. The Suppression of Witchcraft Act (1957) only made matters worse; no longer could anyone make accusations of witchcraft without drawing heavy penalties. The anxiety stemming from perceived loss of protection and effective methods of controlling witches became, in many cases, a focus for the growing power of young and politically volatile Comrades.

Niehaus suggests that the witch finding movements enacted by the Comrades set up a moral opposition between the witch hunter and evil forces; allowing for a broad-based collectivity of support for the Comrades on the basis that witchcraft threatens all. It proved to be a far more effective agent for community support than any appeal based on political action. The detailing of Comrades emerging as jury and executioners of suspected witches (with evidence to suggest that elders instigated some hunts) is one of the book's most valuable contributions. The collaboration between elders and Comrades, as Niehaus writes, was unstable and fraught with tension, mainly due to the young Comrades' increasingly violent use of power that in turn seriously threatened the elders' authority.

Chapter Eight deals with the ANC's unbanning and the transition to democracy. Adults started to reclaim positions of political power, unseating the youth and relegating them to the less important ANC Youth League. These power shifts were often created and contested through the nexus of the witch-hunt. Three major players emerged: the now disenfranchised young Comrades, the ANC power brokers, and traditionalist chiefs looking for a foothold in the new climate of democratic rule. The Green Valley witch-hunts over Christmas 1990 both strengthened and created interlocking ties between chiefs, ANC comrades and the community. The young Comrades became the community's sons and the ANC decelerated the Comrades' otherwise harsh punishment of witches. The important argument presented in this section is that the actors in these ritual dramas believed in the reality of witchcraft they opposed. Their actions, although serving the political purpose of solidifying their community positions, were also aimed at improving life in Green Valley. In my own research and in general in South Africa, witches are believed to impede progress and wealth, so that their removal can only have beneficial socio-economic effects on the community and the individual. In the hard hit Green Valley, one of South Africa's poorest provinces, these reasons become powerful motivators for ambitious groups to seek out and punish witches.

One consistent problem of the book, unfortunately, is the scant attention given to gender analysis. In the context of my own work it is clear that women have increasingly become the main targets of witchcraft accusations, and this is also reflected in the somewhat flawed 'Commission of Inquiry into Witchcraft Violence and Ritual Murders in the Northern Province of South Africa' (1996). The reasons for this gender imbalance are deeply implicated in postcolonial conditions and deserve far more serious attention and analysis than is evident in this book.

This is Niehaus' first book, based upon his Ph.D. In it he draws witchcraft and accusations of witchcraft into their (proper) place as complex symbolic expressions of knowledge and as an exercise in power and the loss of it in the South African Lowveld. In the final analysis the book stands as an important contribution to African Studies: firstly, because it maps out the supernatural forces at play during the tumultuous and significant historical period of political transition in South Africa; and secondly because it is the first in-depth ethnographic study on witchcraft to emerge in post-apartheid South Africa. And finally his inclusion of Eliazaar Mohlala and Kally Shokane as co-producers of the book marks a welcome shift in acknowledging the work and critical input fieldworkers may have in the making of an ethnographic text. *Witchcraft, Power and Politics* fills a gap in contemporary studies of witchcraft in South Africa and is the result of sustained and meticulous ethnographic research spanning a decade of visits to Green Valley in the Northern Province of South Africa. Niehaus' work hopefully marks the beginning of an exciting new era in South African ethnographic work

*Jennifer Badstuebner  
Department of Anthropology and Anthropology  
Faculty of Arts  
ANU, Canberra ACT*

## **'Bad Women' in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa**

Dorothy L. Hodgson and Sheryl A. McCurdy (eds), *'Wicked' Women and the Reconfiguration of Gender in Africa*, New Hampshire, Heinemann; Oxford, James Currey; Cape Town, David Philip; 2001. pp xiii +325 with maps and photographs. ISBN (Heinemann cloth & p/b) 0-325-07005-9 & 0-325-07004-0 (James Currey cloth & p/b) 0-85255-695-0 & 0-85255-645-4.

*Wicked Women and the Reconfiguration of Gender in Africa* is a refreshing addition to the Social History of Africa Series. This book emerged from corridor conversations about papers presented at the 1993 and 1994 meetings of the African Studies Association (ASA) in Boston and Toronto, subsequently published in the 1995 *Canadian Journal of African Studies (Special Issue)*. The fifteen chapters embrace a wide range of issues, mostly from the former British colonies. The editors acknowledge that 'the volume is unbalanced from a regional perspective, more thematic than geographic' (p. xii). Sensibly, they have structured the chapters into four sections each of which spans the colonial and contemporary period with a different perspective on female transgressions: Contesting Conjuality; Confronting Authority; Taking Spaces/Making Spaces; and Negotiating Difference.

The opening words set the scene for reading; 'shebeen singer, vagabond, prostitute, wayward, unruly, indecent, immoral, adulterer and insubordinate'. But, this book is not just about social deviance or identifying women as the source of moral decay in African societies. Discourses of both masculine and feminine power underpin the concept of wickedness.

All of the papers shed new light on women's agency and mobility. Judith Byfield analyses marital disputes and divorce cases brought before British Railway Commissioners in Abeokuta, Nigeria (1892-1904). She examines how Egba women took advantage of new economic opportunities and the alternative judicial arena presented by the opening of the railway to pursue financial autonomy through trade, dissolve unwanted marriages, and legitimate desired relationships. Margot Lovett interprets how Buha women in colonial west Tanzania (1943-1960) responded to male labour migration and transformation of their marriages into 'relationships of absences' (p. 49) by agitating elite men who controlled local courts to sanction new bases on which unhappy wives could gain divorces (p. 52). Andrea Cornwall's discussion traces a century of double standards applied to women in Ado-Odo Nigeria who chose to leave abusive husbands and moved into their own houses. And Richard Schroeder's analysis of Gambian Mandinka wives in the late 1970s/ early 1980s links the dramatic increase in women's cash crop farming with their emergence as primary household income earners, including 'buttering up' (p. 93) strategies men used to gain access to this income. Misty Bastian begins Section Two through her careful exploration of how *Nwaobiala* dancers in 1925 Nigeria used their songs, and incorporated sweeping into their dances, to protest against rapid socio-economic changes in the newly colonised and missionised south-east. Jean Allman's account of colonial Asante in the late 1920s/ early 1930s skilfully demonstrates how women negotiated the harsh terrain of cocoa, cash and colonialism (despite state intervention into marriages articulated in the language of moral crisis about venereal disease) by 'disentangling charges of prostitution and concerns about spinsterhood from women's assertions of autonomy in a rapidly changing economy' (p. 135). Then Dorothy Hodgson hones in on a 1992 court case where a young Maasai woman directly challenged her father's authority about her arranged marriage and bridewealth and won. In so doing she was labelled as 'belonging to the government.'

In Section Three, Nakanyike Musisi relies on Southall and Gutkind's 1957 study as a source for the sub-altern women's voices she seeks to interpret in the development of Kampala-Kibugu (1900-1962). Based on archival evidence, Sheryl McCurdy concludes that Manyema Women in Tanganyika (1926-1936) continued to have few children and several marriages (p. 229), followed by David Coplan's argument about four generations of male migrant labour which led to the institutionalisation of adulterous relationships both for Basotho women and men (p. 191). Philomena Okeke's study of contemporary Nigerian analyses why university educated Ogbo women and 'outside wives' use their sexuality ('bottom-power') to gain favour from men and get ahead in the workplace. In the final section, Barbara Cooper examines the politics of rural women's associations in Niger, Jane Parpart considers the vilification of unmarried women in the Zambian Copperbelt (1936-1964) and Gracia Clark vigorously critiques Structural Adjustment Programs in Ghana to affirm how market women have consistently countered hostility directed towards them during times of economic crisis.

The value of these papers therefore lies in the extent to which they celebrate African women's long-standing initiative, autonomy and accomplishments. They provide insights to advance our understanding about African women's voices in colonial and post-colonial historiography and engage new gendered perspectives on class and aspects of the nature of bureaucracy in Africa. Jane Parpart reminds us that history repeats itself; how marital stability became a sign of respectability and propriety, how courts differentiated between women regarded as menaces to the development of a settled urban population and those who were not, and how nationalist discourse pilloried elite women and urban 'bad girls' at the same time (pp. 284-5). Alternately, Cooper's argument shows how rural women's associational networks drew upon existing social forms rather than female solidarity or a shared female culture to generate new possibilities for women to redefine marriage and access to external political spaces. Although not destined to be a best-seller, my congratulations to the editors and contributors for this ambitious, cutting-edge, inter-disciplinary, theoretical/empirical synthesis about rethinking gender stereotypes in Africa. Whether similarities, differences and contradictions between the cases are a matter of culture, history or interpretation remains debatable.

