An Association of Concerned Africa Scholars (ACAS)
Tribute to Terence O. Ranger (29 November 1929 – 3 January 2015)

Compiled by Timothy Scarnecchia, Teresa Barnes, and Peter Limb

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This special ACAS Review pays tribute to Terence O. Ranger who passed on January 3, 2015, just after midnight just past his 86th Birthday. We sent out a call for tributes in January. We also know that Terry’s students, as well as the Editorial Board of the Journal of Southern African Studies, and the members of the British Zimbabwe Society will be producing their own tributes. We at ACAS who worked and knew Professor Ranger wanted to add our small contribution by focusing here on his role as an activist scholar.

Fortunately, there are many useful ways to learn more about Terence Ranger’s life and work. His students, Jocelyn Alexander and David Maxwell, wrote an obituary for the Guardian. Diana Jeater previously wrote an excellent academic biography of Ranger’s contributions, and also reproduced an interview she did with Terry in the “Terence Ranger: Life as Historiography” History Workshop Journal (Spring 2012) 73 (1): 193-210.

The *Journal of Southern African Studies* did a special issue ([Vol 23: 2 (1997)](https://doi.org/10.1080/03057079708438750)) in honor of Terry, and currently the publishers of JSAS are making Terry's articles available outside of the firewall until the end of 2015. Professor Clapperton Mavhunga at MIT has also written an obituary for Terry at *Africa is a Country*.

Most importantly, Terry wrote a memoir in 2013, *Writing Revolt*, published by Weaver Press in Harare and James Currey in England. Given all of these excellent sources, we are not going to reproduce an intellectual biography here, although we do include at the end a bibliography of Terry's works, thanks to Weaver Press for allowing us to reproduce it here. Many of us in North America were fortunate to have had the chance to show our respect and honor Terry at a conference entitled "Making History: Terence Ranger and African Studies" in October 2010 organized by Professors Teresa Barnes and Jim Brennan. There are photos from that conference in the following pages. We were also able to successfully nominate Terry Ranger for the Distinguished Africanist award from the African Studies Association in 2009. He appreciated that award, seeing as he had already been awarded the ASAUK's distinguished Africanist award, the USASA award was further validation of the influence he has had on African studies beyond Zimbabwean history. We have included his acceptance speech as Appendix A.

“Once in while there comes on stage a man who dares to challenge orthodoxy. Terry did that; he interpreted colonial history from the perspective of Africans - those who resisted and fought against Africa’s colonization and enslavement by Europe. Terry was a colleague who preceded me first in Tanzania and then in Zimbabwe. My wife and I share the loss to the family and friends of this good man; please pass our condolences to them. Africa will miss Terry but remember him.”

---Yash Tandon

**From Alois Mlambo:**

Although I had been familiar with his very influential published works on Zimbabwean history for a long time, I only first met Terry at the 1996 conference on 'The Historical Dimensions of Democracy and Human Rights' at the University of Zimbabwe and, thereafter, worked with him at the University of Zimbabwe where he lectured after his retirement from Oxford in 1997, as well as at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF) where we were both members of the organisation's trustee board. He was closely involved in the 2002 ‘100 Africa’s Best Books’ Project, which had been inspired by the late Professor Ali Mazrui in celebration of Africa’s contribution to the world of letters and which I helped co-ordinate. I also served with him on the UK-based Southern African Book Development Trust (SABDET) for several years. Throughout all this time, I was always impressed by Terry’s unquestioning readiness to give of himself and his time to others, his affability and his humanity. His unflagging commitment to promoting scholarship on and in Zimbabwe is legendary,
whether through his prolific research and publications, as a lecturer at Oxford and the University of Zimbabwe, or as a trustee of the ZIBF and SABDET and co-founder of the Britain-Zimbabwe Society. He is fondly remembered by all Zimbabweans who had the opportunity to interact with him. May his soul rest in peace!

Alois Mlambo, Professor of History
University of Pretoria

Remembering Terence Ranger

From Josephine Nhongo-Simbanegavi

As a highly productive scholar of Africa, Terence Ranger left a rich and voluminous amount of written work for those wishing to engage him or to be engaged by him to continue to do so even though he might not be physically with us any longer. As that scholarly work is already in the public domain, my reflections here will be limited to just a few of some of the things I view as having set Terence Ranger apart from a good number of those who made their names as African Studies experts. At the same time, I would like readers to view most of what I have here as personal opinions emanating mostly from my own interactions with Terence Ranger, the memories of which I will always treasure dearly.

Having been one of his doctoral research students at Oxford University, I must say that I could not have asked for more in a supervisor. In the last two of my three and half year stay in Oxford, he invited Megan Vaughan to team up with him as a co-supervisor. I can say without hesitation that they gave me exceptional academic guidance, and in my opinion, they were among Oxford’s very best! Unlike the experiences related by some of my contemporaries when co-supervisors fought their academic battles over a supervisee, Terence Ranger and Megan Vaughan resolved from the start that any differences of opinion that would arise out of their reading of the thesis materials I gave them to review as supervisors, would be ironed out between them before they gave me feedback. They both knew who they were as scholars; they saw no need to traumatize a student to prove their worth. This is not to say they treated me with kid gloves. When Terence Ranger would comment on a submitted draft that I had provided “the bones of a good chapter”, I soon learnt, that was his way of telling me that my so-called chapter was a mere skeleton without flesh!

