

ISG Newsletter November/December 2024

This last newsletter of the year starts by thanking **Dr Clement Masakure** for the thoroughly professional way in which he ran the International Studies Group during my absence on sabbatical leave. I am most grateful to him.

Particular congratulations to **Sibanengi Ncube** on securing a Senior Lectureship at Walter Sisulu University, where he joins Lotti, another former ISG PhD student and postdoctoral Fellow.

As some of you will know, the broad remit originally given the ISG by Professor Jonathan Jansen was that of developing research capacity. While this has been manifestly achieved over the past decade or so through the award of doctoral degrees, the publication of articles and books, and research contributions to national and international conferences, it has also begun to find expression in the fact that PhD students supervised by previous ISG alumni are now becoming postdocs – step forward **Mutale Mazimba** whose UNZA PhD was supervised by **Alfred Tembo**, himself a doctoral student here six years ago. **Sibanengi, Lazlo Passemiers** and **Victor Gwande**, all former ISG PhD students, and the two latter Senior Lecturers in the UFS History Department, are also on the cusp of the same achievement, with the students they have supervised approaching graduation and becoming eligible for postdoctoral Fellowships.

Special congratulations are due to **Karen Horn, Hlengiwe Dlamini, Saima Ashipala**, and **Michael Glover** on the recent or forthcoming publication of their books; respectively *Prisoners of Jan Smuts: Italian Prisoners of War in South Africa in WWII*; *The Making, Unmaking, and Remaking of Africa's Independence and Post-Independence Constitutions* (co-edited with Professor N.F. Awesome); *Defending the Investment: Rossing Uranium and the Business of Decolonization*; and *Cattle's Experiences of Colonialism*.

So many books from one small programme are an astonishing achievement – really very well done the four of you.

There have been some notable chapters in books and articles published or accepted for publication in the past few months. **Nicola Yon** has a chapter, 'Marginality in the Centre: Migration of Skilled Professionals and Social Protection in SADC', in the University of Stellenbosch STIAS project on Migrant Vulnerability; and **Innocent Dande's** chapter, 'Diamonds, animals, and artisanal miners: Towards a multi-species history of diamond mining in Chiadzwa, Zimbabwe,' (with Joseph Mujere) will appear in Jan-Bart. Gewald (ed), *Gaping Holes: Southern African Multispecies Mining History*. **Priscillah Machinga's** article, 'A history of *ananyamukuta* – Shona midwives: Identity, roles and development in Zimbabwe, 1880s to 1970s', has been accepted by *Third World Quarterly*, a leading international journal; **Kaluba Chama** has two articles; 'Cassava: The Locusts, Drought, and Famine Insurance Crop in Colonial Zambia, c. 1890–1950', in *African Economic History*; and "'Women's Stronghold": Cassava and the Transformation of the Status of Women in Zambia in (Pre-) Colonial Times' soon to be published by *Food and History Journal*, both of the journals leaders in their field; and George has an article, "A fictitious referendum and a

European affair”: African Perspectives of the 1922 referendum and the 1923 Responsible Government in Southern Rhodesia’, forthcoming in the *South African Historical Journal*.

An impressive number of book reviews have appeared or soon will do so; two by **Saima**, of Lydia Walker, *States-in-Waiting: A Counternarrative of Global Decolonization*, for an *H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable Review*, and of Henning Melber, *The Long Shadow of German Colonialism: Amnesia, Denialism and Revisionism*, in the *Southern Journal for Contemporary History*; by **Geraldine Sibanda**, of Frank Gerits' new book in *H-Diplo*; by **Innocent** of Jules Skotnes-Brown's *Segregated Species: Pest, Knowledge, and Boundaries in South Africa, 1910-1948* in the *Agricultural Journal*; **Nyasha Bushu** also published two reviews, of Winnifred Bedigen, *Indigenous Peace Building in South Sudan: Delivering Sustainable Peace through Traditional Institutions, Customs and Practices* in *African Studies Review*, and of Elizabeth Cooper, *Burning Ambition: Education, Arson, and Learning Justice in Kenya*, in *African Studies Quarterly* (they can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#)); and by **Kaluba**, of Robert Ross, *Things Change: Black Material Culture and the Development of a Consumer Society in South Africa, 1800-2020*, in *Africa_Rivista*.

Recent awards and tokens of professional esteem include **Mutale** winning the highly competitive and prestigious Colin Murray prize, awarded by the *Journal of Southern African Studies*, for her project 'Ubulungu (waist beads) and "Ba 2 Pin": Changing norms and new livelihoods for urban families in Lusaka, 2010-2024'. Her application impressed the judges by 'taking an original and interdisciplinary approach, using ethnographic methods to investigate questions about economic survival and cultural expression. The project seeks to address issues of gender and generation in a poor urban neighbourhood in Zambia'. The prize carries a research purse of £2,500. **Una Sechele** was awarded 'Facilitator of the Year, second place' by UFS' Department of Academic Language and Literacy Development; **Geraldine** won the gold award as Newcomer of the Year at the Centre for Teaching and Learning; and **Innocent's** work on epidemiology and equity was featured on the University of Glasgow's Black History Month (it can be accessed [here](#)).

