



The Newsletter of the Britain Zimbabwe Society

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Golden age for the African short story

by Lizzy Attree

This year the Caine Prize returned to Zimbabwe for its 12th writers' workshop, in March and April, coming full circle from when the inaugural Caine Prize was awarded to Leila Aboulela in 2000, at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair in Harare. Subsequently, two Zimbabweans have won the Prize, Brian Chikwava in 2004 and NoViolet Bulawayo in 2011. This year the shortlist includes Zimbabwean writer Tendai Huchu for his short story *The Intervention* published in *Open Road Review*, issue 7, New Delhi. 2013. For the first time, an audio version of Tendai Huchu's story is also available <http://www.openroadreview.in/the-intervention-by-tendai-huchu/>

The Caine Prize, set up in 1999, is awarded annually for African creative writing, and is named after the late Sir Michael Caine, former Chairman of Booker plc and Chairman of the Booker Prize management committee for nearly 25 years. The £10,000 Prize is awarded for a short story by an African writer published in English (indicative length 3,000 to 10,000 words). An 'African writer' is normally taken to mean someone who was born in Africa, or who is a national of an African country, or whose parents are African.

The Prize has become, in the words of the *International Herald Tribune*, 'Africa's most important literary award'. By 2012, the year of its thirteenth award, the Caine Prize had received eligible submissions from 37 different African countries, covering something like a thousand writers, and 18 countries had been represented on the Caine Prize shortlists.

The shortlist for the 2014 Caine Prize for African Writing was announced on 22 April by Nobel Prize winner and Patron of the Caine Prize Professor Wole Soyinka, as part of the opening ceremonies for the UNESCO World Book Capital 2014 celebration in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

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Golden age for the African short story

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The Chair of judges, award-winning author Jackie Kay MBE, described the 2014 shortlist as, 'Compelling, lyrical, thought-provoking and engaging. From a daughter's unusual way of grieving for her father, to a memorable swim with a grandmother, a young boy's fascination with a gorilla's conversation, a dramatic faux family meeting, to a woman who is forced to sell her eggs, the subjects are as diverse as they are entertaining.'

She added, 'The standard of entries was exceptionally high so much so that it was actually very difficult for the judges to whittle it down to a shortlist of only five stories. We were heartened by how many entrants were drawn to explorations of a gay narrative. What a golden age for the African short story, and how exciting to see real originality - with so many writers bringing something different to the form.'

Alongside Jackie on the panel of judges this year are the distinguished novelist and playwright Gillian Slovo, Zimbabwean journalist Percy Zvomuya, Assistant Professor of English at the University of Georgetown Dr Nicole Rizzuto and the winner of the Caine Prize in 2001 Helon Habila.

To commemorate fifteen years of the Caine Prize this year, £500 will be awarded to each shortlisted writer. The four other writers shortlisted are: Diane Awerbuck from South Africa for 'Phosphorescence' in *Cabin Fever* (Umuzi, Cape Town. 2011), Efemia Chela from Ghana and Zambia for 'Chicken' in *Feast, Famine and Potluck* (Short Story Day Africa, South Africa. 2013), Billy Kahora from Kenya for 'The Gorilla's Apprentice' in *Granta* (London. 2010) and Okwiri Oduor from Kenya for 'My Father's Head' in *Feast, Famine and Potluck* (Short Story Day Africa, South Africa. 2013). As always the stories

will be available to read online on the Caine Prize website www.caineprize.com. The winner of the £10,000 prize is to be announced at a celebratory dinner at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, on Monday 14 July.

Events in London

This year the shortlisted writers will be reading from their work at the Royal Overseas League on Thursday, 10 July at 7pm and at the Southbank Centre, on Sunday, 13 July at 5pm. On Friday, 11 July and Saturday, 12 July the shortlisted writers will also take part in the Africa Writes Festival at The British Library, organised by ASUK and the Royal African Society.

The winner of the £10,000 Caine Prize will be given the opportunity of taking up a month's residence at Georgetown University, in Washington as a Writer-in-Residence at the Lannan Center for Poetics and Social Practice. The winner will also be invited to take part in the Open Book Festival in Cape Town in September 2014, the Storymoja Hay Festival in Nairobi and the Ake Festival in Nigeria.

Shortly after the first Prize was awarded, we began to think that the Caine Prize should do more than just publicly reward outstanding achievement: it should also seek to assist the process of African writing directly, and have an activity in Africa. The idea of a workshop for African writers was adopted. Of twelve workshops so far, four were held in South Africa, four in Kenya, one in Ghana, one in Cameroon, one in Uganda and one in Zimbabwe. The Caine Prize workshops are designed to help develop the talent of aspirant African writers and assist their access to

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publication and recognition. We believe in the intrinsic value of artistic interaction and creative exchange. We also wish to promote the reading of literature in Africa.

Events in Zimbabwe

The 2014 workshop was held in the Vumba, in the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe near Mutare at the Leopard Rock Hotel where the writers were guided by Nii Ayikwei Parkes and Henrietta Rose-Innes. The collection that has emerged will be published in July by New Internationalist and seven African publishers in Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Ghana and Nigeria. We hope to add publishers in Cameroon and Malawi to our list of partners in the near future.

Half way through the workshop the writers visited four schools near Mutare in groups of three or four to speak to and read to the students. Accounts of some of these highly successful events at Hillcrest, St Werburgh, Hartzell High and St Augustine's are detailed on the Caine Prize blog <http://caineprize.blogspot.co.uk/>

After the workshop the group returned to Harare for an event on 1 April at the newly refurbished City Library in partnership with the Library and the British Council. Nii Parkes hosted a conversation about new trends in African literature with Clifton Gachagua from Kenya, Barbara Mhangami from Zimbabwe, and Elnathan John from Nigeria. Farayi Mungoshi also spoke briefly about the newly published novel by his father, Charles Mungoshi, that begins with a short story written at a Caine Prize workshop in Kenya back in 2005. A stimulating evening was enjoyed by all.

