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Below you will find short summaries of researchers and their research available at the institute on February 14, 2005. You are welcome to ask for a meeting aside from the seminar:

Research Programmes

Gender and Age in African Cities

This programme aims to complement studies on African urban issues in the 21st century. It seeks to provide a specific, urban-based, up-to-date and fine-tuned study of a number of determinants and outcomes of processes and events that are normally the subjects of academic and professional enquiry. As key determinants of life in the cities and towns of Africa, age and gender are important areas of investigation that could yield some valuable insights into the macro and micro-social, political and economic processes in urban Africa.

- The demographic dynamics of African urban centres.
- Transformation in household dynamics.
- Ageing and its implications.
- The bright and dark side of African urban life: a gender-age perspective.
- Youths in Africa cities.

Amin Kamete has been Senior Lecturer at the Department of Rural and Urban Planning, University of Zimbabwe in Harare. A qualified urban planner, he has been engaged in teaching and researching on urban issues since the 1990s. He has published extensively on urban development in Zimbabwe and sub-Saharan Africa. His main focus is on poverty, homelessness, the urban economy, sustainability, governance and housing. He has also produced a number of commissioned reports and technical papers for the public sector, the private sector, civil society as well as bilateral and multilateral agencies.

Sexuality, Gender and Society in Africa

A major aim of the Sexuality, Gender and Society in Africa research programme is to promote and enhance conceptual and methodological discussions on issues related to studies of sexuality and gender in Africa, and to encourage research. The programme aims to develop spaces for critical discussions of sexuality and gender in contexts of gender/feminist theory, connected to empirical studies and/or political practice. Collaboration with groups and individuals on the African continent struggling for similar goals is considered of great importance.

Signe Arnfred holds a degree in Cultural Sociology from the University of Copenhagen. Her professional background is gender studies and feminist theory, approached from a sociological/socio-anthropological angle, with a seasoning of development studies. She has published in the fields of gender studies, social science methodology and feminist theory, and on gender relations in southern Africa, particularly in Mozambique.

Research Projects

Cultural Images in and of Africa

The project Cultural Images in and of Africa was initiated in 1995 in response to recommendations that the Institute include cultural change into its research priorities and profile. The main objectives are:

1. to encourage new research and studies in the Nordic countries on cultural change and issues in Africa;
2. to create a network of scholars in the Nordic countries and Africa for co-operation and contacts;
3. to contribute to a critical examination of the negative and prejudiced images of Africa in the Nordic countries;
4. to encourage an interest in contemporary African cultural expressions as “mediums of change”.

The project has focused on two distinct but inter-related themes:

- (a) Studies on images of Africa in the Nordic countries in specific, and in the West in general. An international conference on this theme resulted in the book *Encounter Images in the Meetings between Africa and Europe*, and the co-ordinator has published two books on Africa in the Swedish schoolbooks.

- (b) Cultural dynamics of contemporary Africa in the light of changing images of Africa expressed in cultural production, in the arts. International conferences have been organised on film, theatre and music in Africa, and two antologies have been published, *Same and Other* (eds Mai Palmberg and Maria Eriksson Baaz). A book is in progress in Swedish drawing together research results from the members of the network and interviews from various parts of Africa.

Mai Palmberg is a Finnish political scientist who has been with Nordiska Afrikainstitutet since 1984. She has written on socialist orientation in Africa, Africa images in Swedish and Finnish schoolbooks, the liberation struggle of Southern Africa, Swedish companies in South Africa, the workers' political role in Zambia, AIDS in Africa, humanism and racism, the Afrikaners as a national minority, new South Africa and the ANC platform, on homosexuality and human rights in Southern Africa, on music and national identity in Cape Verde, and on popular music in Zimbabwe's crisis.

Liberation and Democracy in Southern Africa

Following the Independence of the previous settler colonies of Zimbabwe (1980), Namibia (1990), and the democratic elections in South Africa (1994), colonialism and Apartheid were officially brought to an end in the Southern African region. These processes of controlled change involved external actors in the transitional phases of negotiated settlements and resulted in changed control under previous liberation movements. The post-colonial realities as they manifest themselves today, however, require further explorative efforts to investigate further to which extent there are limitations to liberation and democracy in the formally de-colonised societies. The project analyses aspects of the current socio-political power structures and their effects in terms of the originally aspired goals.

Henning Melber is Research Director at the Nordic Africa Institute. He studied Political science and Sociology at the Freie Universität Berlin, where he graduated in 1977. He obtained a PhD in 1980 and the *venia legendi* for Development Studies in 1993 at Bremen University. He has been a Senior Lecturer in International Politics at Kassel University (1982–1992) and Director of the Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit in Windhoek (1992–2000).

State Building in Post-Liberation Eritrea

The research project deals with the process of state-building in post-liberation Eritrea. It is an exploration of the prospects, challenges and potentialities encountered by Eritrea since it became independent in 1991. It aims at examining ten years experience of state-building by focusing on institutionalisation, bureaucratisation and democratisation of state organs. The three dimensions are distinct yet intimately linked aspects of the process of building a nation state.

Redie Bereketeab received his PhD in Sociology from Uppsala University in 2000. His doctoral dissertation examines the process of nation formation in Eritrea. His area of interest is political sociology: state, nation, nationalism, identity and language. He has been associated with the Nordic Africa Institute as an externally funded researcher since February 2002.