After he retired from Oxford and came to the University of Zimbabwe where I also had a lectureship now following the completion my DPhil, Terence Ranger partnered with fellow Zimbabwean scholars, notably with Professor Ngwabi Bhebe, who was then heading the History Department. The partnership saw the building of what could arguably be one of the most fruitful team research efforts in the Department’s history. Even as the political atmosphere in Zimbabwe was gradually heating up, Terence Ranger would not let that interfere with the intellectual conversations he wanted to see on campus as well as off-campus. His home was one of the few places where blacks and whites met and socialized outside the context of work-related interactions. Not only did he and his wife Shelagh play host to guests from across the historical racial divide in Zimbabwe, they created space for up-coming and seasoned academics, as well as key figures in politics and civic society to meet and talk in a relaxed atmosphere, despite the deepening of political tensions in our country.
As a researcher who showed immense respect for those who gave him his subject materials, there is a lot Terence Ranger’s approach could teach us about working across cultural and other divides. Avoiding false proclamations of a prior love of Africa and Africans as a few have been tempted to do in accounting for their connections or associations with the continent, Terence Ranger stated honestly that he became a historian of Africa by accident. However, the positions he took in African struggles were not accidental. They were choices he made and continually reviewed. He knew he enjoyed a privileged position in comparison to the lives of the majority of the people who owned the past he studied, and who shared the present he became part of as a de facto citizen of conflict-torn Rhodesia and later, post-colonial Zimbabwe.

Having such de facto Zimbabwean citizenship at the turn of the millennium came with its challenges though. However, as some of his interactions with the controversial land reform campaign did show, Terence Ranger embraced its reality. One afternoon, a scruffy-looking man came to the UZ History Department looking for “Mr Ranger”, before identifying himself as a war veteran and a newly-settled farmer. Unsure of the purpose of his visit in the toxic atmosphere of anti-white threats of violence by some of the leading figures in the land reform campaign, the secretarial staff in the office told him that Professor Ranger was away in England, which was not true. Terence Ranger was in the country. It turned out the man was actually looking for help with farming inputs. He had been advised by some of his comrades that “Mr Ranger” might be able to assist. When Professor Ranger came to the office the following week, he heard of the man’s visit and was sorry to have missed him, especially when the secretaries told him the man seemed so stuck that they had ended up giving him some money to cover his fares to travel back into the city from the University. Not only did Terence Ranger reimburse the fares the man had been given, he also left a donation for him, asking the secretarial staff to keep it safe in the office. In case the man returned, he did not want him to leave empty-handed again. It was clear that despite the toxic racialization of the discourse around land, Terence Ranger was viewed and spoken of differently in the same circles where the self-elected spokespersons of war veterans were baying for blood, and ordering whites to pack their bags and return to England! He did not lose sight of the fact that many peace-loving but genuinely impoverished and land-hungry former fighters and ordinary Zimbabweans had become pawns in the self-serving and colour-coded discourse of scheming politicians.

In thinking of how Terence Ranger could be honored, I recall how Zimbabwe’s Ministry of Education once made a pre-election time announcement of school name changes that eventually never saw the light of day. His name was on the list compiled to replace the colonial names currently in use. While he had his suspicions about the timing of the announcement and while he did not like the top-down nature of the proposed changes, Terence Ranger asked then to be taken to the school that had been identified for naming after him. He thought that he should at least see it before flying back to England. Reflecting on the dire situation of Zimbabwe’s education system now, if he was still alive, he would very unlikely view school name changes as a priority. However, the University of Zimbabwe has several lecture theatres currently carrying mere numbers and letters for names. Terence Ranger organised
engaging seminars and delivered memorable lectures in some of those places. It would be a very fitting tribute if one of those lecture theatres could get a real name now, perhaps the name of Terence O. Ranger.

Josephine Nhongo-Simbanegavi, Zimbabwean Historian.
From Ned Alpers:

I first met Terry Ranger in a London pub with Richard Gray, my SOAS mentor. This would have been some time in the Spring of 1965. I can’t say that I recall anything about our conversation, but that shared drink constituted the interview for my first academic appointment. About a year later Terry invited Annie and me for drinks at the home of his mother, who was also named Annie, something Terry often noted. As Annie Alpers recalls, Terry’s mother served us her homemade elderberry liqueur. By July 1966, having defended my Ph.D. thesis a week previously, Annie and I arrived in Dar es Salaam, where I took up a two-year appointment as Lecturer at what was then the University College of Dar es Salaam, which was then still a constituent campus of the University of East Africa. Dar was an incredibly energetic place to be a young historian in the mid-1960s. Terry seemed to be everywhere in those days, leading weekly history seminars, very much at the center of campus activities, and soon deeply engaged with the re-organization of the College curriculum in the aftermath of the Arusha Declaration. Terry’s *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia* was published in 1967 and provided a framework around which the first Africanist generation of Maji Maji research was organized. Terry’s leadership in revising the colonial historiography of Tanzania manifested itself in the two teachers conferences organized with the Ministry of Education. The first of these, held in January 1967, resulted in *Aspects of Central African History* (1968), which Terry edited; the other, held in December of that same year, produced *A History of Tanzania* (1969), which Isaria Kimambo and Arnold Temu co-edited. Both very clearly reflected the dominant nationalist historiography of the period, but this was very much a part of Terry’s commitment to writing a usable past for the present moment in African history.