The following day on 2 April the writers were invited to read excerpts of their work at the Tambira Hub in the new Meikles MegaMarket in Harare. The event was hosted by Tinashe Mushakavanhu. Shoppers were in for a treat,

as they heard stories and poems from Lawrence Hoba, Philani Nyoni, Elnathan John, Abubakar Ibrahim, Barbara Mhangami, Bryony Rheam, Gertrude Zhuwao and Clifton Gachagua. The writers were then themselves in for a treat with a lunch at Meikles Hotel in the kitchen of La Fontaine restaurant.

It is hoped that by bringing the Caine Prize workshop and the writers involved to Zimbabwe that the literature and publishing sector will be enlivened and encouraged. AmaBooks co-publishes the Caine Prize anthology in Zimbabwe and Weaver Press publish a number of Caine Prize winners such as Brian Chikwava and NoViolet Bulawayo and we hope the opportunity to meet Caine Prize authors, talk about books and writing will have encouraged locals to join the library and buy a few books as well as keep up to date with all the Caine Prize does each year.

Caine Prize sponsors

The principal sponsors of the 2014 Prize are the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust, the Booker Prize Foundation, the Miles Morland Foundation, Sigrid Rausing and Eric Abraham, Weatherly International plc, China Africa Resources plc and CSL Stockbrokers. The Beit Trust primarily supported the workshop in Zimbabwe, with Exotix, and support was also received from the British Council, the Culture Fund, the EU delegation and Cambria. Kenya Airways provided travel grants for workshop participants. Past workshops have been supported by the DOEN Foundation and the Lennox and Wyfold Foundation. We are immensely grateful for all this help, most of which has been given regularly over the past years and without which the Caine Prize would not be Africa's leading literary award.

Lizzy Attree is the Director of the Caine Prize.
<http://www.caineprize.com/index.php>

The long haul – new report from Chatham House

Zimbabwe's International Re-engagement: The Long Haul to Recovery, a report by Knox Chitiyo and Steve Kibble, available for free download at

<http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/papers/view/198715>

Reviewed by Jenny Vaughan

This report examines the economic and political challenges Zimbabwe faces following the 2013 election, and provides pointers to ways in which the challenges Zimbabwe faces can be met if it is to re-engage with the international community – particularly the west. According to Dr Chitiyo, it ‘hopefully will encourage next -generation critical thinking on what we might call ‘Zimbabwe Futures’; ie post- GNU Zimbabwe and the diaspora in a changing local, regional, continental and international context.’

Like Joni Mitchell, it looks at life – or, at least, where it affects the west’s relationship with Zimbabwe – from both sides. From the EU and UK position, it advocates a change in attitude to Zimbabwe – accepting the fact of Zanu-PF’s landslide (and disputed) victory in 2013 elections, with opposition parties weakened and divided, and working with that situation as it exists rather than waiting for it to change.

Zimbabwe, it suggests, is now a major player in the southern African region, and the EU, and the UK in particular, should reach out to it. Zimbabwe should no longer be singled out, and that there should be a move towards a regional focus, supporting ‘growth and transformation grounded in good governance and human rights’. The EU’s few remaining non-defence-linked sanctions should be lifted within the next year, it proposes: if nothing else, this takes away a ‘political irritant’ which provides an excuse on Zimbabwe’s side for economic failure.

But the main thrust of the paper is concerned with Zimbabwe itself, and the steps its government could take to find its place on the international scene – politically and economically. The report’s list of suggestions for how re-engagement might take place is long and challenging, and involves a plea for such co-operation and change in outlook, proposing that, alongside its current ‘look East’ policy with Zimbabwe’s involvement with China, moves from the west to reach out to Zimbabwe should be reciprocated – even going as far as to suggest that Zimbabwe should seek re-entry into the Commonwealth. The report also stresses the need to work with other governments in the region to tackle poverty and address the issues of human rights and the problem of corruption.

The writers point out that – despite the signs that the economy (having recovered to some extent since its sixty-year low in 2008) – is showing renewed signs of decline, the situation is not entirely bleak. There are, it says, ‘numerous institutions, organisations and businesses that are functioning and doing so through smart strategies, competent management, good leadership and partnerships’. These offer templates for success, but in order for them to work, the government must engage with the opposition, civil society and the business sector

It also believes that closer and more constructive relations with the diaspora are vital. (These are, after all, Zimbabweans who have contributed so much towards the survival of the country through its long years of crisis.)

The likelihood of all, or even most, of the report’s suggestions being adopted may be met with some scepticism by many Zimbabweans and, in any case, the writers believe (as the title of their report emphasises) that the road to recovery will be ‘a long haul’.

A Zimbabwe book and information project

by Shiraz Durrani

Discussions about development of people and countries sometimes ignore a vital ingredient: access to relevant information which can improve people's learning and skills and provide experience from other countries and situations. Again, development is sometimes seen as something that 'others' do to 'us' in a passive process not involving people themselves. Liberation from such mental prisons is as essential a requirement for African development as is the availability of information about alternative models and methods.