*Kristine Ryan*  
*Perth, Western Australia*

# The Shift to 'Developmental Colonialism' in Colonial Africa: the Case of Kenya

Joanna Lewis, *Empire State-Building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925-1952*, Oxford, James Currey; Nairobi, East African Educational Publishers; Athens, Ohio, Ohio University Press, 2000. pp xvii +393, Maps, Photographs. ISBN 0-85255-785-X9 (p/b).

During the past fifteen years the importance of the late colonial period, circa 1945-1960, in shaping the political and economic destiny of post-colonial Africa into the 21<sup>st</sup> century has become increasingly apparent. The general turn of the imperial powers towards 'developmental colonialism' as a means for involving their African colonies in the post-war reconstruction of the metropolitan economies, morally recharging the legitimacy of colonial domination and deepening the involvement of Africa in global capitalism have been widely recognized as the key events of these years. Frederick Cooper's massive comparative study of British and French policy in this period laid out the critical issues in the interaction of metropolitan and local colonial political economies that led to decolonisation. There have, however, been relatively few detailed studies of the process in particular colonial states and how it shaped both the structural legacies of the colonial state and post-colonial understanding and practice of development. Joanna Lewis' richly detailed study of the metropolitan and local dimensions of the development of welfare policy in Kenya is an important addition to our understanding of late colonialism.

Lewis focuses her attention initially on the impact of metropolitan ideas on the Colonial Office that culminated in the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 and wartime planning for post-war social programs in both Britain and the Empire. For the metropolitan authorities, growing consciousness of African poverty and both rural and urban social decay was linked to a growing belief in universal standards of welfare and development that made the solution of African problems an extension of metropolitan programs of social engineering. For them, the colonies became 'tropical East Ends' in which UK solutions could be effectively applied by an interventionist and paternalist state guided by modern technical and social expertise. The particularity of the varied African contexts of the Empire was lost sight of in the rush to treat them as extensions of the welfare problems of Britain itself. With the election of the Labour government in 1945, statist social engineering dominated Colonial Office policy, especially under Arthur Creech Jones, who held the portfolio for four years.

The development of metropolitan ideas is explored by Lewis through lengthy treatment of the contributions of Lord Hailey and Margery Perham. Hailey, the ex-Indian Provincial Governor and ICS officer, was the Colonial Office's most influential adviser on policy for African social and political development, and produced the 'arch-mandarin's guide to post-war colonial administration in Africa' (p. 83). Accepting universal standards of welfare and anticipating the post-war political challenge from educated Africans, he advocated improvements in the material conditions of African life and controlled development of political access through local government. Technical expertise in his view, however, necessarily remained subordinate to the established form of colonial administration and its authoritarian paternalism. Perham, the 'maiden aunt' of the Colonial Service, advocated a more direct focus on poverty and colonial racism, with a modernisation of colonial administration in an equally statist program of development.

Lewis then shows how these two dimensions of metropolitan policy, bureaucratic and humanitarian, had to confront the realities in Kenya of the interests of both the colonial state and the settlers. During and immediately after the war, local discussions came to focus, with little result, on using demobilised soldiers of the King's African Rifles as welfare officers in rural society. However, a small and meagerly funded welfare organization with few personnel and resources ran into the reluctance of the provincial administration to cede any control over the rural population or change its established authoritarian methods that relied heavily on compulsion to get Africans to do 'what was good for them'. Settlers also refused to countenance any welfare programs they thought would threaten their labour supply. In the racially divided political economy of Kenya, the colonial state proved initially ill-equipped to deal with African poverty and incapable of actually executing a program of social engineering. The trickle of 'experts' joining the civil service to implement development and welfare programs remained firmly subordinated to the political officers of the administration.

Within both metropolitan ideas and Kenyan realities, Lewis dissects the consequential marginalisation of African women and their subordination in policy to a distinctly gendered paternalism of both British and African male officials. Change, both in relation to the role accorded to African women and the resources and power of the state's growing apparatus of development and welfare, came only in the early 1950s as the social and political crisis in the colony mounted towards the state of emergency of October 1952. The focus shifted towards community development, with recognition of a central role for women, as a policy that served both humanitarian values and traditional administrative concepts of trusteeship. European district officers/ community development began to join the provincial administrative cadres. The Emergency finally brought rapid expansion of welfare programs within a 'second prong' of social and economic development; counter insurgency and reform were finally merged in a combined application of force, social intervention and technical expertise.

Lewis has given us the first detailed analysis of a crucial part of the 'second colonial occupation', but not, however, of all its dimensions. The major problem with this fine monograph is its contextual and temporal limits. First, the crucial changes in the political economy of Kenya after 1945, particularly the transformation of production relations in settler agriculture and the growing development of industry through local and overseas investment are scarcely mentioned at all, despite their crucial consequences for African rural and urban life. Second, the coverage of the book effectively stops in 1952, while, as Lewis notes, the real transformation and implementation of development and welfare programs took place in the following decade. This means that the watershed year of 1954, when the Kenya Government began to turn away from the settlers as the basis for the colony's future development, and towards industrial development, African commercial agriculture and the stabilisation of labour relations, is not mentioned at all. Moreover, by the late 1950s, the provision of aid money from the United States and then the World Bank became crucial for Kenya's transformation from a colony to a 'developing nation' in the capitalist world system. There is another important book to be written about this story, and one hopes that Lewis will turn her hand to it in the future.

*Bruce J. Berman  
Queen's University  
Kingston, Ontario  
Canada*

## From Liberation Movement to Ruling Party: The Transformation of the EPLF

David Pool, *From Guerrillas to Government: The Eritrean People's Liberation Front*, Oxford and Athens, James Currey & Ohio University Press, 2001. pp xvi +206. ISBN 0 -85255-853-8 (p/b).

The idea behind this book - an examination of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) from its formation to its transformation into ruling party of the independent Eritrea - is sound and very welcome. As the title implies, the author is concerned both with the story of the thirty-year Eritrean liberation struggle and the subsequent history of Eritrean nation-building. David Pool is well known as a prolific scholar of Eritrea. Even if frequently blamed for being an apologist of the national independence of the country, he has now convincingly produced a competent appraisal of a factor that so dramatically exhibited itself throughout the Horn of Africa as the Cold War came to an end: the uncertainties of a successful liberation movement seeking to prove equal to the task of ruling an independent country.

The book is composed of three neatly integrated parts. The opening chapter of Part 1, entitled Reaction to the Pastí, deals with a theme of burning political and historiographical relevance: the impact of Italian colonialism as essential features of the contemporary history of Eritrea, central for the legitimisation of the Eritrean nation-state. Chapter 2 puts the reader into the political context of Ethiopian history over the same period and is useful in setting the scene, although novice readers might have benefited from a discussion of the concept of national identity. Although this latter issue of contested identities, which involves the whole northern Ethiopia, has been crucial to Eritrea the question remains largely implicit in the core chapters of the work rather than being deployed as a conceptual frame of reference for the narrative. Pool fails therefore to offer a detailed exploration of current interpretations addressing the issue. While he provides a number of interesting insights the book which promises a great deal therefore fails in this respect to deliver.

Pool devotes the bulk of his work to the coverage of the liberation war, which is quite extensive. The following three chapters of Part 2 which cover the history of the war of liberation highlight the predominant theme of the book: the relevance of EPLF in this liberation war and in post-colonial Eritrea. Despite the fact that the author does not touch on the extent of the theoretical arguments related to the formation of EPLF, as many others have (for instance, the subject is at the heart of Ruth Iyob's *The Eritrean Struggle for Independence. Domination, Resistance, Nationalism, 1941-1993*) this chapter is in particular a valuable addition to the literature. Pool admits that he avoids highlighting the ideological, conceptual and social differences between the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and the EPLF; admitting that 'this work does not do justice to the ELF, and a full-length study of ELF would fill many gaps in the account of Eritrean nationalism' (p. xiv). Nonetheless he devotes special attention to relations between the two Eritrean liberation movements and points out the features of the civil war fought between them for the leadership of the anti-Ethiopian struggle

The book ends with Part 3, devoted to the post-independence challenges, charting the way in which the new regime created its political system. This concluding chapter is a competent - if short - overview of many of the problems facing Eritrea as we enter the new century. The main problem here is that the issue of EPLF's governance remains hidebound by traditional notions of that term from which recent work in the field has largely moved away; for example one might mention Kjetil Tronvoll's works. The Eritrean regime has been aptly described as an authoritarian political system that sees development and reconstruction largely as a top-down project and contains disappointingly few democratic elements.

The coverage of the subject, the range of sources consulted and the comprehensive system of notes and cross-referencing is somewhat unbalanced: the author primarily synthesises secondary sources and his conclusions are often based on data from interviews, whose methodological accuracy is not always clear. The author himself felt the need to stress that conventional kinds of sourcing had to be abandoned at times and the reader will have to allow a degree of trust to the author. Pool's explanation is that, because of the 'necessity of secrecy in a bloody liberation struggle, a strong tradition of silence developed about the Front and its activities and this has been perpetuated into post-independent Eritrea.' It is at times hard to be convinced by any argument that rests on only those kind of interviews. Nevertheless overall one cannot escape from the impression that Pool's book can inform a wider non-specialist audience needing a general picture of Eritrean liberation struggle. This informative book is in general readable and it will inspire further research.