Apart from the daily routine of teaching and research at Dar, Terry also organized a combination lecturing and collecting tour of southern Tanzania that included John Iliffe, John McCracken, and me. The most memorable moment was a dinner at the UMCA mission at Masasi at which the head of table was Bishop Trevor Huddleston, with Terry holding down the other end of the table in his own magisterial fashion.

Both Annie and I served on various committees with Terry, I as a member of staff, she as Administrative Secretary of the Tanzania Branch of the East African Academy, of which Terry was an officer. Two things stand out in our joint memories of those meetings. First, while taking notes in his very recognizable angular printing, Terry also habitually doodled elaborate cartoons. Second, Terry had an uncanny ability to sum up a meeting so that everyone sitting at the table felt that their input was being recognized, when in actuality Terry had absorbed everything stated at the meeting and produced his own, usually very personal synthesis that reflected his own sense of what had transpired.

Before I completed my contract at Dar in March 1968 Terry and I talked about his own plans for the future and his decision to move on from Tanzania before too long. Although I had not yet set foot in Los Angeles, we discussed the possibility of his coming to UCLA, which he eventually did in 1969. At UCLA Terry immediately attracted a diverse cohort of graduate students eager to explore the possibilities of the Dar School and his own brand of resistance historiography and style.
of expressing historical African agency. A particularly noteworthy example of Terry's intellectual vision was his seminar on the comparative history of resistance and revolt in Africa and by Native Americans, which inspired at least one graduate student, George Phillips, to apply Terry's model to the history of Cahuilla resistance to Spanish colonialism in southern California. On February 9, 1971 at an evening session of the seminar that was held on the 10th floor of Bunche Hall we were suddenly shocked by the very destructive 6.6 San Fernando or Sylmar earthquake that caused the entire building to sway from side to side. Terry maintained his usual equanimity throughout the long tremor, while one Native American participant commented that he had nothing to fear as this was "his land." Thus assured by both Terry and our native Californian colleague, we continued the seminar as scheduled.

Terry's other major intellectual contribution to UCLA was the continuation of his deep and abiding interest in African religions, which also attracted the interest of many graduate students. The culmination of planning begun in Dar and subsequently supported by a major Ford Foundation grant to the African Studies Center at UCLA resulted in a stimulating conference on the history of African religious systems held at the University of Dar es Salaam (as it had just then become) in June 1970. A selection of the papers from this conference was published as *The Historical Study of African Religion* (1972), which Terry co-edited with Isaria Kimambo. After five years at UCLA, in 1974 Terry resigned his professorship to take up the Chair in Modern History at the University of Manchester, the first Africanist to hold a general chair in History in the U.K.

After Terry returned to the U.K. our professional and life trajectories were no longer linked as they had been from 1966 through 1974. Although Annie and I remained in occasional contact with Terry through his annual Christmas letters; visits to Los Angeles, where he stayed with us several times; and encounters in Manchester and Oxford, the last of which was a delightful pub lunch (thus completing the circle, I suppose) in September 2008 with John and Inez Sutton. By then Terry had donated his library and personal papers to the African Studies Centre at Oxford, although we were both impressed by the piles of political asylum dossiers that Terry had presented over the years and that still occupied a corner of his study at home.

**Ned & Annie Alpers, January 23, 2015**

From Allison Shutt:

Unlike many who have contributed to this memory site, I did not have a personal relationship with Professor Ranger. Of course, like everyone else, his work was foundational to my own. And like many others, I admired his efficiency in writing and the pioneering way he cleared the path for others to follow. For me that trail began with Ranger's wonderful biography, *Are We Not Also Men?*, which established the historical significance of the purchase areas for middle class mobilization. I was an academic follower.

Lately, though, I've come to spend time with a more personal part of Professor Ranger's life by studying the anti-colour bar campaign in Salisbury. As his memoir *Writing Revolt* makes so clear, he was deeply involved in the
struggle for a more just society—he wrote and acted (I always liked the way Professor Ranger used italics as a tool to emphasize his points). The anti-colour bar campaign was exhilarating, fun, and also very, very serious. The absurdity of being thrown into the Les Brown pool in response to his effort to integrate the pool was understood by Ranger most of all. It was a performance. But it was an effective one, and one that illustrated the absurdity of racial thinking in Southern Rhodesia. And now, with Professor Ranger's last book and his archives we have robust evidence to help us think through anew the tangled paths of nationalism in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Typical Ranger—leading the way, and not waiting at all for us to catch up. But what sticks in my mind, what stays with me after everything else is something else, something that surprises me because it isn't an academic influence at all; it seems personal, in fact. He was a good man, a brave man, a generous man; his was a life worth following, even if I always felt I was trailing behind.

Allison Shutt, Professor of History, Hendrix College

From Merrick Posnansky:

I was very sorry to hear of Terry Ranger's passing from my colleague Ned Alpers at UCLA. Terry was the foremost African historian of his age and introduced so many of us to new approaches and appreciation of the African past. I replaced Terry at UCLA in 1977, but no one could ever replace Terry whose interests in Africa were so very vital in Politics, Religion, the development of University Education and the betterment of everyone in all the countries where he served. He was a man of boundless energy. It was difficult to keep up with his varied activities. He was the consummate organizer, always arranging informal seminars and conferences that brought different specialists and students together. He was the sublime networker, and built up the Department of History at the University of Dar-es-Salaam to be the leading such department in Africa. His interests were so wide that his department embraced archaeology, Pan-African and Diasporan Studies and the role of Revolution in changing accepted institutions, that did not feature elsewhere in Africa on a regular basis until a decade later. He also gave African history an integrity that facilitated comparisons with the history of countries like Russia and Japan that were so far away but which had some comparable experiences.