Librarians in Zimbabwe

These lessons were not lost on librarians in Zimbabwe. They formed the Zimbabwe chapter of the Progressive African Librarian and Information Activists' Group (PALIAct-Z)¹ as early as 2010² as a way of breaking 'the colonial and imperialist policies and practices in meeting the information needs of working people in Africa, to make the [library] profession more relevant to the needs of African librarians and information workers'. Since then, PALIAct-Z has united hundreds of library and information workers from all over Zimbabwe and Southern Africa as a region.

Recent initiatives

Besides their other activities, PALIAct-Z undertook two important initiatives this year that set a useful example in development, self-support and internationalism. The first involved collecting and delivery to libraries in Zimbabwe of material used at the London Metropolitan University in teaching progressive librarianship. It included economic

and political material as well as fiction. Included also were conferences papers, journal articles, individual journal issues and conference proceedings in book and CD format. The material will be distributed among institutes of higher teaching of librarianship in Zimbabwe by Book Aid International (BAI)³. Two organisations played roles in making this possible: the Zimbabwe Library Development Trust⁴ and BAI in London. The former set up essential links between organisations and individuals and also coordinated the programme while the latter arranged transport and distribution in Zimbabwe. A number of individuals helped to bring the project to fruition and the group was brought together by Margaret Ling.

Following the success of the above project, PALIAct worked with the London-based publishers, Vita Books who donated 100 copies of their latest publication, *Progressive Librarianship: perspectives from Kenya and Britain, 1979-2010*⁵ to BAI to distribute to 12 African countries. Working with their local partners, BAI will select relevant libraries to receive the title. The success of the two projects provide important lessons not only in international co-operation but also in creating a co-operative culture that relied on self-help and

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¹ Information about PALIAct is available at: http://www.seapn.org.uk/editorial.asp?page_id=62

² PALIAct-Zimbabwe's Facebook page is available at: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Progressive-African-Library-and-Information-ActivistsPALIACT-ZIMBABWE/110349615693655>

³ Further information on BAI is available at: <http://www.bookaid.org/> [Accessed: 17-03-14].

⁴ Further information on ZLDT is available at: <http://www.zimldt.org/index.php/component/content/article?id=1> [Accessed: 17-03-14].

⁵ Durrani, Shiraz (2014): *Progressive Librarianship: perspectives from Kenya and Britain, 1979-2010*. London: Vita Books. Ngugi wa Thiong'o commented: "In this book on progressive library movement, Shiraz Durrani challenges us to look at the concept and practice of library differently, while also providing invaluable information on the alternatives in both Kenya and Britain. He thus continues the critical tradition he has already established with his earlier works, particularly, *Never Be Silent*. It's all right to be silent inside a library but never about a library".

Stevenage-Kadoma Link tribute

A tribute to Leslie Rose: 1924-2014

by **Pat Akhurst**

Leslie Rose was the first head-teacher of the Nobel Grammar School in Stevenage and is still remembered fondly for his work there. He was firmly in favour of every child having the right to a decent education and enthusiastically endorsed the idea that all Secondary Schools should be comprehensive. This was to tie in with his interest in access to education in Zimbabwe in later years.

When the link with a town in Zimbabwe for Stevenage was suggested he and I were both members of the 'setting up' group and were keen to make connections between schools and education in Kadoma and Stevenage. We attended Dayschools set up by BZS to 'introduce' the new country of Zimbabwe, including one on education, and Leslie also represented the Kadoma Link at Research Days in Oxford. This background information was very helpful.

In 1994 Leslie, now retired, was able to spend 6 weeks working in Secondary schools in the Kadoma area. We could not have had a better introduction to education in Zimbabwe as Leslie understood so many of their problems from his own experiences here post the 1939-'45 war. He was impressed at the emphasis placed on education for all at Primary level but concerned in particular when teachers spoke of the problems girls faced in getting access to

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took on seemingly insurmountable problems. There is a larger lesson in development in this positive, 'can-do' approach.

Shiraz graduated from the University of East Africa and got his library qualifications from

Secondary education. Families who could only afford to keep one child in education would send their sons, not daughters, and many very able girls were not getting a fair chance. He brought this to our attention and asked if we could set up a support system for the girls involved. As a result a scheme was set up, originally just for girls but now covering boys as well because of the financial situation in Zimbabwe. It is now known as the Leslie Rose Bursary and one of the first girls to be supported has written an account of how many of the recipients have gone on to Higher Education and include teachers, lawyers and nurses.

It was tragic when Leslie suffered a serious stroke in later years but he dealt with his disabilities courageously and still enjoyed hearing the latest news about the Link. We were very touched when his family asked for donations to the Bursaries in his memory because he had been so moved by his experience in Zimbabwe. It was very appropriate that Mike Sango, an ex-Head-teacher Leslie had met in Kadoma, and his wife, were able to join us at Leslie's funeral, with the daughter of another Kadoma Head-teacher, Martin Masaraure. Stevenage-Kadoma Link owes much of its success to Leslie's belief in people of all backgrounds and their right to an education .

the University of Wales. In Kenya, he worked at the University of Nairobi Library. Shiraz was an active member of the then underground December Twelve Movement/Mwakena in 1970s and 1980s. Shiraz had to leave Kenya for Britain in 1984. Since then, he worked at Hackney and Merton public libraries, and following this lectured at London Metropolitan University.

Africa Writes, 11-13 July at the British Library

Tendai Huchu and other Caine Prize shortlisted writers will be taking part in *Africa Writes*, the annual festival of African writing, held at the British Library. See <http://www.bl.uk/whatson/events/africawrites/> for more information.