Irma Taddia  
Department of History  
University of Bologna  
Bologna, Italy

# Encyclopedic Account of the History of Islam in Africa

Nehemia Levtzion and Randall L. Pouwels (eds), *The History of Islam in Africa*, Athens, Ohio University Press, 2000. pp x +591. NPR. ISBN 0-8241-1297-3.

In the twenty-four chapters of this book some of the leading scholars of African Islam provide a comprehensive history of Islam and Islamic social formations on the continent of Africa. The book also provides valuable insights into the creative role that Islam and Muslims have played in African development over the last fourteen centuries. In most of the chapters the authors have sought to emphasise how Islam energised, enlivened and animated life in African communities, and at the same time how Islam was moulded by its African settings which have produced the rich diversity of religious traditions, beliefs and practices that exists today.

The volume begins with an introductory essay in which the editors of the volume, Nehemia Levtzion and Randall L. Pouwels, provide the conceptual framework for the volume as they explore and discuss the patterns and varieties of religious experience among African Muslims. The rest of the book is divided into four parts. Two chapters in Part 1 deal with Islamic traditions of Egypt and North Africa, and the role of the Indian Ocean and more specifically the Red Sea in the spread of Islam in eastern and southern Africa. The eight chapters in Part 2 are devoted to Islam in West Africa and the six chapters in Part 3 deal with Islam in Eastern and Southern Africa. Part 4 is devoted to 'General Themes' and contains eight chapters devoted to Islamic Law, Muslim Women, Sufi Brotherhoods, Islamic Education, Prayer, Amulets and Healing, Islamic Art, Literature and Music. The underlying theme of these chapters is that Islam was instrumental in transforming not only religious life but also the social, economic and aesthetic consciousness of African Muslim communities. Muslim clerics developed a pious literature to communicate their religious message to illiterate peasants and herdsmen in their vernacular languages. Poems which could be easily committed to memory were used a major vehicle for teaching and preaching. Islamic Sharia law, the Islamic educational system and sufi brotherhoods (*tariqa*) served as catalysts of Islam's expansion on the continent as well as of resistance to colonialism. Under the influence of increasing Islamic orthodoxy Muslim women accepted the Islamic dress code including veiling, but at the same time became more politically active.

The authors of various chapters do a commendable job in following the general framework for the study of Islam outlined by the editors in the introductory chapter. The key factors that have played an instrumental role in the spread of Islam and subsequently shaping the Islamic religious landscape in Africa have included trade, ('commercial diaspora'), Muslim intellectuals (sufis, clerics and saints), kingdom, Jihad, and conflict between high Islam (Islam of the ulema) and the popular Islam (Islam of the saints).

Significantly, these themes provide empirical validation of some of the recent theories of Muslim social formations. For example Ernest Gellner's 'Pendulum Swing Theory of Islam' postulates a recurrent conflict between 'high Islam' and 'folk (popular) Islam'. While these two traditions by and large coexist in a kind of amiable symbiosis, there is always a latent tension between them which from time to time surfaces when social conditions change in the form of puritanical revivalist movements, aiming at transforming the folk tradition in the image of the high tradition. According to Gellner, Islam is the only Western religion with this built-in self-purifying and self-rectifying mechanism. Almost all chapters in parts 2 and 3 provide some historical evidence of this dynamics of cultural history of Islam.

It is not possible to provide a complete overview of the volume given its enormous scope and coverage. Its twenty-four chapters are rich in historical accounts of the Islamisation and the role Islam has played and is playing in the religious, social and political affairs of different African Muslim countries and communities. For those interested in micro history this book has much to offer. (Here is an example of the micro history: A *qadi* of Jenne in the second half of the sixteenth century was from among the sons of the chiefs of Kala. He withdrew from authority and became a scholar. Bakary, the son of Biton Kulibali, ruler of the young eighteenth-century Bambara state, became a Muslim; he was deposed and killed because he failed to maintain the delicate balance between Islam and tradition (p. 3). For those who are interested in the role of macro factors in African Islamisation such as geography, trade, law and colonialism chapters by Pearson, Levtzion, Triaud, Voll, and Christelow have much to offer.

Several contributions provide interesting historical parallels to current events related especially to Islamic militancy in contemporary Muslim societies. In her chapter on Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa, Kapteijns shows that between 1880-1918, three forms of Islamic militancy became interconnected in the Horn. One was against adherents of indigenous religions and lax Muslims, a second opposed the Christian Ethiopian state, and a third resisted European colonialism. In Somalia, Sayyid Muhammad Abdullah Hassan began a Jihad in 1898 to purify the country from the Ethiopian and European 'unbelievers'. The contributions by Kaba ('Islam in West Africa: Radicalism and the New Ethic of Disagreement, 1960-1990'), Miles ('Religious Pluralisms in Northern Nigeria'), Christelow ('Islamic law in Africa') and Reichmuth ('Islamic Education and Scholarship in Sub-Saharan Africa') also include discussion of Islamic reform and militancy.

This volume provides an encyclopedic account of the history of Islam in Africa. It offers well-grounded accounts of historical events and processes that have shaped Islamic expansion and Muslim social formations on the African continent over the past



fourteen centuries. Given that the study of Islam in West Africa has hitherto been significantly more advanced than in East and South Africa there is also considerable merit to the way in which the editors that this volume have tried to redress this imbalance in the study of Islam in the two regions of Africa. The book can also be a useful source for students of the sociology of Islam who may be interested in assessing the validity of some of the recent theories of Muslim social formations using the rich historical evidence contained in this magisterial account of African Islamic history.

Riaz Hassan  
Sociology  
Flinders University of South Australia  
Adelaide, SA

## Mission and Colonial State in Africa

Holger Bernt Hansen and Michael Twaddle (eds), *Christian Missionaries and the State in the Third World*, Oxford, James Currey, 2002. pp x +307. ISBN 0- 85255-783-3(p/b).

Publishing houses such as James Currey who have done so much to advance African Studies can be forgiven for an occasional misleading title. In this case readers interested in post-independence states outside Africa should be warned that most of the chapters concern missionaries and the colonial state in Africa. Only four range beyond the African continent and the only postcolonial states considered are Columbia and Haiti. This is very much a book of a conference, in this case one held at Roskilde, Denmark in the late 1990s, with financial support from a Scandinavian foundation. The majority of the papers are very short (9-14 pages) and highly focussed on empirical history. Although missionaries and church historians dominate the list of contributors, there are several notable secular scholars of African history including Debby Gaitskell, John Lonsdale, John McCracken, and James Campbell. These authors reiterate themes familiar to readers of their more extended works.

Very few of the papers make any attempt to theorise the colonial state or the third world. After a couple of perfunctory nods to recent secondary works the authors get straight down to business. Most footnotes in all the chapters refer to archival and older printed sources. Michael Twaddle is to be congratulated for a very fine introductory chapter drawing attention to the intimate connections between nineteenth-century Protestant missions and the heritage of the European slave trade. Three chapters on West Indian societies amplify this theme in interesting ways. One of these, 'Religion and the Search for Identity: Campaigning against Voodoo and Illiteracy in Haiti, 1939-43', will be fascinating to Africanists unfamiliar with the sophisticated work currently being done on the role of religious innovation in the societies that emerged from the plantation system.

The standard of the individual chapters varies from very high to quite ordinary. At the top end of the scale, John McCracken's chapter on 'Church and State in Malawi' provides a thoroughly researched and nuanced account of changing relations between Scottish Presbyterian missions and the colonial state over a period of ninety years. At the other end of the scale Torstein Jørgensen's chapter on 'Zulu Responses to Norwegian Missionaries' adds little if anything to established historical scholarship. He takes me to task for having 'suggested' in my venerable PhD thesis that 'the first converts to Christianity within the independent chiefdoms of southeastern Africa were social outcasts and misfits' (p. 96), and then goes on to say 'our examination of Norwegian missionary reports does not support this suggestion.' Michael Twaddle (p. 6) repeats Jørgensen's conclusion, citing an article I wrote in 1977.<sup>1</sup> What I attempted in my thesis, my book and the article was to group converts to Christianity according to indices of status. Taking 748 named individuals on whom data was available, I divided them into subgroups on the basis of systematic indications of social origin and status.<sup>2</sup> For my comments on the Norwegian subset of the larger group I relied not only on the observations of missionaries from other denominations, but on standard Norwegian authorities: Olav Myklebust, Ole Stavem and Haldan Sommerfelt. The broad conclusions I reached were that very few converts were drawn from families of means, position and substance. Almost none came from chiefly families. I would be the first to admit I could have been wrong and would welcome new evidence correcting my conclusions. Unfortunately Jørgensen provides no evidence, merely his impressions based on reading in the Norwegian archives. He makes no attempt to classify Norwegian converts by social status or any other recognised indicators. This falls well short of established standards of historical scholarship.