Nordic Researchers

Sweden

Collective organisation among informal workers in African cities

Informal economies in African cities have experienced a rapid expansion in recent decades. Incomes and conditions have however declined for large numbers of urban informal workers under conditions of adjustment. In addition, these workers continue to experience a persistent lack, or even deterioration of rights, as authorities in many cities continue to be hostile towards them. This research project addresses the ways by which informal workers in urban Africa organise collectively to defend their rights and livelihoods. The aim is to uncover the agendas, the alliances and strategies being used by this growing number of associations of informal workers across urban Africa, through a comparative study of several cities. It involves a study of their growing global linkages, of their changing relations with trade unions as well as the nature of their relations with local government. The study explores the contradictions between and within these associations, which includes looking at the gender dimensions of organising.

Ilda Lourenço-Lindell completed her doctorate at the Department of Human Geography, Stockholm University, in 2002. In her doctoral work, "*Walking the tight rope: informal livelihoods and social networks in a West African*

city”, she investigates processes of informalization of livelihoods in urban Africa in a global context and the social networks and strategies of the urban poor in the context of structural adjustment.

Norway

Modernisation and Stress in Men’s and Women’s Lives: African Experiences

The research project deals with societies in transformation under rapid change brought about by forces such as modernisation and globalisation, which increase distress and uncertainties in the everyday lives of young people. It explores and scrutinises the factors that impinge on present-day social life; how people draw on their various support systems to manage. The approach is grounded in the awareness that it is important to see people not merely as victims of adverse circumstances, but rather as agents actively responding to their life situation, however, adverse, in an increasingly troubled world.

Liv Haram is a social anthropologist trained at the University of Bergen. From 1989 to 1992 she worked as a researcher in a multi-disciplinary AIDS research and competence building programme in northern Tanzania. Based on research from the same area, her doctoral study examines gender relations in the context of rapid social change and a burgeoning AIDS crisis. She has also conducted extensive fieldwork in Botswana and has published on such topics as modernisation, urbanisation, gender-relations and sexuality, – including AIDS, risk and uncertainty as well as people’s health care seeking behaviour.

Finland

Contemporary Charismatic Movements in Tanzania

A trans-national religious movement variably called neo-Pentecostalism or charismatic Christianity has been spreading across all of Africa during the past couple of decades. It is attracting the urban middle class as well as the rural poor across the continent. Hasu’s research examines the contemporary religious experience in the context of charismatic Christianity in Tanzania. There have been two important trends in Tanzanian society since the mid-1980’s that have contributed to the rising popularity of this movement: the intensification of Muslim activities and the economic reforms in the country. Economic reforms have resulted in increased unemployment and a lowered quality of social services. This has taken place in the context of marked poverty. Many of the charismatic churches and ministries are characterized by prosperity gospel. This form of gospel has it that Christians should be healthy, wealthy and successful. This Christianity that maintains to address questions of poverty and prosperity is now flourishing in the declining African economies.

Päivi Hasu is a cultural anthropologist from the University of Helsinki and received her doctorate in 1999. She held a fellowship from the Academy of Finland for her PhD as well as for her post-doctoral research project. In her dissertation Hasu discussed ritual history, gender relations, AIDS and moral discourse among the Chagga people of Tanzania. Her interests include among other things historical anthropology, religious and ritual studies, gender and modernity. She has been employed at the Nordic Africa Institute since August 2002.

Denmark

Socializing Children: Kin and Christian Churches in Uganda

The research project addresses the connections between childcare and sociality for children not living with their biological parents. Focus is given to children living either with relatives/foster parents in households, or in institutional settings. Analytically the focuses are on notions of children, childcare, and childhood, relations and reciprocity between care-giver(s) and care-recipient(s), and the social consequences of (church) organisations providing assistance that was until recently a matter of kinship. A particular effort is made to initiate dialogue between pedagogical and anthropological knowledge about childcare and childhood in the North and in the South as well as bridge the gap between research and applied work.

Catrine Christiansen is an anthropologist trained at the University of Copenhagen. In her research she has focused on changes in beliefs, personhood, social networks, and health seeking behaviour brought about by conversion from mainline to charismatic Christianity among Samia Christians in Uganda. Her principal research interests include health, religion, kinship and social change. She has been employed at the Nordic Africa Institute since September 2002.

Guest Researcher

Post Conflict Transition: the State and Civil Society in Africa

The programme will encourage research on the causes of conflict, and on the ways in which the pasts are being dealt with in the post-conflict transitions, and how the future is imagined, as well as on the political cultures. Important research issues in the transitions, include the dynamics surrounding the negotiations towards and the

signing of peace accords, the factors for success or failure of these accords, the demobilisation and re-orientation of ex-combatants, the rule of law, human rights and human security, and the resettlement of internally displaced persons and refugees. Medium and longer term issues include long-term peace building, traditional mechanisms for reconciliation and rehabilitation, truth and reconciliation commissions, problems of post-conflict justice. The transformation of regional security complexes into regional security communities, the re-building of infrastructure, institutions of the state and civil society, the building of democratic polities, and growth and development are also priority issues on the post-conflict reconstruction agenda. Violent conflict invariably impacts on values. Religion plays an important role, especially in terms of representations of the 'good' and the 'evil'. Research should look into both the transformations in the values and ethics, and into the ways civil society and other actors are responding to the changes.

Cyril Obi is Associate Research Professor at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs. He has been the editor of the Nigerian Journal of International Affairs since 2000. He is the current holder of the Claude Ake Visiting Chair at the Department for Peace- and Conflict Research, Uppsala University.