SAVE THE DATE – FRIDAY 11 to
SUNDAY 13 JULY 2014 AT THE BRITISH
LIBRARY

Dear All,

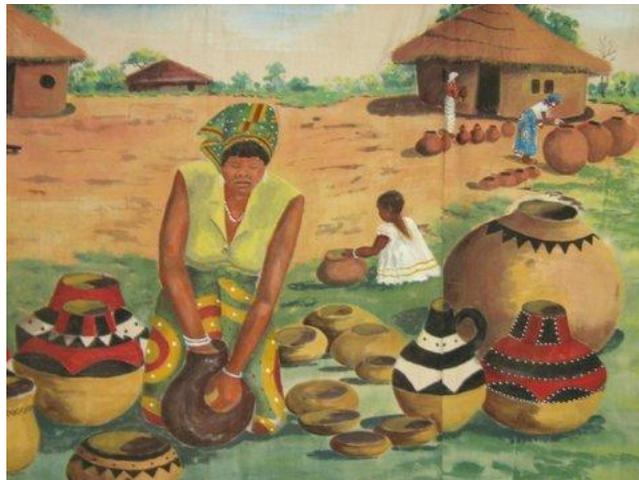
Africa Writes, the Royal African Society's annual literature and book festival promoting contemporary African writing, returns for a third year.

Please SAVE THE DATE (11-13 July) and read below for more information on this year's festival highlights, and follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/AfricaWrites?ref=hl>) for news, updates about the festival and African literary treats. We'd love to see you there!

Africa Writes 2014 - Festival Line-Up

This year festival highlights include:

- An Audience with Ama Ata Aidoo, author of *Our Sister Killjoy* and *Changes*, in conversation with translator and critic Wangui wa Goro.
- The Caine Prize 2014 Seminar, exploring the shortlisted writers' literary influences and their take on the development of present-day African narratives.
- *Africa in Translation: Poetry in (e)motion*, a symposium exploring the works of a range of African poets and their translators, featuring Wangui wa Goro, André Naffis-Sahely, Vusi Mchunu and Professor Jeff Opland joined by award-winning poets Gabriel Okoundji, Ribka Sibhatu and others.
- *Reclaiming the Feminine Voice*, Young Poet Laureate for London Warsan Shire, Belinda Zhawi, Ribka Sibhatu and Chinwe Azubuike sharing poems covering issues of gender-based violence and migration, through to questions of creative freedom, pleasure and transgression. Introduced and moderated by Jessica Horn, feminist writer and activist.



With thanks to Father Ted Rogers

Ted Rogers: A Memoir

'Jesuit, Social Pioneer and AIDS Activist in Zimbabwe'

Reviewed by Nigel Hall

Father Ted Rogers has put together a remarkable memoir of his life in the first volume of a series of books on *Christian Lives in Africa*, published by Cluster Publications in 2012. Ted notes in his Introduction that his main motivation for writing was to recognise those who worked with and helped him, most on a voluntary basis.

The book contains a wealth of information on Ted's life and his experiences around the world, including photographs and index. I knew Ted for many years when I was teaching at the School of Social Work in Zimbabwe and know how much his contribution in founding that School was appreciated and valued. As Professor Chavunduka, former Vice Chancellor of the University of Zimbabwe notes in his Foreword, his greatest contribution – and this is among many – was in the field of social work in Zimbabwe.

From Liverpool to Freetown

Ted Rogers has led a colourful and active life and the memoir traces much of this. He starts from Liverpool where he was born in 1924 into a large family of nine siblings on a council estate – his father had been wounded in the Great War and his mother was a tailoress. It was a tough time but the family seems to have been very close. Living near the sea Ted joined the merchant navy as a midshipman in 1941 and as this was during the Second World War he soon found himself in a convoy transporting cargo to West Africa. On his first voyage his ship was torpedoed and together with survivors made their way in a lifeboat to Freetown.

Following this dramatic exploit which he typically underplays, Ted recounts other experiences on these convoys and in the Navy which took him to Ceylon and India.

Ted had decided to go into the priesthood and, following his demobilisation from the Merchant Navy, trained as a Jesuit priest in some of their stately homes in the UK. In 1961, the decision was made – without consultation – for him to be posted to Rhodesia. Ted was then sent to St Paul's Mission, Musami, where he became the headmaster of the Secondary School there, later moving to St Peter's, the first Catholic Church in Harare, the township now known as Mbare in the capital Salisbury

St Peter's Kubatana

Ted started up a desperately needed secondary school in the Highfields township – St. Peter's Kubatana (which now has about 1,000 in the school and a technical college) – followed by a practical one year Certificate course at the School of Social Service which he founded in February 1964, initially with 18 students, with Ted having to fund-raise both locally and internationally. This was his major achievement as the renamed School of Social Work – which became the first Associate College of the University of Rhodesia in 1969 – went on to train hundreds of social workers, with around 300, due to political and economic instability, now practising in the UK.

During the period of the Smith Regime the Rhodesian Catholic Bishops Conference exposed some of the racial inequities in the country, and this led up to the formation of the Justice and Peace Commission, which Ted had a major part in organising. Ted also became involved with the work of various charitable organisations, Catholic Women's Clubs, was co-founder with Prof Lawrence Levy of SASCAM (for mentally handicapped children), Chairperson of the Council of Social Services (later known as VOICE and NANGO) and Christian Care for a time. Ted was also Chairperson of the Commission on Social

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Service and Development (CSSD) for the Archdiocese of Salisbury and became involved in practical assistance to people in the protected villages, such as the provision of food and blankets. Catholic priests and nuns were targeted during the Zimbabwe liberation war and the book details some of some of the gruesome acts committed against them during this period.