I have happy memories of him, many created when we were together at a conference in Lusaka in 1963 in which he was the vital force using all the resources available at that time to gain a deeper appreciation of the African past. For Terry, history was not an arcane discipline concerned with archives, written records and colonial institutions but a living tradition in which Africans, closely integrated with change, had to have a major voice and voices which would be heard regardless of the traditional status of their speakers. I slightly got him into trouble as coming from Uganda, at that time, I decided to take out the Uganda students of the nascent University of Zambia. Terry joined me and suggested a bar right in the centre of Lusaka, in a rather posh neighborhood, where we duly went. Talk of Independence was in the air in Northern Rhodesia at that time, a year before Independence, but when we sat down the manager said he could not serve a mixed group. We protested, a policeman was called and we were ejected. Because Terry
was a well known person and a *persona non grata* in parts of the Central African Federation, he was ticked off and warned. Terry was not phased and shrugged off the whole incident.

I also had the pleasure of his company and knowledge when he organized the Pan African History Congress in Dar, the only one as it happened, in 1970. Terry was close to Nyerere, who was delighted to be involved with all the participants. Terry arranged for me to sit with him at the congress dinner - a real pleasure for me as he was such an easy person to talk to and had a great feeling for the African past and its importance for our understanding as Africa made its way out of colonialism. I had recently had contacts with Milton Obote of Uganda who was difficult to talk to and could never agree that on many African topics there were multiple opinions. It was easy to grasp why Nyerere was so beloved and Obote feared. It also explained why History, as iterated by Terry Ranger, as was so important for the development of Africa.

Terry and his wife very kindly invited my wife Eunice and I to Manchester in 1976, we had a delightful evening and both Terry and his wife gave us some do’s and don’ts about LA and UCLA that proved very useful. He could not have been more gracious and helpful and down to earth when discussing mundane aspects of life in Los Angeles. I never saw him again until he visited UCLA. As so often happens our paths diverged but I shall always be grateful for the freshness with which he clothed African history, his constant enthusiasm, and his search for new approaches through religious, labor, resistance or women's history. We all learnt a lot for which we can be grateful as we have filtered his ideas though our own students.

**Merrick Posnansky, Professor Emeritus History and Anthropology, UCLA**

**From Liz Gunner:**

**Terence Ranger – an appreciation**

Terry Ranger had such a great influence on so many lives in so many different ways that it is extremely hard to pin down the things that mattered to me personally. There is no doubt that he shaped my thinking and in some ways my life. His work on religion in Africa was hugely influential and will continue to leave its mark on later work for a long time. For me one of the most important of his books is his path-breaking study of the Beni dance and popular culture in East Africa. He covers 80 years of the genre’s life and weaves together archival sources, the voices and shape of the dance and dancers with such force and elegance. I read it again thoroughly a few months ago and the canvas was as fresh as if newly done. I believe he set out the importance of culture within history so strongly there that its influence is still profound.

My best memory of him in conference mode was when he and I co-organised the Bulawayo conference on Land Culture and History in Southern Africa. We called it Views of the Land. It was in July 2000 shortly after the elections in Zimbabwe and the country was tense. The conference began shakily as I nearly killed Jabulani Sithole, Malcolm Draper and myself by driving too fast from Pietermaritzburg to the airport in Durban, to catch the plane for Harare. But we made the plane and got to Bulawayo at about the same time as all those coming from much further afield. It was an amazing few days: Bulawayo
was looking tattered but still grand. We held some of our meetings in the large lecture theatre of the museum and stayed at the Bulawayo Club which very reluctantly accommodated the women participants but we were not allowed to drink at the bar. This caused outrage but the rules were firm and remained. There was also the Bulawayo Art Gallery directed then by the magnificent Yvonne Vera. We met there too and I was lucky enough to chair a session when Yvonne Vera and Chenjerai Hove spoke about their craft as writers. Terry listened intently, perhaps planning *Bulawayo Burning* as the author of *Butterfly Burning* spoke freely to us.

On the last night there was the launch of *Violence and Memory*; the three authors, Jocelyn Alexander, JoAnn McGregor and Terry sat on the stage with four of their main researchers. The theatre was packed with the intelligentsia and political dignitaries of Bulawayo. They were in full flight. There was wonderful talk and debate and an air of defiant joy at the work that had been done.

This generous and eminent man has left us but the imprint of his work and mind remains.