Norman Etherington  
History  
University of Western Australia  
Nedlands WA

## Documenting the Search for Peace

<sup>1</sup> The thesis was 'The Rise of the Kholwa in Southeast Africa: African Christian Communities in Natal, Pondoland and Zululand, 1835-1880', Yale 1971.

<sup>2</sup> *Preachers, Peasants and Politics in Southeast Africa*, London, Royal Historical Society, 1978, Chapter 5, especially pp. 101-103.

## in Northern Uganda

Okello Lucima (ed.), *Protracted Conflict, Elusive Peace: Initiatives to End the Violence in Northern Uganda, Accord, Issue 11*, London, Conciliation Resources in collaboration with Kacoke Madit; 2002. pp 99, maps, photographs. ISSN 1365-0742. Available in web format from the CR web site <<http://www.cr.org/accord/acord11>>

This ninety nine page eleventh issue of *Accord*\* is concerned with one of Africa's 'forgotten wars': the nasty running sore that has persisted for sixteen years in Gulu and Kitgum, the two Acholi districts of northern Uganda. Fourteen chapters of varying length provide a documented account of successive initiatives taken since 1986 by local officials, elders and more recently through international governments and institutions, to end this war and to restore peace to the region. They are held together by some good lateral thinking and by a freshness of approach derived from close involvement in events. The authors are all writing on the basis of their direct involvement at one level or another in the events they describe. While the editor acknowledges that their document 'largely reflects an Acholi-centred perspective' (p. 5) it is nonetheless remarkably objective and unbiased. As Catherine Barnes and Okello Lucima put it in their Introduction (p. 8) 'Acholi are intimately aware of the destruction and suffering caused by both parties to the conflict.'

The conflict has been between the Uganda government under the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and its armed forces (formerly the NRA, now the UPDF), and successive resistance movements, since 1988 the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) under Joseph Kony. At an early stage the war turned upon the Acholi people and for this reviewer the greatest contribution of this collection is to convey the complexities of and the interaction between the successive phases of military engagement and attempted negotiation; the failure of which over sixteen years has led to continuing spirals of violence and entrenched mistrust between the conflict parties. Three articles (by Catherine Barnes and Okello Lucima, Ogenga Otunnu and Balam Nyeko and Okello Lucima respectively) describe the political background and also provide 'thumb-nail' profiles of the key players at the local, national and regional level while a final chapter by Chris Dolan is on the politics of children's rights in northern Uganda. The heart of the matter however lies in the eight articles (by Bethuel Kiplagat, Caroline Lamwaka, Billie O'Kadameri, James Alfred Obita, Joyce Neu, Patrick Oguru Otto, Fr Carlos Rodriguez, Rosalba Oywa, Nyeko Caesar Pobllicks and Barney Afako) that describe the successive initiatives attempted over some fifteen years especially the Acholi themselves to find a way to peace and reconciliation between the protagonists.

These initiatives make an extraordinary story. They include the 145 day journey through Kitgum up to Juba and back to Uganda, made in 1987 by the Peace team led by Acholi elder Tiberio Okeny Atwing. Also the long, patient (and brave) negotiations with the LRA through 1993-1994, carried out by Betty Bigombe, herself Acholi, while she was Museveni's Resident Minister in Gulu; and which culminated in face to face meetings, which ultimately failed, between the LRA and government representatives. As O'Kadameri puts it (p. 35) 'a woman trying to end a war between men.' Acholi women (many of whose children have been abducted by the LRA) have played an important role in this local search for peace and reconciliation as Rosalba Oywa's article shows. Their first Women's Peace Demonstration was in 1989; there have been others since.

In documenting these initiatives *Accord* opens up new windows to understanding better what has been happening in northern Uganda over the past sixteen years. While Barney Afoka's thoughtful chapter on the amnesty process makes clear that not all the responsibility for the failure to restore peace lies on the government side the document as a whole provides important insights into the *mindsets* of the parties to the negotiations and the *misunderstandings* that undermined trust through the two periods of negotiation, 1986-1990 and 1993-94. First, the senior NRA commanders 'found it difficult to grasp (Holy Spirit Movement's) ideology' and thought 'they should come back to reality first before they talk with us'; (p. 31) Second, the successful Peace Accord of 1988 was essentially the outcome of 'army to army' negotiations, between NRM/A and UPDM/A and not between the Uganda government and Acholi 'civil society'. In contrast Betty Bigombe's initiative was characterised by her determination to win civilian trust; in which she succeeded (p. 35). In the process, and notwithstanding the ultimate failure of the 1993-94 LRA/Government negotiations, she demonstrated that peace-making is a political rather than a military process.

The document also includes key texts and agreements relating to the northern Uganda peace process from 1985 up to the Nairobi Agreement of December 1999 between the Governments of Sudan and Uganda.

Cherry Gertzel  
School of Social Science  
Curtin University of Technology  
Bentley WA

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\* *Conciliation Resources* which produces *Accord* is an international service for conflict resolution and prevention. Kacoke Madit was formed in 1996 by members of the Acholi community living in the diaspora to raise awareness and seek a way of bringing the conflict in northern Uganda to an end by members of the Acholi community living in the diaspora.

## Edwin Smith: African Missionary-Anthropologist and Author of 'The Golden Stool'

W. John Young, *The Quiet Wise Spirit: Edwin W Smith (1876-1957) and Africa*, London, Epworth, 2002. pp 300. ISBN 071620553X (p/b).

Edwin Smith, British Methodist missionary and anthropologist, belonged to the generation of African missionaries for whom David Livingstone was (in Smith's words, *The Golden Stool*, (p. x) 'my hero- my master.' Born in South Africa in 1876, he spent seventeen years from 1902, as a missionary and pioneer working with the Primitive Methodist Missionary Society in Central Africa. A considerable linguist and master of Bantu languages, he wrote a considerable number of books on Africa, mostly on questions of race and culture and religion, the best known probably *The Golden Stool: Some Aspects of the Conflict of Cultures in Africa* (1926) and *Aggrey of Africa* (1929).

John Young's biography of Smith (a much expanded version of his earlier M.Phil thesis at the University of Bristol) is a useful addition to our knowledge of the foundations of 20<sup>th</sup> century anthropology and African studies as well as Christian missionary practice and will be of interest to those concerned with the study of both. As Young points out, Smith has been sorely neglected by theologians and historians (of both Christian missions in Africa and anthropology). After serving in Primitive Methodist Missionary Society stations in Zambia from 1902-1915 he returned to Britain where he worked for the British and Foreign Bible Society until his retirement in 1939. He became a major figure in British missionary and anthropological circles during the 1920s and 1930s; although, except for a brief sojourn in the USA during WWII, at no time did he hold an academic position. Nevertheless it was during the period 1920-1939 that he cemented his place as one of the most influential figures in British missionary and anthropological circles. His involvement with mission education in Africa took him regularly to the Colonial Office while his scholarly work drew him to the Royal Anthropological Institute and to the International African Institute (IAI) of which he was a founding member in 1926 and President from 1933-35; and from which he received numerous honours. Works such as *The Ila-speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia* (an ethnography based on research undertaken while serving in Zambia), in addition to *The Golden Stool* (a study of the problems of 'culture contact'), and *Aggrey of Africa* (a biography of the African Gold Coast missionary and educationalist James Aggrey) were among the many books on missiology, missionary history and African anthropology that brought him to prominence. He was Editor of the IAI's journal *Africa* for many years, retiring at the end of the 1940s.

In documenting Smith's life and work Young has achieved mixed success. Based on sources provided by Smith's family as well as archival research in Britain the book is set out in a strictly chronology fashion with only minimal contextualisation in British imperial policy and practice. Although this makes for easy reading for the non-academic church-going audience (which Young is conscious of trying to reach), it also restricts his ability to critically appraise key aspects of Smith's life and work. Thus this is a descriptive rather than analytical work. Two illustrations of this limitation might be given. The first relates to Smith's development of 'fulfillment' theology through which the missionary was to preach Christianity and develop Christian rites from existing African ideas and practices. Although this is a significant feature of Smith's work, the parallel colonial ideologies of indirect rule and South African segregation— despite the numerous similarities – are not discussed. A second limitation is in relation to Smith's role in the formation and governing of the IAI. With the assistance of Rockefeller funding the IAI's role in the development of anthropology during the 1930s was significant, yet the absence of any discussion of the relationship between Smith's ethnography and anthropology and the broader developments within the field is disappointing.

Nevertheless, *The Quiet Wise Spirit* is a comprehensive and well-researched overview of Smith's life and work and justifies Adrian Hastings' summing up of the period 1925-50 in Christian missionary research and practice, including in Africa, as 'the age of Edwin Smith'. This is a book that should be purchased by any individual or library with an interest in Christian missionaries in Africa, and the foundations of African studies and anthropology.