Reconstruction and rehabilitation

Following the end of the war Ted contributed to the work of reconstruction and rehabilitation and the return of refugees to the country through various NGOs. Then after 21 years as the founder Principal of the School of Social Work Ted stepped down and left for a three-month tour of Brazil, part of a year's sabbatical at St Antony's College Oxford, where he studied the work of the Church with the poor and marginalised, later presented to the University at a seminar.

In the memoir Ted suggests lessons for Southern Africa, such as the value of 'deep' participation in development by 'Basic Christian Communities'. Returning to Zimbabwe in 1986 Ted took up a post as secretary to the Archbishop of Harare and was tasked by the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC) to develop a programme on HIV/AIDS, later helping set up the AIDS Counselling Trust (ACT). Ted carried on his special interest in AIDS in his post (from 1988) as the Director of IMBISA – the Interregional Meeting of Bishops in Southern Africa – and visited and presented talks in various countries in the region.

'God in all things'

Ted relates how he has been profoundly influenced by the mystical ideas of the philosopher and Jesuit priest Teilhard de Chardin and the idea of 'finding God in all things' – i.e. secular work offered up as a service to God, which I'm sure Ted has

personally manifested. In the 1990s Ted continued his work on HIV/AIDS after stepping down from IMBISA, particularly developing training sessions for youth on peer education based on social work principles, and developing Youth Against AIDS clubs in 40 schools in the country. He worked with Shelter Trust – an organisation headed by one of his former social work students that helps women who are at risk of abandoning their babies.

In 2011 following a serious illness Ted was re-assigned to Boscombe in Bournemouth, one of two Jesuit retirement homes in England, where he is today.

This book is to be recommended as a highly informative and detailed account of a very committed Jesuit over half a century in many various ways, but his outstanding contribution is in building the social work profession in Southern Africa.

If you wish to obtain Father Rogers' book you can do so from Redemptorist Publications at <http://rpbooks.co.uk>, price £15.

Nigel Hall

Nigel Hall teaches social work at Kingston University, London, and is publications officer for the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)

In his 2014 Easter newsletter, Father Ted writes that 'another severe problem is lack of government assistance for disadvantaged children to pay school fees. That is why our AIDS Orphans Trust is so important, but this year we have had to cut back on numbers and not take in any new students to make sure that those still on the books can finish their four years. Last year we assisted 93, this year the number will be less. Heartfelt thanks to those who have contributed already - you have loved a needy child. But we need more donations. Cheques may be made out to 'Jesuit Missions' with an accompanying note 'For Fr Rogers' AIDS Orphans A/C'. Send to Jesuit Missions, 11 Edge Hill, Wimbledon London SW19 4LR.

Nature's Wonder in the Countryside

by Shumba Nyamuzihwa ©2014

It is mid-October in Zimbabwe and the scorching heat wave burns the earth. This is the time when the sun bites down with its tropical violence. To make matters worse there is no running water in the cities. In Gweru, once touted as the City of Progress, Gwenzoro Dam the main supplier of the city has run dry, and now water is being drawn from Amapongogwe Dam.

Today I am pulling a suitcase with small wheels, and with my son we head towards Amtec Motors where a horde of people will be waving their thumbs to hitch lifts bound for Harare. Just last night I had convinced my first son about going to the countryside, my late parents' rural home where one can breath fresh air and smell the scent of trees responding to the changing season. A sadness verging on despair descended on me. I am passing through the Gweru City Council Municipal Offices. I am struck by the poor landscape, patchy brown grass, dying flowers and faded fountains with statues of frogs that once would have been a wonder had there been enough water and kids would stare to see them spitting water. But alas that is no more. I look at this once beautiful place with a frown on my face just reminiscing about the Park when I started my job as a Librarian at a local Teachers Training College. It was then that Gweru was called the City of Progress, clean pavements, lush green lawns and general cleanliness.

A latest Merc Compressor pulled through and we were on our way to Harare. On the sides of the roads one can see rubbish, empty plastic bottles, empty boxes of Pizza, Chicken-Inn and Coke cans, an eyesore to those with an eye for good health, but vendors, basket-weavers and cobblers just stare their concern only being to get that extra dollar \$1 for a meal at home.

We arrived in Harare late evening. A few moments ago a few showers had swept the dirty streets. At least an air of expectation for the

transformation of the season hit my nostrils. 'Looks like it has rained here', my son remarked having felt a sudden change in weather. 'Sure it looks promising', I responded assuring that out at our rural home we would be greatly relieved.

Chitungwiza

'NOP up to Unit L!!!!', a scruffily dressed youth shouted at the top of his voice. We darted our eyes towards the direction the hoarse voice bellowed. Not long we were on our way to Chitungwiza. Once a dormitory town, Chitungwiza now holds more than a million people. It is here where news headlines in daily and weekly papers report of corruption and shady dealings among some City Councillors who have resorted to bribes to allocate desperate homeseekers to undeveloped stands. Today wetlands have been turned into housing stands, and houses of all shapes and sizes litter the landscape. Roadsides are all littered with vendors, basket-weavers, cobblers and brick moulders. What an eyesore all over, I was not happy to be staying in this crowded and dirty location for the following day I woke up early and was at 'Kumbudzi' (goats) terminus along the Masvingo-Beitbridge Highway. Soon I was smiling all the way to kumusha.