**Liz Gunner,** University of Johannesburg

**Auckland Park Johannesburg.**

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**From Eliakim Sibanda:**

**A Tribute to Professor Terence Ranger, Scholar, Activist and Friend**

Professor Terrence Ranger, “Terry” as those of us who knew him very well fondly called him, was a very special human being who uncritically accepted friend and foe alike. In my tribute to Professor Ranger, I will refer to him as “Terry” not because I disrespect him but because he was a friend beyond being a scholar; just as he too, like most of my close friends, used to call me “Kim”. What I enjoyed most and indeed revered about Terry was his way of dealing with difference in an evenhanded and open-minded manner. In as much as we had sharp differences over his writings, politics and personalities, I must say I learned a lot from Terry about how not to have differences undermine friendships. He also contributed extensively to my academic progress, especially my research on Zimbabwe. I recall that when he gave over his scholarly work to the Archives, I was among the first, and if not the first researcher to whom he gave unfettered access to his un-indexed papers. Terry did this despite knowing that I would find much in communications between and amongst politicians, especially around the time of the split in ZAPU leading to the formation of ZANU that differed drastically from the version offered in some of his works about the split. Certainly, his ‘archive’ was a treasure trove for me on the history of Zimbabwe, as understood “from below up (history from below).”

This might sound hyperbolic, but I will say it nonetheless; there cannot be any gainsaying the fact that Terry made significant and sustained contributions to the field of the history of African people in Zimbabwe, especially during the time he lived in Tanzania after being expelled from Zimbabwe for participating in the struggle for the decolonization of the country. As a progressive and engaged intellectual, academic and practitioner, it came as no
surprise that his first book in this field, which happens to be his best known seminal and classic work, Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896-7, despite being controversial, provided a 'useable' past to Africans in that it united them across ethnic lines. Moreover, it inspired many to form national parties that transcended ethnicity as they struggled for the decolonization of Zimbabwe. It was a truly groundbreaking book in the sense that, for the first time, a book written by a westerner gave Africans agency. His research and writing across multiple genres (including books, articles, essays, reports etc.), in the eyes of most of us, shaped the direction of the history of the African people of Zimbabwe and their historiography at a time when such history was still in the fringes both locally and internationally.

Terry explained Zimbabwean African people to the Western world. His books and articles on the agency of Zimbabwean Africans in particular, especially during the colonial Zimbabwe, became the only works by a westerner that resonated even beyond Africa. I believe that non-Zimbabweans, particularly westerners, understood Terry's works because he was a clear communicator whose lucidity expressed very complex ideas in a highly accessible way; he explained complicated African concepts in ways that they could grasp. I applaud Terry's prolific publication on Zimbabwe which definitely came as a result of hard work; especially given that Terry was not an African historian by training. Indeed, Terry's training was far from Africa in focus, era and geography. He was essentially a medievalist who wrote his dissertation on 17th Century Ireland and who subsequently self-invented as an African Historian – talk about versatility and multidisciplinarity.

It would be disingenuous if I were to say that Ranger's written works on Zimbabwe, albeit priceless in their significance and usefulness, were without serious “blemishes” which some scholars, including those to whom he was an academic ‘hero’ of Zimbabwean history for many years, correctly point out. Some scholars, myself included, questioned his classic Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896-7, which posited that spirit mediums coordinated the AmaNdebele and VaShona struggle in their resistance of colonialism in the late 1890's; and also his one-sided 'celebratory' writings which seemed to favor ZANU-PF’s narrow and self-serving definition of nationalism, and its leader Robert Mugabe, prior to and after independence up to 2000 – at which point the versatile Terry changed course and started writing in condemnation of patriotic history and against Mugabe's use of violence as a tool of control. (I mention this not because I intend to review his work, but rather give context to our commonalities and differences.) Most of us shared common threads with Terry but we were definitely different textures in the same fabric! Certainly, these critiques in no way diminish the significance and influence of Terry's research and writings, the conduit through which he impacted Zimbabwe. That scholarship continues to shape the writing of history on Zimbabwe even now.

All this to say I will always remember Terry for his unflagging commitment to the growth of a particularly Zimbabwean history and historiography, and for the more than forty fruitful years he invested in the growth of the field. Terry was not only a writer but a mentor as well, encouraging others to research and write, especially on Zimbabwe, a specific constituency he had intentionally decided to serve. Throughout the years, he cajoled and nudged many budding scholars to write and gave very insightful and constructive feedback.

Terry's legacy will not be confined to his academic life. In the early 1960's Terry joined African nationalist movements in Zimbabwe in the struggle for decolonization, first NDP and when it got banned, ZAPU. Later he would tell me that he never joined any other party after ZAPU was banned in the country. Needless to say his membership in nationalist organizations 'earned' him deportation. In
other words, we will remember Terry for his role as a scholar who brought the history of the African people in Zimbabwe to the mainstream but also because he was a passionate, dedicated fighter for justice. Years later, after independence, he would fight for Zimbabweans when they fled their country from political persecution by their government to seek political asylum in Britain from 2000 on. He would stand as a stalwart supporter of their asylum applications.

My own personal observation of Terry as a friend, which I constructed from my many visits with him at his home and teashops – and cannot in clear conscience end this tribute without sharing – is that he was a raconteur par excellence. Terry relished telling stories. Zimbabwean nationalists with whom he interacted for many years and innumerable ordinary Zimbabweans he met on his research trips were often his focus. The story that he would tell to me repeatedly, and would ultimately urge me to include in my biography of Joshua Nkomo, the late Vice-President of Zimbabwe, is how Nkomo avoided giving him an interview.