Paul Cocks  
La Trobe University  
Bundoora, Victoria

## African Profiles for Australian Schools

Ian Leggett, *Uganda*, Oxford, Oxfam; Kampala, Fountain Publishers Ltd, 2001. pp iv +88, photographs. ISBN 0 85598 454 6 Oxfam UK (p/b); 9970 02 270 9 Fountain Publishers (p/b).

Geoff Sayer, *Kenya Promised Land?* Oxford, Oxfam GB. pp 72, map, photographs; ISBN 0 85598 382 5 (p/b).

Chris Peters, *Sudan A Nation in the Balance*, UK and Ireland, Oxfam, 1996. pp 64, map, photographs. ISBN 0 85598 316 (p/b).

Sadly the teaching about Africa in our schools has, I believe, declined a lot in recent years, which at one level is difficult to understand since I have found in my teaching that students are very interested in learning about Africa. At another level however I realise that one of the difficulties is that among teachers Africa is so often seen as one country with little understanding of the diversity which abounds across the continent. This series of books, *An Oxfam Country Profile*, goes a long way towards developing and giving a good understanding of this diversity. Another difficulty is the lack of time that teachers have to read in depth about what is happening in many different countries around the world in this time of enormous and rapid change. Access to the internet has helped a great deal in obtaining relevant and current information on a variety of topics, however we are all aware I am sure of the issues associated with this (wading through huge amounts of Web-junk is but one). In this respect these short books, each averaging between sixty and ninety pages, would be most useful for teachers. They quickly give the reader a good view of the country including the environmental, economic, political, social and cultural picture of the country while being succinct and to the point.

Another important focus for teaching is bringing the issues within a country into a context that students can relate to, so I was very pleased to see some personal stories within the books about real people. These could certainly be used as a 'case study' type focus which goes a long way towards creating discussion and interaction with the issues of the country. It is much more helpful to be discussing what Thomas the musician's views of living in Kenya are, or Mwangi and her sister Wangui's experience is, than a broad sweeping non-personalised view of Kenya.

The way these books are organised is a huge advantage. They are organised into short chapters, have clear sub-headings, with the names of the chapters reflecting clearly what is in the chapter (surprisingly this is not always the case). The two sections at the back of each book, 'Dates and Events' and 'Facts and Figures', are a valuable source for teachers as are the quality and amount of pictures and maps. It is quite amazing how many classroom activities can be produced from just these sources by an innovative teacher (of which there are many).

Ideally teachers like resources that have a selection of suggested activities associated with them. However if the information is up to date, if it is easy to interact with and has a good selection of maps and photographs they will use the resource. When I speak to teachers in the classroom and they are thinking about spending some time teaching about Africa, rather than trying to take a broad sweeping view of it I suggest that they choose at least two countries in Africa to focus on. Which countries they choose almost always depends on the resources available. The Series *An Oxfam Country Profile* will be most useful in this respect.

*Donna Gratton  
One World Centre  
Perth WA*

## **Posthumous Publication of Study of Igbo Women**

**Joseph Therese Agbasiere, *Women in Igbo Life and Thought*, London, Routledge, 2000. pp 188. ISBN 0-415-22703-8, 0-415-22704-6.**

The author of this monograph was an Igbo religious- a Holy Rosary sister-who completed an Oxford doctorate in 1985 and went on to teach at the Gaba Pastoral Institute in Kenya. She returned to Oxford in 1997 to revise it for publication, a task in which she received a remarkable amount of generous assistance. She fell ill, dying in 1998 at the age of sixty-nine. Shirley Ardener completed the revision, and the book was published posthumously.

*Elizabeth Isichei  
Theology and Religious Studies Department  
University of Otago  
Dunedin NZ*

# Tales from the Field: Conducting Qualitative Research in Botswana

Zitha Mokomane\*

Changes in nuptiality patterns have recently become important elements of the demographic process in Botswana. Studies in recent years have consistently found that the proportion of never-married persons has been increasing from census to census at all ages, and extending the experience of various cohorts suggests that as many as 30 percent of women reaching age fifty in 2020 will never have married.<sup>1</sup> By the same token mean age at marriage is comparatively late: 28.0 years for females and 30.8 years for males in 1991.<sup>2</sup> These changes have been attributed, among other factors, to labour migration, changes in family structure and unemployment. Accompanying these shifts in marriage has been an increase in the number of couples who are living together without being married. According to the 1991 census 12 percent of all people aged fifteen years and over reported themselves as 'living together'. This proportion of cohabitants is reaffirmed by findings of recent Family Health Surveys which indicate that the proportion of women in the 15-49 age bracket who are 'living together' has increased from 11 percent in 1988 to 17 percent in 1996.

Despite its clear emergence as a new form of family union in Botswana, no study has been done on cohabitation in the country. Consequently, the specific dimensions influencing the formation of these unions are only dimly understood. It is against this background that my doctoral thesis, tentatively entitled *Cohabitation in Botswana: Levels, Patterns and Interpretations* is based.

The first part of my study involved quantitative analysis of various data sources to examine the levels and differentials of cohabitation in Botswana. In order better to understand the patterns that emerged from the quantitative analysis and to explore the issue in more detail between October 2001 and January 2002 I collected qualitative data in Botswana. The purpose of the qualitative study was to obtain insights rather than statistically representative information, hence it was carried out in only two places: Lobatse (an urban area) and Ntlhantlhe (a rural village). This report discusses observations and experiences during the during this data collection exercise.

My first observation was of an incredibly trusting atmosphere among people as well as in public establishments. For example, out of the more than sixty respondents that I interviewed (they included cohabitants, recently married people, chiefs, customary courts officials, social workers and ministers of religion) only *one* asked to see my ID and research permit before agreeing to be interviewed. This is despite the fact that in some departments I asked, as part of my study, to see clients' [confidential] records/files. It is perhaps noteworthy in this connection that any intention to conduct empirical research in Botswana requires the application of permission from the Office of the President (OP). Together with the relevant stakeholders, the OP considers the application and research proposal taking into consideration, among others, the relevance of the study, the methodology and perhaps, most importantly, ethical issues. The prospective researcher may not commence her/his research until they get a written approval or 'clearance' from the OP. However, this trusting nature of the community and public servants shows how easily possible it can be for unauthorized and/or unethical research to be carried out in the country.

During interviews I observed interesting differences by rural/urban residence, education and gender. In general, rural respondents were more hospitable and eager to participate in the study and share their experiences than their urban counterparts. For instance, although I emphasised in my introductory remarks that participation was voluntary and that the prospective respondent did not have to participate if they did not want, I never had a refusal in the rural area. Conversely, I had quite a few refusals and cancellations of appointments in the urban area.

I also noticed behavioural differences between people in the low income and high-income areas in the urban area. The former behaved more or less like rural people in that they were also welcoming and eager to talk. The hospitality of rural people and low income urban people was also evident in that in all the cases where I interviewed respondents in their own homes, I was either offered tea or porridge or politely told '*tsamaya ka tlala*', a Tswana expression loosely translated to 'go well, although we did not offer you anything to eat'. By saying this one acknowledges that, customarily, a visitor must be offered a snack but they unfortunately have nothing to offer. Being told this is for the visitor as good as being offered something to eat.

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\* Zitha Mokoman is a Lecturer in the Department of Population Studies in the University of Botswana. She is at present on study leave in Australia where she is a Ph.D. candidate in the Demography and Sociology Program at the ANU, Canberra.

<sup>1</sup> E. van de Walle, Z. Mokomane and K.R. Baker. Forthcoming. *Extramarital Childbearing and the Residence of Children in Botswana*.

<sup>2</sup> G.N. Lesetedi, and N. Ngcongco. 1995. *A Demographic & Socio-economic Profile of Women and Men in Botswana: A Review of Summary Indicators of Population Composition & Distribution, Mortality, Marriage, Migration & Economic Ability in 1991 Population and Housing Census Dissemination Seminar: Gaborone, Botswana*.

Differences were also observed between men and women. The latter were found to be enthusiastic informers who not only talked about their own experiences but also, where necessary, talked about experiences of friends and relatives. This not only helped enrich the data, but it was through this that I managed to get more respondents (through the snowballing technique). Women also brought up more unanticipated themes that I then introduced in subsequent interviews. Men, on the other hand, tended to be relatively reserved and apprehensive. For instance most of the cancellations and refusals that I encountered in the urban area were from men. I also gained the impression that some of the men painted a better than real picture of their experiences and future intentions.

While it may be expected that more educated people will understand the need and value of research, my field experience suggests that these are relatively the people who most of the time seem suspicious and are the most difficult to convince. This is probably because they are more likely to be urban residents and live in more affluent areas of town. In addition their higher status may mean that they usually have reputations to protect. For example although I assured them of confidentiality and thoroughly explained the purpose of the tape recorder that I used, the popular question among this group seemed to be 'what if you lose that cassette and people hear me?' In contrast less educated people, both in urban and rural areas, were very excited in general about being interviewed and in particular about being recorded. Many asked if they were going to be heard on radio—something they would really look forward to!