The loaded Noah-Ace snaked its way through abandoned farms as the driver used the route to avoid VID Inspectors along the main road. Suddenly my son scratched my shoulder pointing to high rising buildings. 'Those were tobacco barns but now they have been abandoned after land invasions', I told him and a look of surprise shown on his face. We were back on a narrow strip road heading towards Landos. I now smelt the natural countryside. Yes rains had fallen and the forests' flora and fauna was pregnant with new life. Here and there farm children would emerge holding

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platefuls of mushrooms and mazhanje (brownish wild fruit with yellow seeds). ‘Mu mu mushrooms!!! Ho ho ho howaaa’, their voices completed in Shona vernacular. This year looks different as I overhear fellow passengers remark about the mushrooms. Some were warning it as dangerous to buy this wild relish as it is poisonous. In previous years in some villages whole families perished after preparing a meal of mushrooms. But others welcomed the sudden appearance of this wild relish as a good omen of plentiful rains.

‘Close the windows, quick close the windows’, an elderly woman shouted. From outside strong gusts of cold wind began to blow and carried tree leaves whirling in the air. I could see big trees being swayed from side to side. And the rains came heavily. At Mahusekwa Growth the van stopped to drop passengers. At long last as evening gathered we dropped off and walked towards home.

Early morning, around five o’clock, nature was awake with a multitude of sounds as frogs, birds, and insects competed with one another in giving thanks for surviving the storms. Still huddled in my blankets I listened to the rain-bird whose song that I could clearly hear and my heart leapt with joy. I was happy to be home, opened the door and stood out feeling the early morning breeze. After washing my face and rinsing my mouth I called out my son. Somewhere in the distance I could hear the competing bellows of bullfrogs. ‘Shingai my son!!’, I called him. ‘Listen, just listen - those are bullfrogs in the wetlands happy and jumping around and fighting in the water. Put on your sandals and follow me’, I urged him.

Scenes of my early childhood memories dawned, as the forest swallowed us wild trees that had long ceased to bear fruits hang their branches heavy with fruit. Wild oranges, water berries and others whose English names I cannot better describe stared at us. We were picking a variety along the way. ‘Mind the snakes might be hiding there, they also enjoy wild fruits’, I warned my son guardedly who seemed carried

away. We were surrounded with trees full of life and with fruits all over. The reawakening of nature was a pleasure to the eyes with the fresh leaves. High up my gaze soon caught sight of some big birds balancing precariously on tree branches. At first, possibly my eyes were deceiving me and then true to reality these were white storks, the migratory birds I had read about in books. We brushed against big branches and just before heading towards the wetlands we heard the sound of Hornbill, its beak knocking on a tree branch.

The bellow of the bullfrogs became louder. In the swampy water big bullfrogs bellowed, fought each other as they competed for mates. Booooww!!! Booooww!!! Booooww!!! their bellowing sounds deafened our ears. Not long after the big white storks landed some metres away as they walked step by step, picking a frog or two. Then something happened. A big bird landed like an aeroplane. ‘That is a Secretary Bird’ ‘See that head, it’s like a Secretary’s biro no wonder it’s called by that name’, I remarked to my son. What a spectacle. Its big legs seemed like in socks, as it one two one two stepped in the wetland with dignified steps.

Reawakening

The countryside’s nature had reawakened in our eyes. Those who had been cautious and not rushed to invade the farms were at peace with nature now here in the villages. They had respected tradition and not destroyed the forests and decapitated trees a source of livelihood and hope for future generations. Soon the grandparents would be in these deep forests and wetlands to educate to explain to the youngsters the different wild trees, fruits trees that would cure them from diseases and help them to fend off diseases. Not in the invaded farms where land was now barren, where trees had been burnt to ashes to burn tobacco and rivers destroyed panning for gold. I held my son on the shoulder with memories of my late father, just like he used to do to me. For we were joyful to nature’s wonders and as we headed home picking wild fruits along the way filled with happiness all over. I could even feel it in my bones... nature’s wonders in the countryside.

New Books on and from Zimbabwe

This selection of books about and from Zimbabwe covers the period since the Newsletter's last book listing up to February 2014. The list is arranged alphabetically by author's surname, and includes a number of e-books (see details at the end of each entry).

Masunungure, Eldred V & Shumba, Jabusile Madyazvimbishi (eds)

Zimbabwe: Mired in Transition

Collection of 11 essays assessing progress since February 2009 and exploring some pressing questions. What is the public mood, and how has it changed? What steps have been taken to reform the media? How important is a new constitution? What spaces exist for fiscal reform? Also examines emigration and the diaspora, and the possibility of a second 'lost generation' in the absence of positive changes. 344 pp, Zimbabwe, Weaver Press, 2014, ISBN 9781779222022, paperback.

Morris, Jane (ed)

Sigondephi Manje? Indatshana zase Zimbabwe

Translation of the collection, *Where to Now?*

Short Stories from Zimbabwe, featuring 16

Zimbabwean writers - Raisedon Baya,

NoViolet Bulawayo, Diana Charsley,

Mapfumo Clement Chihota, Murenga Joseph

Chikowero, John Eppel, Fungai Rufaro

Machirori, Barbara Mhangami-Ruwende,

Christopher Mlalazi, Mzana Mthimkhulu,

Blessing Musariri, Nyevero Muza, Thabisani

Ndlovu, Bryony Rheam, Novuyo Rosa Tshuma

and Sandisile Tshuma. 176pp, Zimbabwe,

amabooks, 2014, ISBN 9780797494497,

paperback.

Morris, Jane (ed)

Small Friends and other stories and poems

The short stories and poems in this collection

were written by students at King George VI

School and centre for physically disabled

children in Bulawayo. HIV and AIDS have

had a devastating effect on all the communities

of Zimbabwe, and those with disabilities have not been exempt from the effects of the virus, as is reflected in many of the pieces in this collection. The book clearly demonstrates both the talent of the students and their concern about the issues facing their community and wider society. 72 pp, Zimbabwe, amabooks, 2014, ISBN 978079749452, paperback.