As the story goes, Terry was promised an interview by Nkomo, someone he knew very well and with whom he had many pictures taken together during the struggle for Zimbabwe, and as a member of NDP and ZAPU both parties of which Nkomo was the leader. Nkomo instructs Terry to go and wait for him at his daughter's business in Bulawayo. Terry waits for Nkomo for twenty minutes and when he finally arrives, he invites Ranger for a tour of interior of the business. As they walk around Nkomo keeps asking Terry about what kind of curtains, chairs and carpet would suit the house. After a 20-minute ‘consultation’ tour, Terry reminds Nkomo that he has come to interview him. Nkomo turns around and in ‘wonderment’ and says, “Oh, I thought you were an interior designer” after which he announces he has to leave for his next appointment but will give Terry a ride into the city. Terry gets excited that he will now have the chance to interview Nkomo as he is being driven to his next appointment. When they get to the cars, Terry is ushered into a different car than Nkomo. Just as the car convoy gets into the city the driver asks Terry where his hotel is, and thus where he was being driven. He would always end his story by saying “The moment the driver asked me where my hotel was I became excited, I became favorably impressed that Nkomo was coming to my hotel!” You see, the car in which Ranger was being driven was at the head of the convoy. Little did he know he was being dropped at his hotel by one of Nkomo’s bodyguards. I wish I could tell the story with the elegance and beauty with which Terry told it. Unfortunately, I cannot outflank Terry whose storytelling punch lines were exquisite!

No doubt, Terry’s physical presence will be missed by all of us; by friends and by those who were spurred to research and write because of his provocative writings and presentation on the history of the Zimbabwean African population, one which by and large he clearly loved. Personally, I will miss his stories and our growthful, inspiring and unique friendship built largely on our difference in perspective. While we all are truly saddened by his passing on we are, on the other hand, assured that his memory and influence will continue through his vibrant legacy of fighting for Zimbabweans, especially the vulnerable and, as a scholar and practitioner, through his writings. His scholarship will indeed have a lasting impact, and is one that will shape the historiography and history of Zimbabwe far beyond his limited time on earth! We unreservedly celebrate Professor Terence Ranger’s achievements and life as a scholar, social justice practitioner and friend.

Eliakim Sibanda, PhD
Professor and Chair
Department of History
University of Winnipeg
From Wendy Urban-Mead:

When I was a brand-new Ph.D. candidate at Columbia University in 1995, studying under Marcia Wright, all I knew is that I wanted to find a case study that would allow me to take a deep look at an African mission-founded church from its inception, from the Africans’ side of the story. She mentioned this to Terence Ranger when she saw him that year. At that time he was researching what would become *Voices from the Rocks*. His instant suggestion was that I should investigate an American Protestant group that he had encountered in the Matopo Hills -- the Brethren in Christ -- whose records in Pennsylvania were too far away for him or his students at UZ or Oxford to pursue. Thus it was that Terry, whom I had not yet met, handed me a topic that I have studied and written about ever since.

At that point I had only read his 1986 review essay for *African Studies Review*, “Religious Movements and Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa.”¹ This piece had for me proved a crucial starting point; from there I proceeded to read nearly everything he had ever published, plus many of his unpublished papers. Of particular importance to me in the early years of my preparation to conduct research in Matabeleland were two: *Are We Not Also Men?* and *The African Voice in Southern Rhodesia*. The first, because in painting a portrait of the Samkange family, 

Terry featured the importance of the Methodist Church in the family’s history. Terry’s credibility as a historian firmly on the side of African nationalist aspirations, established with the publication of Revolt in Southern Rhodesia in 1967, rendered his taking seriously the role of the mission churches in Zimbabwe’s (and, more broadly, Africa’s) social history all the more significant. This imprimatur from Ranger opened the way for a new wave of historical studies on the role of the mission churches in southern African history generally. Prior to this, mission studies was the province either of Eurocentric historical accounts of the spread of Christianity in Africa, or the work of missiologists. Ranger was among the first of the secular Africanist historians to focus on and take seriously the importance of the “Black St. Pauls,” who worked ahead of and alongside the white missionaries before and during the colonial period, to establish the Christian churches in Africa.

The significance to me of The African Voice is that this slim volume published in 1970 featured sketches of the lives and political careers of Lobengula’s sons – and thus Matabeleland featured prominently. Terry’s last three monographs: Violence and Memory (co-authored with Jocelyn Alexander and JoAnn MacGregor), Voices from the Rocks, and Bulawayo Burning, all featured themes grounded in Matabeleland. Thanks to this wave of publication at the end of his career, the way was opened also for histories of Zimbabwe to undertake themes based in the previously under-researched western province.

I benefited enormously from both of these thematic openings. My forthcoming book, The Gender of Piety: Family, Faith, and Colonial Rule in Matabeleland, Zimbabwe (Ohio Univ Press, 2015) bears an enormous debt to Terry. He not only suggested back in 1995 that I look into the Brethren in Christ in Matabeleland, he also checked in on me while I was doing field work in Bulawayo, and maintained a lively and interested correspondence with me until the last year of his life, all the while read many drafts of articles and chapters over the years. His way of prioritizing, supporting, and valuing the work of Zimbabwean scholars served as a powerful example to me. His invitations in recent years that I participate in the BZS research days were only one aspect of his ceaseless interest in, and support for, my work—and the work of many others also researching Zimbabwe’s history. He waited impatiently for this book to be published and I have deep regret that he never got to hold it in his hands.