International conferences attended and papers accepted for forthcoming occasions:

Jennifer Chansa presented a paper, 'Liberation stories from below: Stories of women who participated in the struggle for Zambia's independence', at 'Remembering the forgotten heroes of Zambia's Liberation Struggle', organised by the Southern African Institute for Policy and Research and the Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula Foundation; **George Bishi** attended a Summer Programme in Social Science, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey; **Kaluba's** paper, "Icimbo ca Malilo" as Oral History: Social and Therapeutic Role of a Funeral Dirge in Post-Colonial Zambia', has been accepted by the 23rd International Oral History Association Conference to be held in Krakow, Poland on 16-19 September 2025; **Geraldine** presented a paper at 'The Business of Worldmaking: New Perspectives on Liminal Actors in Postcolonial Development Cooperation' Conference, in Koper, Slovenia; **Audrey Maringa** made a virtual presentation of a paper, 'Syphilis, Colonialism and the African Society 1890-1969', at the 'Disease, Discourse, and Dissonance: Ideas and Concepts of Health/Illness in African Studies' conference, organised by the University of Bayreuth; while **Peter Uledi** excelled himself by attending the 'Writing and Researching on the Global South' Conference at the University of Sussex, as well as the 'Navigating the Academic terrain: Experiences and Reflections' conference at the Zimbabwe Open University. He has also secured external funding towards the cost of presenting a paper at the Eighth Annual Political Economy Conference, to be hosted by the University of Coimbra next January.

An international workshop very recently hosted by the University of Bologna had an exceptionally strong ISG presence: **Priscillah, Una, Jennifer**, and **Sibanengi** all presented papers at '50 years of transitions in Southern Africa and the development challenges ahead'. Their papers respectively were, 'Public Maternity Services and *Ananyamukuta* (Indigenous Midwives) in Postcolonial Zimbabwe'; 'Economic relations between Botswana and South Africa following the fall of Apartheid'; 'Nation Building and Resource Management: Experiences and Lessons from Mining and Political Transitions in Zambia', and 'Prosecution or Persecution? The Intersection of Politics and Law in post-colonial Zimbabwe's Democratic Struggles since the 2000s'.



Over the past few months, the ISG itself hosted two workshops. The first of these was organised by **Sibanengi** and **Kaluba**, and the second by **Priscillah** and **Geraldine**. They were, respectively, 'Commodities in Southern African History'; and 'Pandemics, People and Economic Margins'. Not surprisingly but no less gratifyingly, ISG members were heavily represented at both workshops. At the 'Commodities' one, **Jennifer** presented a paper, 'Local Minerals, Global Laws:

The Impact of Global Mining and Environmental Regulation on Zambian Mining Industry, 1970s to 2005'; **Saima**, 'A Peculiar Partnership: Iranian Investment in the Exploitation of Namibian Uranium'; **Audrey**, 'Healing a nation in crisis," drug smuggling and the

pharmaceutical industry in Zimbabwe, 2007-2017'; **Mathew Ruguwa**, 'Diamond Mining, Land Grabbing and Displacement in Marange Communal Area, Eastern Zimbabwe, 2009-2016'; Shalot, 'A history of illicit alcohol in urban Zimbabwe: The case of Kachasu 1980 to 1990'; and **Mutale**, 'Production of Commodities and Resource Depletion in the Bangweulu Swamps (Lunga), 1900-1950'.

At the 'Pandemics' one, **Shalot Nhete** presented a paper on, 'COVID-19 Pandemic, Makeshift Recreational Drugs and Everyday Economic Struggles in Harare, 2020 – 2022'; **Saneze Tshayana**, 'The Epidemic of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide in South Africa'; **Mathew Ruguwa**, 'Artisanal Diamond Mining, Disease Outbreak and Healing in Marange, 2006-2008'; **Audrey**, 'Syphilis, Colonialism and African Society, 1890-1969'; **Mutale**, 'Pandemics and the First World War: The Case of Influenza in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), 1918 – 1922'; and **Priscillah's**, 'Maternal Health in Zimbabwe During the COVID-19 Pandemic'.

The end of the year sees three long-standing ISG postdoctoral Fellows come to the end of their contracts: **Sibanengi, George**, and **Una**. All of them made huge contributions to the Group's success over an extended period; indeed, Una and George did their MAs as well as their PhDs with us. I am pleased to say that all three of them will become Research Fellows, so their association with the ISG will continue. In that capacity, too, a warm welcome to **Mbozi Santebe**, another former ISG PhD student, now at UNZA.

All of you have obviously been working hard and to good effect. As there can only be one explanation – that you have been more afraid of **Dr Masakure** than me – I clearly should stay away longer! But well done everyone for what is recorded in these pages.

The ISG will be closed from 13 December 2024 until 13 January 2025.

Ilse le Roux, Tari Gwena, and I wish you all the very best for Christmas and the New Year.

Ian Phimister,

22 November 2024