Pasura, Dominic

African Transnational Diasporas- Fractured Identities and Plural Communities of Zimbabweans in Britain

Examines the relationships, connections, identities and linkages between diasporas and their original or symbolic homelands. It proposes a framework for understanding African diasporas as core, epistemic, dormant and silent. Using empirical illustration, the book investigates the formation of the Zimbabwean diaspora by examining how the diaspora was dispersed, how it is constituted in Britain and how it maintains connections with the homeland. It argues that the Zimbabwean diaspora has to be understood as fractured and fragmented. 194 pp, UK, Palgrave Macmillan, May 2014, ISBN 9781137326560 hardback,

Now available as an e-book:

Staunton, Irene (editor)

Writing Lives

A collection of short stories, featuring Lawrence Hoba, Tendai Huchu, Tendai Machingaidze, Nevanji Madanhire, Daniel Mandishona, Christopher Mlalazi, Blessing Musariri, Chiedza Musengezi, Sekai Nzenza, Fungisayi Sasa and Emmanuel Sigauke.

Writing Lives is the seventh of Weaver's anthologies of short stories, and with the others, this vibrant collection reflects the lives and experiences of Zimbabweans as filtered through the lens of each author's perceptions. 108pp, Zimbabwe, Weaver Press, 2013, ISBN 9781779222565, ePUB

BRITAIN ZIMBABWE SOCIETY RESEARCH DAY 2014

Politics, Culture and Identity in Zimbabwe and its Diasporas

Saturday 21 June 2014, 8.30 – 5.30pm

Programme - as at 30 April 2014

- 8.30-9.00 Registration in Nissan Theatre foyer
- 9.00-9.05 Welcome and introduction: Dr Knox Chitiyo, Chair, BZS
- 9.05-9.45 Keynote presentation: *Overview of Zimbabwe's Politics: Past & Present*
Professor Brian Raftopoulos, University of the Western Cape
- 9.45-11.15 Panel 1: *Zimbabwe and Regional Politics Post GNU*
McDonald Lewanika, Crisis Coalition in Zimbabwe, *Zim-SADC Relations Post-GNU: A Mix between good African Culture and an Aversion for Tough Questions and Actions*
Dr Blessing Miles Tendi, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, *ZANU PF's relations with the region*
Chofamba Sithole, *The Zimbabwean Diaspora in the UK: Internal Schisms, Organisational Challenges and Prospects for Effective Diaspora Engagement in the Post-GNU era*
Chair: Professor Jocelyn Alexander, University of Oxford
- 11.15-11.30 Tea/Coffee break - Buttery
- 11.30-13.00 Panel 2: *Media, Gender and Law in Political Context*
Dr Wendy Willems, LSE, *Mediated nationalism and changing notions of independence in Zimbabwe: therise of counteremory?*
Dr Bruce Mutsvairo, Leiden University College
Dr Khanyisela Moyo, University of Ulster, *Gender and Transitional Justice: Conceptualising Women's Political Participation in Zimbabwe between 2008 -2014*
Chair: tba
- 13.00-14.00 Lunch: St Antony's or free choice
- 14.00-15.30 Panel 3: *Economy, Civil Society and Migration in Zimbabwe and the Diaspora*
Dr Joseph Mujere, University of Zimbabwe, *'Pirate' radio stations, the civil society and the shaping of political discourse in Zimbabwe, 2009-2013*
Professor JoAnn McGregor, University of Sussex
Dr Dominic Pasura, University of Middlesex, *'Do You Have a Visa?' Negotiating Respectable Masculinity in the Diaspora*
Chair: Dr Sara Rich Dorman, University of Edinburgh
- 15.30-15.45 Tea/Coffee break - Buttery
- 15.45-17.00 Panel 4: *Culture, Identity and Politics*
Tendai Huchu
Simon Bright, Zimmedia
Pathisa Nyathi, *Identity, Culture and Politics: The Case of Chief Albert Gumedede's installation*
Chair: Dr Ranka Primorac, University of Southampton
- 17.00-17.30 Summing up: Dr Diana Jeater, BZS

BZS Research Day 2014 - Our speakers

2014 is an important year for publications across the spectrum of Zimbabwe's politics, identity, gender, and diaspora discourses, with a number of watershed publications due throughout the year - including works by some of the presenters at this year's Research Day. The Day will be an opportunity to engage with the authors and also to learn more about works in progress.

Keynote presentation

PROF BRIAN RAFTOPOULOS

Former Associate Professor of Development Studies at the University of Zimbabwe. Brian moved to Cape Town in 2006 and is now Mellon Senior Research Mentor at the Centre for Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape. He is also the Director of Research and Advocacy in the Solidarity Peace Trust, a human rights NGO. He has published widely on Zimbabwean history, labour history, historiography, politics and economics, and is on the Advisory Board of the Journal of Southern African Studies. Also a civic activist, involved in the founding of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) and the first Chair of the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition.

Panel 1

McDONALD LEWANIKA

Human rights activist, Director of the Crisis Coalition in Zimbabwe since 2009. His previous positions include founding Coordinator of the Students Solidarity Trust and Secretary for Education and Research at the Zimbabwe National Students Union, ZINASU. McDonald is currently studying for an MSc in International Development at the University of Manchester. He is co-editor, with Delta Ndou, of *We the People - Our Version of Events*, an anthology of 'ordinary' people's voices on the elections of 31 July 2013.

DR BLESSING MILES TENDI

Tendi teaches Politics in the Oxford Department of International Development (ODID), Queen Elizabeth House. He is the author of *Making History in Mugabe's Zimbabwe: Politics, Intellectuals and the Media* (2010).