Wendy Urban-Mead, Associate Professor of History, Master of Arts in Teaching Program, Bard College

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From Isabel Mukonyora:

In writing this piece for the Association of Concerned African Scholars Review, I decided to be as spontaneous as possible.

My first encounter with Terence Ranger was through his books, followed by the sudden and rather overwhelming encounter with a man sitting across the table from me in the National Archives of Zimbabwe. This was a time in my life when looking at the relationship between missionaries and colonial administrators became a way of explaining modern Africa to my curious mind.

Before I knew it, I became one of many students of Terry associated with St. Antony’s College in Oxford. He is cited in each and every one of my publications so far because I could not help but see and appreciate the determination with which he stood for both the emancipation of Africa and the continual development of serious academic work on Africa.

Terry passed away a year after one more meeting with him in which I promised him a book that will show one more time that I too should stand firm as a scholar. This forthcoming book, “Global Christianity for an Era of Climate Change”, celebrates T. O. Ranger’s great achievements.

I am honored to be invited to say these few words in memory of a great historian and Bella’s good friend of the academy for many years.

Isabel Mukonyora, Associate Professor, Western Kentucky University

From Paul Landau:

I have been asked to write something about Terry and so I will. In Jan Vansina’s autobiography, Jan registers me as a kind of adopted junior kin, borrowed intellectually not only from Steve Feierman, but also from my proper ancestor, Terry Ranger. (He also affiliated me maternally with the sociologist Karen Field, another parallel offspring of Terry Ranger’s.)

I am not sure about that, but there are several reasons Terry influenced me greatly as an historian, even while he and I only occasionally crossed paths as people. First, he thought through things to the point where one saw an independent logic emerge, located in the knot of reality he evoked in his articles, a logic he ended up calling “peasant consciousness.” The idea that consciousness is something connected to material realities on the ground (I recognize Terry claims never
to have read Marx, but anyway) . . . that it had a logic and a reality . . . I was already thinking through this way of seeing the world reading E.E. Evans-Pritchard, Gwyn Prins, and other great historically minded anthropologists or historians aware of anthropology, Richard Werbner, James Fernandez, Jean Comaroff, for instance. I was studying Christians and their modes of thinking and questioning the Eliadean mysticism of so many scholars. Terry demonstrated that one could elaborate and explain African modes of thinking about the world without betraying their intended meaning or the historical context.

In his many articles, about inoculation campaigns and dance movements in Tanzania, about central African religious movements, about peasants and Christian churches (in which he destroys the implicit Africa v. Christianity set-up of many historians), one finds the same location of a logic, a language, a situation of active people in a zone of thought we can both credit and interpret in history. That moment was always one of change instead of stasis: Terry's reconstructions were four dimensional. As for praxis as an historian he set the bar quite high. If there was economic data, one had to see it and mine it. In his work on war and demobilization and ethnic constructions in Zimbabwe and elsewhere, which put him in touch with Eric Hobsbawm and a wider audience, we see the same process: the history of the construction of a domain of self-understanding, or identity, functional to a changing world.

There was an optimism in this. He had no good speaking-knowledge of Shona. Some of his arguments are high-wire acts of interpretive verve. At all times Terry turned the reader's attention to the basis for African people's understandings in the real world as far as this could be reconstructed. There were few assertions, few postulates of what the people “believed.” Instead one glimpsed a logic. The historian following Terry need not betray people's expressed words: When people did speak of belief, when they argued that God and grace motivated them, they ought also to be taken seriously. Especially instructive to graduate students, at least to me, was Terry's debate over various issues with Dick Werbner and Julian Cobbing and then with other critics over (inter alia) the historicity of his attribution of “high god” stature to Mwali, the function of “religion” in politically active times, the reality of the cult component — the Mhondoro seers and the incarnations of ancestors, and the roles the mediums played in the 1896/7 rebellion (Chimurenga) and (thus?) also the 1969–80 war against the Ian Smith regime. Norma Kriger also criticized Terry's forbearance toward ZANU-PF in their various transgressions and atrocities.

Another of Terry's interventions (in 1986) was seen by some as a scholarly challenge to Jean and John L. Comaroff's framing of Christianity in the story of colonialism and resistance in South Africa. (In their vision, Christians in the big healing churches — whether or not they agreed with resistance, politically speaking — were involved in a dialectical process of maturing their consciousness(es) until they could clearly grasp their actual material situation (their position in relations of production) and derive their behavior from it. This mode was a vehicle for describing state-tolerant Zionist churches' healing rituals — as "resistance" to colonialism.) I had just finished my initial preparations for my exams when this debate began to make me think in new ways again. J.D.Y. Peel thereafter echoed Terry with related complaints: if the playing field were
taken as discursive, one had to credit what religious people actually said. On what grounds were Christians’ statements taken as Rosetta stones for the growth of political or material consciousness, and not as a fully formed kind of consciousness?

My own orientation grew through my thinking about these matters as debates. But one could imagine the meaningful development of the domain called “religion” (and what was left over, a space of secularity called “politics”), without that development being a maturation of political consciousness. That was the key for me. Following Terry, noticing that the official administration of religion generally came with the production of ethnic socialities, or “tribes,” as actual social identities, I looked for similar dynamics in mid-19th century highveld South Africa. My argument was that the emergence of “religion” as a separate sphere was not the same as the culmination of self-realizations leading to proper consciousness. Instead of self-conceptions for the motor of transformation I instead like Terry looked at the material use of land and the positioning of labor. I found great data, but I can’t really imagine I’d have been able to make any of the argument without Terry’s work.