Finally some degree of 'interview fatigue' could be sensed among respondents, both urban and rural. At the end of each interview, I asked the respondent(s) if they had any comments or questions. Many commented that every now and then they saw researchers visiting them but they (the respondents) don't seem to benefit anything from these researches. In other words the general comment was to the effect of 'what's in all this for us?'. The following statement by a fifty-two year old rural man succinctly summarises the sentiments of many respondents:

My only comment is that we always see people coming here saying that they are from government departments, some say they are here to count people so that the government can help us. But after that they disappear and we never hear from them again. Some come and say they want to know how many people are unemployed. After that they also disappear and we never hear from them again. Now, you are also here to ask us why we are cohabiting and why we are not getting married. I know that after this you will also disappear and we will never hear from you again. So I personally want to encourage those people who are sending you here to come back here after some time and tell us what they have planned and what they are planning to do to help us because as I have told you, we are suffering because there are no jobs.

The implications of these feelings for future cooperation and response rates are rather obvious. Maybe such comments should be a wake up call for African scholars, especially those who do empirical research, to come up with suggestions for more effective ways of disseminating our research findings back to our research communities especially rural ones. Publishing these findings in journals and newspapers is more likely to benefit only a few educated people. Perhaps at the end of each study, the researcher(s) can go back and give seminar kind of presentations. Any more suggestions out there?

## **Australian Author's Book Launch Combines with Celebration of a Victory over Asbestos**

On the 22 December 2001 an out of court settlement was announced between Cape plc which had mined asbestos in the Northern Cape and the Northern Province of South Africa and more than 7,500 former South African miners and their families. The agreement came after more than four years of legal struggle and will see the plaintiffs share twenty one million pounds in what is the biggest group action ever brought before a British court. The claimants are South African; their injuries were sustained in South Africa while they were employed by fully owned subsidiaries of the British company Cape Asbestos Pty, the predecessor of Cape plc.

To celebrate that victory a series of seminars and workshops was held in London in the second week of May 2002. A day long workshop at the Trades Unions Congress was followed by a seminar at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine at which Australian academic Jock McCulloch's *Asbestos Blues: Labour, Capital, Physicians and the State in South Africa* (London: James Currey, 2002) was launched. (See his article in this *Review*, Volume XXIII Number 2, December 2001). His book is based on many of the documents which under the terms of the out of court settlement are to be destroyed, and therefore provides a unique view of the South African industry. The celebrations culminated in a meeting at the House of Commons between anti-asbestos activists from more than a dozen countries, trade unionists and MPs followed by a reception at the South African High Commission.

Richard Meeran of Leigh, Day Co, who represented the former miners, played down the extent of the victory. 'I don't pretend that this is some kind of triumph but I think it will constitute some sort of justice for the claimants. The company has been held to account and it's an important deterrent. It's not a victory but if you look at where we started a few years ago, when everyone told us we were wasting our time, then it's a good result.' McCulloch however believes that it is certainly a far more significant outcome than Meeran suggested. As well as bringing relief to miners and their families this settlement raises the possibility that EC multi-national companies will in future be held responsible for the behaviour of their subsidiaries in the developing world. Such companies may be forced to either step back from the day to day workings of subsidiaries thereby creating a genuine autonomy and with it some legal distance or take full and effective control thereby ensuring that litigation does not arise. It is possible that parent companies operating abroad will have to conform to those standards of occupational health and safety which apply at home. At present the variations in such standards are one of the major reasons for moving off-shore. On South Africa's asbestos fields apartheid allowed for work conditions and labour relations which would have been unthinkable in the UK.

## **African Studies in Botswana**

African Studies in the broadest sense in Botswana has so far been limited to *Pula: Botswana Journal of African Studies* which is now in its sixteenth volume. While early issues ranged over the African continent, more recent issues have tended to restrict themselves to Southern Africa. The general disciplinary coverage of the journal is reflected by its succession of editors: first a historian (Leonard Ngcongco) and then a sociologist (Thabo Fako), then a historian (Neil Parsons) and now a sociologist (Francis Nyamnjoh). The main editorial principle has been that whatever the discipline of the writers, their work should be generally accessible to people in the humanities and social sciences. The journal has also resisted becoming an in-house journal for University of Botswana (UB) academics by continuing to take contributions from all countries and continents.

Recent and forthcoming special issues of *Pula* cover elections and democracy in Botswana, recent archaeological research, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, 'El Negro' and the 'Hottentot Venus' (vol.16, no.1, April 2002), and Basarwa (San) studies (vol.16, no.2, October 2002). For details of how to contribute and how to order copies, go to the *Pula* web-site at <http://schapera.fws1.com/pula>.

There are also plans for an African Studies Institute with the faculty of humanities at UB, to promote the study of fine arts and culture. This may or may not be broadened by cooperation with the faculty of social sciences to include sociological/ anthropological research and continental politics. The alternative initiative within the latter faculty is the Schapera Project, named in honour of the near-centenarian pioneer social scientist of Botswana, to follow up the many strands of his work since the 1920s. One of its first tasks is to draw up inventories of past research on Botswana, such as the hundreds of theses and dissertations already written. (See the Schapera Project web-site at <http://schapera.fws1.com>.)

The premier research institution in the country is the Botswana Society, which has been publishing its annual journal *Botswana Notes and Records* since 1969. (There having been no equivalent journal in undeveloped colonial times.) The society has also periodically published the proceedings of national symposia and workshops, which it holds every two

or three years. This journal and these proceedings together form the most important source of development-oriented research in all disciplines on Botswana. They reflect the vigour of government ministry research units and expatriate researchers up to the mid-1980s. (The Botswana Society does not yet have an effective web-site, but contact it at [email: botsoc.info.bw](mailto:botsoc.info.bw); its publications are listed on <http://ubh.tripod.com/bsoc>.) This vigour was also seen in the numerous cyclostyled publications of the National Institute of Research (NIR) at UB, which brought university researchers into the development-oriented mainstream.

The research landscape has however changed radically since the mid-1980s in line with other changes in the country. These changes reflect greater scale and complexity of institutions, increasing affluence in many quarters, bureaucratisation, and the diversification or loss of previously unified national development orientation. NIR has been closed down, as its role has been taken by the government's own Botswana Institute for National Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA: its web-site is [www.bidpa.bw](http://www.bidpa.bw)). The Botswana Society, notably *Botswana Notes and Records*, keeps on going but has been supplemented and drained by other, more glamorous NGOs - notably the Kalahari Conservation Society ([www.delin.org/kalahari](http://www.delin.org/kalahari)). All this change has been exacerbated by the withdrawal of nearly all foreign aid - Norwegian, U.S., Swedish, Dutch, Canadian - since the early 1990s because of Botswana's economic and political 'success' and its supposed ability to stand on its own feet. NGOs are now expected to be funded by subscriptions and slow-moving government and/or relatively paltry private capital.

Meanwhile UB has expanded from the 3,000 student limit of smallness and community-connectedness, to beyond 10,000 and into the bigness of a world within itself. Like universities elsewhere, it has moved from traditional academic 'administration' towards the principles of business 'management', away from the old 'quality assurance' of external recognition of *achievement* towards new complex internal *performance* criteria. Staff 'research and publications' are now assessed essentially on grounds of quantity rather than of relevance.

Yet for all this slowing down and bureaucratisation of the previous frenetic and exciting pace of Botswana development, new opportunities open up. *Pula: Botswana Journal of African Studies* should soon become available electronically on the Internet, courtesy of CODESRIA (Dakar), and it is hoped that where *Pula* leads *Botswana Notes and Records* may follow. One of the big new government buildings that have sprung up in Gaborone over the past five years has been the centre for a new national television service - hungry for content but hampered by the same budgeting rules that keep the country relatively corruption-free. (UB is hoping to meet some of those needs through a new practical-oriented media studies program under Prof. Wayne Levy of Deakin.)

The UB campus at Gaborone, in the south-east of Botswana, has expanded considerably with new buildings over the past decade, but UB actually now has a larger campus site at Maun in the north-west. So far the site is only utilised by the Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Institute (HOORC). Notoriously expensive to build and run because of Maun's remoteness, HOORC nonetheless looks to increased symbiosis with teaching there and on the Gaborone campus. UB's main Internet web-site ([www.ub.bw](http://www.ub.bw)) is more or less limited to the contents of the annual university 'calendar' or handbook. But alternative web-sites, more content-rich, such as UB History (<http://ubh.tripod.com>) have sprung up. The UB History site serves the needs of an international community ranging from armchair-tourists in Germany, through North American undergraduates wanting last-minute data for an assignment, to searchers after family-trees from the Pacific. Enquiries from within Africa are, however, limited.