CHOFAMBA SITHOLE

Zimbabwean journalist, blogger, editor and political analyst based in the UK. His previous positions include Assistant Editor of *NewsAfrica* magazine, Communications Fellow at the Commonwealth Foundation, editor at the Refugee Council and, in Zimbabwe, editor of the *Sunday Mirror*. He is a regular commentator on Zimbabwean and African affairs on the BBC, Al Jazeera, Press TV, Voxafrica and others.

PROFESSOR JOCELYN ALEXANDER

Professor of Commonwealth Studies in the Oxford Department of International Development, Queen Elizabeth House. Her research interests lie in Southern African history, rural politics, land reform, violence and its legacies, crime and punishment. She is co-author with JoAnn McGregor and Terence Ranger of *Violence and Memory: One Hundred Years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland* (James Currey, 2000), and author of *The Unsettled Land: The Politics of Land and State-making in Zimbabwe, 1893-2003* (James Currey, 2006). She is currently writing a history of political imprisonment in Zimbabwe.

Panel 2

DR WENDY WILLEMS

Lecturer in Media, Communication and Development at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), and Honorary Research Fellow at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. Her main research interest is the role that media and

popular culture play in consolidating power and enabling resistance and social change. She was previously Visiting Lecturer at Midlands State University in Gweru, Zimbabwe and at the University of Westminster, London. She has also worked as Senior Research Officer for War on Want. She is the founder, with Dr Winston Mano, of the *Journal of African Media Studies (JAMS)*.

DR BRUCE MUTSVAIRO

Dr Bruce Mutsvairo's research looks into the impact of new media technologies in advancing social and political changes in sub-Saharan Africa. He has a PhD in Media studies from Leiden University in the Netherlands. A former Associated Press correspondent in Amsterdam, Bruce has presented papers and taught journalism and media studies at various universities in the US, UK and the Netherlands.

DR KHANYISELA MOYO

Currently a lecturer at the University of Ulster, School of Law /Transitional Justice Institute, Northern Ireland. Her research interests are in gender, land reform, and transitional justice, rule of law, combating impunity and minority rights. She practiced law in Zimbabwe, before leaving for postgraduate study at the Universities of Oslo, Nottingham and Ulster.

Panel 3

DR JOSEPH MUJERE

Lecturer in history at the University of Zimbabwe. His research interests are in migration, citizenship and belonging. He holds a PhD in history at the University of Edinburgh on Basotho belonging in Masvingo, following a group of Basotho who originally migrated to Zimbabwe in the 19th century with DRC missionaries. Joseph has recently been involved in a shared project with Dr Joost Fontein on liberation war sites in Gutu, and he is doing postdoctoral research on mining communities in South Africa, as a research associate in the Society, Work, and Development Institute (SWOP) at the University of the Witwatersrand.

PROFESSOR JOANN MCGREGOR

Professor of Human Geography at the University of Sussex, where she directs the Sussex Africa Centre. Her research interests are conflict, displacement and the legacies of violence, the politics of land and the environment, migration and African diasporas. Her publications include *Violence and Memory: One Hundred Years in the Dark Forests of Matabeleland* (co-authored with Jocelyn Alexander and Terence Ranger, James Currey 2000), *Crossing the Zambezi: The Politics of Landscape on a Central African Frontier* (James Currey 2009) and *Zimbabwe's New Diaspora: Displacement and the Cultural Politics of Survival* (Berghahn 2010).

DR DOMINIC PASURA

Dominic Pasura is Research Fellow in the Social Policy Research Centre of the School of Law, Middlesex University. His research interests include migration, transnationalism and diaspora studies, integration of migrants and refugees, religion in the New African diaspora and African studies. He has recently published a book, *African Transnational Diasporas - Fractured Communities and Plural Identities of Zimbabweans in Britain* with Palgrave Macmillan, which uses the example of Zimbabwe to propose a framework for understanding different types of diaspora.

DR SARA RICH DORMAN

Lecturer in politics in the School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh. Her research interests cover African politics, nationalism and the post-colonial state in Africa, citizenship and belonging, elections and state formation. Research related activities. She is on the editorial boards of *African Affairs* and the *Journal of Southern African Studies*. Her publications include *Making Nations, Creating Strangers: States and Citizenship in Africa* edited with Paul Nugent and Daniel Hammett (Leiden: Brill 2007)

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Saturday 21 June 2014, 8.30 – 5.30pm

St. Antony's College, 62 Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6JF

Nissan Lecture Theatre

<http://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/about/directions.html>

BZS 2014 RESEARCH DAY ADVANCE REGISTRATION

Prices for full day tickets including tea/coffee/biscuits but excluding lunch:

Standard rate £30

BZS member £20

Unwaged rate £15

Organisation (max 2 delegates) £50

ONLINE BOOKINGS BY CREDIT/DEBIT CARD TO

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/bzs-research-day-2014-tickets-10036680983#>

Please note that there is a booking fee for online bookings

IF YOU PREFER TO PAY BY CHEQUE, PLEASE USE THIS FORM

Complete and return this form with your cheque to:

Margaret Ling, Treasurer, BZS, 25 Endymion Road, London N4 1EE

Enquiries: margaret.ling@geo2.poptel.org.uk

Please register me/us for the BZS 2014 Research Day as follows

Standard £30 ____ BZS member £20 ____ Unwaged £15 ____ Organisation £50 ____

NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

POSTAL ADDRESS: _____

I enclose a cheque for £_____ made out to 'Britain Zimbabwe Society'. Please note that this fee does not include lunch.

Acknowledgement of registration will be sent by email, or by post if you send an SAE.