Increased cooperation between universities in Africa, within the SADC region particularly, is much talked about but too often rendered impractical by financial and currency restraints. The only visible evidence of such cooperation on the Gaborone UB campus is the presence of many foreign African teaching staff, mostly in the science, technology, education and business faculties. Because of the expansion of secondary education outstripping carefully-planned university growth, in the past five years Botswana has sent thousands of its students to fill the coffers of tertiary institutions abroad and overseas. Possibly 4,000 have gone to South Africa, and lesser thousands that previously went to Europe and North America are now being diverted to Australasia.

Yet so far Tswana-speaking and other students from cash-strapped neighbouring parts of South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia etc. have been precluded from coming to the relatively good facilities of UB. Foreign students at UB are confined to a few hundred in specialist graduate programs, such as a UNESCO-sponsored program in demography which has brought in students from as far as Mongolia. Most graduate programs, and all undergraduate programs, lack the leavening of alternative insights brought into teaching and research by foreign students. Given Botswana's higher education and research resources and its considerable cultural and linguistic overlaps with all neighbouring countries, and as the country moves away from insistence on unitary nationalism to greater tolerance of multiculturalism, its university has a unique opportunity to develop as an intellectual powerhouse for African Studies in the centre of Southern Africa.

Neil Parsons  
History Department  
University of Botswana  
Gaborone, Botswana



## **New Journal of Eritrean Studies**

The College of Arts and Social Sciences in the University of Asmara has launched a new peer-reviewed publication, the *Journal of Eritrean Studies* which marks the beginning of a new exciting chapter in the development of Eritrean Studies. The Editor and the Editorial Advisory Board will welcome studies of Eritrea from a wide range of perspectives, including Eritrean culture, politics, economy, environment, society, history, language and methodological studies. Contributions will be welcomed from all over world, and those from scholars and practitioners working within or associated with the academic community in Eritrea are especially welcome. The journal seeks to benefit from the works of specialists in different academic disciplines engaged in research on Eritrea, and from the expertise of those who are involved in the current affairs of the country; and to promote a deeper understanding of issues which are relevant to the past, present and future of Eritrea. It is intended for students and academic specialists, as well as for general readers and practitioners with a concern for Eritrea. Contributions should be presented in such a way as to be accessible to any informed and interested reader. The journal strongly encourages an interdisciplinary approach. For further information contact Department of History, University of Asmara, PO Box 1220, Asmara, Eritrea. [cass\\_jes@geo.uoa](mailto:cass_jes@geo.uoa)

## Art Exhibition to Break the South African Silence on HIV/AIDS

The Fowler Museum of Cultural History and the James S. Coleman African Studies Center of the University of California, Los Angeles, held an exhibition called “Break the Silence”: Art and HIV/AIDS in South Africa’ from February 17 2002, to the end of April. The program was guest-curated by Carol Brown, director of the Durban Art Gallery, and was based upon HIV/AIDS-awareness activities reported by Allen Roberts in “Break the Silence”: Art and HIV/AIDS in KwaZulu Natal’ published in *African Arts* in 2000. In response to the crippling effects of South Africa’s HIV/AIDS crisis, women’s workshops in KZN have created colorful beadwork, telephone-wire basketry, cloth sculptures and other works, both to make needed income and as opportunities to think through and discuss amongst themselves the dire effects of the pandemic that presently hits their communities harder than any in the world. Panels from the immense HIV/AIDS-awareness ribbon that bedecked Durban City Hall for the HIV/AIDS congress held in Durban in 2000 are also featured in the exhibition, as are prints and other works. The hope is that the exhibition will be a step toward greater participation of US-based African and Africanist arts-and-humanities students and faculty in seeking solutions to the pandemic. For information, contact Ms Azeb Tadesse at [alemma@isop.ucla.edu](mailto:alemma@isop.ucla.edu).

## Joint Oxfam/Community Aid Abroad HIV/AIDS Programme in South Africa

The Joint Oxfam HIV/AIDS Programme in South Africa (JOHAP) is a response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in South Africa which involves supporting partner organisations (financially and with capacity building) who are working on service delivery (prevention/care and support) as well as advocacy issues. It was established as a pilot programme, based upon a three year strategic plan, by a group of Oxfam agencies in 1998. Oxfam Community Aid Abroad in Australia manages the programme and supports local programme staff members in the JOHAP secretariat in Durban. Its mission is to strengthen the civil society response to HIV/AIDS, especially through CBOs and NGOs, so that it is cohesive, responsive and effective. During its first three year phase JOHAP focused on service delivery, capacity building and advocacy, working through CBO/NGO partners in Kwa Zulu Natal and Northern Province. JOHAP’s partners targeted: young women; vulnerable children; young men; policy makers; CBOs/NGOs; and people living with HIV/AIDS.

As JOHAP moves into its second three year phase it will seek to build on these achievements. The programme aims to increase its impact on the civil society response by focusing more specifically on strengthening both the quality and the cohesion of that response. It will do this by supporting partners in the development, documentation and dissemination of good practice in HIV/AIDS work, and in the creation of an enabling environment for the civil society response to HIV/AIDS.

## African Studies in Western Australia

The African Studies Centre of Western Australia (ASCWA) held three meetings through the first semester of the academic year. The first was on 22 February when after a short AGM which elected a new Committee of Management **Rodger Chongwe** spoke on *The Recent Presidential Elections in Zambia and their Significance*. **Professor Norman Etherington** spoke on 26 March on *Rewriting South African History*. On 17 May **Dr Martin Mhando**, of Murdoch University (whose recent film, *Maangamizi: the Ancient One* is the only sub-Saharan African film ever to have been nominated for an Academy Award). spoke on *African Documentary History: A Discourse of Authority*.

**Professor Terence Ranger** was a Visiting Scholar at **Edith Cowan University** from 3-14 February, 2002. He participated in a Symposium organised by Drs Peggy Brock and Jacqueline van Gent on *Indigenous Peoples and Religious Change: Australia in an International Context* at which he gave the keynote address. He also gave a lecture on *The Crisis in Zimbabwe* at Edith Cowan University on 13 February. Professor Ranger has recently completed four years as Visiting Professor at the University of Zimbabwe. Prior to that appointment he was Professor of Race Relations at Oxford University. His research over many years has been based in Zimbabwe, and includes *Voices From the Rocks*; and *Violence and Memory*. He has also edited numerous books, including *The Invention of Tradition* with Eric Hobsbawm. Professor Ranger is no stranger to Western Australia having been a visitor to the University of Western Australia in 1992. (See *African Studies Association of Australia and the Pacific Newsletter*, vol. XIV, no. 2, December 1992, for Peter Limb’s interview with him on that occasion.)

## African Research Institute La Trobe University

**Helen Hintjens**, of the University of South Wales, Swansea and Visiting International Fellow at the University of Melbourne addressed a joint seminar of the **African Research Institute** and the Politics Society on Wednesday 24 April. The subject was *When Right goes Wrong: Human Rights, Development and Genocide in Rwanda*.

**Aggrey Omondi**, the founding coordinator in 1989 of the Ugungu Community Resource Centre in Western Kenya, addressed a seminar on 15 May. Aggrey spoke of the challenges of self-help in a rural African community and the importance of community-based ideas in facing major health, educational, social and economic issues.

There was high student attendance and participation in the discussions arising from both seminar topics.

## **Institute of Advanced Studies La Trobe University**

Members of the African Research Institute on 9 April attended a reception to welcome Associate Distinguished Visiting Fellow **Professor Rejoice Ngongo**, from the Department of Educational Planning and Administration in the Durban-Umlazi campus of the University of Zululand, South Africa. Professor Ngongo spent six weeks at La Trobe University, doing research and writing, presenting seminars in the Faculty of Education, and meeting Africanists to discuss her work. Professor Ngongo has published widely on South African problems of education reform, women's issues, conflict management, leadership for schools, self-esteem and other topics and has held various administrative positions in her university and on national and international educational bodies. She currently supervises nineteen M.Ed. Students and four D.Ed. Students!

## History Department University of Melbourne

**Ruth Watson**, Lecturer in History at Birkbeck College and **Wayne Dooling**, Lecturer in History at the School of Oriental and African Studies gave papers at a History department seminar on 10 April. Ruth Watson spoke on *Re-thinking Early Colonial History: Yorubaland and the Cape Colony*.

### Adam Matthew Publications

Adam Matthew Publications has in recent years produced some important microfilm of source materials for historians. There has been a focus on aspects of empire and also on gender. Hundreds of reels of microfilm are now available for purchase by libraries or individuals. Some of the series are: Africa through Western Eyes; Empire and Commonwealth; Colonial Discourses: series 1: Women, Travel and Empire; series 2: Imperial Adventurers and Explorers; series 3: Colonial Fiction; Church Missionary Society Archives: several series, including one on Africa; Women Missionaries, including papers from the Ladies Society for Female Education in Africa and India, 1878-1904. Those mentioned are only a small selection from the total list.

Adam Matthew Publications is commencing an Empire On-Line series in July 2002, with a current plan to expand this venture through to 2006.

For further details see: [www.adam-matthew-publications.co.uk](http://www.adam-matthew-publications.co.uk)

Or contact: Adam Matthew Publications, Pelham House, London Road, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 2AA, England.

### Death of Dr Nina Mba

FSAAP members and others in Australia who knew **Dr Nina Mba** (née Gantman) will be saddened by the news of her recent death in Lagos, Nigeria. A Memorial Gathering was held for Nina in Sydney in February. A good many of her friends from university days were there as well as people she had befriended in Nigeria.

Australian by birth, in December 1966 Nina went to Nigeria, where soon afterwards she married Benedict Mba. In the years that followed she worked actively for the advancement of women, democracy and the arts in Nigeria. A member of the Department of History at the University of Lagos for many years, she was known for her work in pioneering women's history in Nigeria; including her own research and writing on women and politics in that country, her most recent book, co-authored with C. Johnson-Odim, being *For Women and the Nation: Funmilayo Ransome Kuti of Nigeria*, published in 1997. After her retirement from the university she remained actively involved in academic pursuits, including the Nigerian Biographical Foundation, to which she was secretary/consultant, and which was reported in this journal (Vol. XIX, no. 2, December 1997). Always strongly committed to building links between Australia and Africa, Nina was the founding force behind the creation of the Nigeria Australia New Zealand Association (NANZA) in 1999. She was inducted into the chiefly style group of her husband's people last year; a singular mark of respect and honour in Nigeria.

### Conferences

**The African Studies Association of the UK** will hold its next Biennial conference in Birmingham from 9-11 September 2002, on the theme: **'What Can We Learn From Africa?'** The first call for papers was sent out in October. Contact [karinbarber@netscapeonline.co.uk](mailto:karinbarber@netscapeonline.co.uk)

The **45<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting** of the **African Studies Association USA** with the theme **'Africa in the Information and Technology Age'** will be held on 5-8 December 2002 at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington D.C. Email: [Idjones@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:Idjones@rci.rutgers.edu)

**Film and History Conference, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, Cape Town, South Africa, 6-8 July 2002.** This conference aims to stimulate research in the field of film and history in Africa. For further information contact: Vivian Bickford-Smith ([vbs@beattie.uct.ac.za](mailto:vbs@beattie.uct.ac.za)) Richard Mendelsohn ([rmend@beattie.uct.ac.za](mailto:rmend@beattie.uct.ac.za))

An **International Conference** on the theme **'Language, Literature and the Discourse of HIV/AIDS'** will be hosted by the **Department of English at the University of Botswana from 24-28 June 2002.** The aim of the conference is to focus on the discourse of HIV/AIDS with particular reference to literature and language. Conference information can be obtained at <http://ub.bw/home.html> Click on **Humanities**, click on **English**; click on **conference 2002** Communications to: Emevwo Biakolo <[biakolo@mopipi.ub.bw](mailto:biakolo@mopipi.ub.bw)> Joyce Mathangwane, [mathanjt@mopipi.ub.bw](mailto:mathanjt@mopipi.ub.bw)>

An **International Conference** on **'The Horn of Africa between History, Politics and Law'** will be held in **Rome, Italy, from 13-14 December 2002.** For further information contact Irma Taddia <[taddia\\_j@mail.cib.unibo.it](mailto:taddia_j@mail.cib.unibo.it)>

The Department of Kiswahili (CEES) University of Nairobi in Collaboration with the Department of Linguistics and African Languages (CHSS) & Chama cha Kiswahili cha Taifa (CHAKITA-Kenya) is organizing an **International conference on the theme 'Kiswahili Language, Literature and Modern Thought' from 3-5 Oct. 2002**. The conference will cover issues relating to the language and its literature, as well as their studies within the context of wider/global scholarship and discourses. For further information contact:

Att: Organizing Committee, Kiswahili Conference 2002  
Department of Kiswahili, CEES, P.O. Box 30197, Nairobi  
e-mail: [kiswahili@uonbi.ac.ke](mailto:kiswahili@uonbi.ac.ke)

**The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA)** will hold its 10th General Assembly in Kampala, Uganda at the Nile International Conference Centre from **8-12 December 2002**. The Assembly, Africa's biggest triennial gathering of scholars actively involved in social research, will be held under the broad theme 'Africa in the New Millennium'. Among the sub-themes around which scientific sessions will be organised are: Higher Education in Africa: Crises, Reform, and Transformation; Academic Freedom in Africa: The Kampala Declaration Revisited; Health, Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa; Reforming the African Public Sector: Retrospect and Prospect; The Changing Political Economy of Land in Africa; Colonialism, Customary Law and Post-Colonial State and Society. For further information contact:

The Secretary,  
CODESRIA 10th General Assembly, BP 3304, Dakar, Senegal.  
E-mail: [general.assembly@codesria.sn](mailto:general.assembly@codesria.sn); Fax: +221-824 5795

**The Historical Society of GHANA** will hold its **Annual Conference on 25-28 July 2002** at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, (Accra). This will be the first annual conference of the revived Historical Society of Ghana. The theme will be: **'History, Our Heritage and National Development'**. The Society calls for papers that explore different facets of Ghana's past and present, shedding light on how history, culture (material and cognitive), and our national resources have been and can be harnessed in pursuit of national development. Papers that examine Ghanaian democracy, state-civil society relations, Human Rights, conflict resolution, legal history, the philosophical underpinnings of traditional governance, economic models of development that respond to Ghanaian cultures and resources, Ghanaian theology, tradition and modernity, etc., are sought. The abstracts will be posted on the website of the Historical Society of Ghana. Inquiries to Ebenezer Ayesu at [asafo@ghana.com](mailto:asafo@ghana.com); Fax numbers are: 233-21-510397 and 233-21-500512; Web-site: [http://people.tamu.edu/%7EYarak/hsg\\_conf.html](http://people.tamu.edu/%7EYarak/hsg_conf.html)

## AFSAAP Publications 2002

**Africa Today: A Multi-disciplinary Snapshot of the Continent in 1995**, edited by P. Alexander, R. Hutchinson and D. Schreuder, published by the Humanities Research Centre, at the Australian National University, 1997. This volume is the *Proceedings* of the annual conference of AFSAAP in 1995. It is available from the Humanities Research Centre, ANU, Canberra, ACT 0200.

**Post-Colonialism: Culture and Identity in Africa**, edited by D. Pal Ahluwalia and Paul Nursey-Bray and **Post-Colonial Condition, Contemporary Politics in Africa**, edited by D. Pal Ahluwalia and Paul Nursey-Bray. These two volumes contain the *Proceedings* of the 1996 annual conference. Both volumes, Nova Science Publishers, Commack, NY, 1997 in the Horizons of Post-Colonial Series edited by Pal Ahluwalia. For information contact Dr Pal Ahluwalia, Politics, Faculty of Arts, Adelaide University, Adelaide, SA 5000. Email: [pahluwal@arts.adelaide.edu.au](mailto:pahluwal@arts.adelaide.edu.au).

**New African Perspectives and Challenges of the Future-Afrique: Comprendre Le passet et prepararer L'Avenir**, edited by Peter Limb and Jean-Marie Volet in *MotsPluriels*, no. 13, April 2000. *Selected papers* from the AFSAAP Annual and International Conference November 1999 on *New African Perspectives: Africa, Australasia and the Wider World at the End of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* ([http://www.arts.uwa.edu.au/Mots\\_pluriels/MP1300index.html](http://www.arts.uwa.edu.au/Mots_pluriels/MP1300index.html))

**Re-Imagining Africa: New Critical Perspectives**, edited by Dianne Schwerdt and Sue Kossew, Nova Science Publishers, Commack, NY, 2001. Selected papers from the AFSAAP Annual and International Conference on *New Perspectives: Africa, Australasia and the Wider World at the End of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. For information contact: Frank Columbus, Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 227 Main Street, Huntington, NY 11743  
email: [novascience@earthlink.net](mailto:novascience@earthlink.net)  
[www.nexusworld.com/nova](http://www.nexusworld.com/nova)

**African Identities: Contemporary Political and Social Challenges**, edited by Pal Ahluwalia and Abebe Zegeye, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002, forthcoming) This volume of selected papers from the AFSAAP Conference 2000 will be published later this year.

**Directory of Africanists, in Australasia and the Pacific**, edited by Liz Dimock, 1997. A small number of copies of this now out-dated Directory are still available at a reduced price of \$5.00. Please add postage: \$A5.00 overseas; \$A3.00 within Australia

### Annual AFSAAP Conference Papers on Microfiche:

1992, 3 fiche	-	\$15.00
1991, 7 fiche	-	\$35.00
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1989, 4 fiche	-	\$20.00
1988, 5 fiche	-	\$25.00
1987, 3 fiche	-	\$15.00
1986, 1 fiche	-	\$ 5.00

Please add postage and handling: Up to three annual conferences: \$3.00 within Australia. \$5.00 overseas. More than three annual conferences: \$3.00 within Australia. \$5.00 overseas.

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email: [Tanya.lyons@flinders.edu.au](mailto:Tanya.lyons@flinders.edu.au)