On the other hand, sometimes Terry disagreed with me. Some of the force of Terry’s interventions came out of his own humane, deep understanding of Christianity, which I lacked. That wasn’t all of it: I won’t speak for him but I am sure he disagreed correctly with other aspects of my work which like so much else he voraciously read he digested for what was best, not worst. Terry did however make it clear (notably in one talk I was fortunate to see) that he disagreed with (inter alia) my attempt to eliminate the concept of “spirit” from our vocabulary. Whatever Mwali was, he was a spirit, and he was going to keep on talking about spirits. The manner of his disagreement was to point to the will, to insistence, as the reason for recognizing the Divine: I took the message to mean faith is transcendent. I write about these debates lest they be forgotten or glossed over, because Terry was a great and subtle debater. The idea that you could argue about things in print or at a lecturn that mattered and were researched and real and yet were about intention and self-understanding — that was paradisical to me.

Terry could not only argue but could also revise his views — as he did (for instance) in considering Chris Lowe’s and other work and revisiting the idea of “imagined” ethnic identities. As it often did Terry’s interventions are on the side of the real: scarcely any ideology can be discerned behind his interpretations save a general desire for justice and fairness. The question of what identities are not constructed, and whether there are legitimate and illegitimate forms of identity, has not been yet been reconciled with a simple or easy formula. He wrote in a way that suggested the African people he wrote about would agree with him if they could be introduced to his interpretation. He was largely right.

It can’t be denied that it was very important to me that such a great historian of southern Africa such as Terry had time for me — from the instant in 1990 when he introduced himself to me to every other crossing of paths. He had many graduate students and colleagues who will undoubtedly recollect things about Terry invisible to those like me who were never his student. But being recognized by such a person, with such obvious quality of mind, application, and sharpness, was a huge boost to me as an
historian, in thinking about what I myself was capable of — what I might attempt to do — and illustrating what quality was. That Terry and I had a chance to take a few meals together, and that he had a chance to be introduced to my book on precolonial-to-colonial era African politics (2010) in southern Africa, and read and commented on and ultimately supported most of the arguments about Zimbabwe’s and South Africa’s deep political connectedness, — that was a final gift to me personally. I last spoke with him and Shelagh his wife early last year, at their home, after reading his short and snappy autobiography of his time in the 1960s in Southern Rhodesia. He turned the conversation to mutual friends and then to me and my labors, wanting news. It was winter and slick outside and they were fairly housebound until the spring, which was looked forward to. I am happy they got to experience another thaw together, another whole Oxford summertime, but I wish it could have been many more.

As an historian, Terry demonstrated a model of engaged, thoroughly researched, clearly presented narrative about cooperations and clashes among Africans and Europeans in central and eastern Africa, about the creation of new categories of expression, in ways accessible from all sides. As a committed reviewer and judge of others’ work, he was engaged, generous, and argumentative. As a person, he was helpful and supportive. He will be missed.

Paul Landau, Professor of History, University of Maryland

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**From Jonathan Zilberg:**

I’ve chosen to share by way of tribute this photograph of one of my favorite meetings with Terry and Sheelah. Terry mattered a great deal to me and sharing archival information with him as it surfaced during my research in Oxford and London in the last years of his life has perhaps been the greatest pleasure of all during my work on Zimbabwean art history. Sharing such data with Terry provide me a way to be close to someone I cared deeply for and it mattered especially as we had a longstanding mutual love for the art of Cyrene and how it provided a vast and particular record of the Zimbabwean landscape through these children’s and young adults’ eyes.

*This photograph* was taken by Garry Charnock of his wife Anne showing the Rangers a few specimens from their collection of Cyrene art on a sunny day at home in 2011. The Charnock collection is a very large sample of what remains of the
show of Cyrene art which travelled the UK from 1949 through 1957, the documentation of which is to be found in Rhodes House and in the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel archives in London. Having just put the final touches on his last book manuscript, Terry gladly agreed to write a short essay on Cyrene and the art of Cyrene as he knew it in his experience. That essay will soon be made digitally available, alongside my own, as part of a Special Collection of Cyrene Art now kept in the Harold Robbins Library in National Museum of African Art in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

I’ll always remember with the greatest fondness the first time I was introduced to Terry as a young graduate student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1988, the moments I was lucky enough to share with him and the last time we met at the British Zimbabwe Society meeting in 2013 when a small selection of the Charnock Collection of Cyrene art was on display. Thank you and farewell, dear Terry.

Jonathan Zilberg, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Center for African Studies, Alumnus

Remembering Terry Ranger

By Teresa Barnes, 8 January 2015

One doesn’t know how to write about someone like Terry. He was a colossus in our field who also, to my astonishment and pleasure, seemed happy to regard a person like me as a friend in later years. I might have first met him when I was a graduate student at the University of Zimbabwe in the mid-1980s; I contributed a chapter to one of his and Prof. Bhebe’s edited collections; attended the landscape conference at the Bulawayo Museum in 2000; I reviewed a couple of his books, we sent emails back and forth, I visited him once in Oxford and had tea; helped organize a conference in his honor at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign on what was to be his last trip to the US in 2010. I was immensely honored to accept the African Studies Association’s “Distinguished Africanist” award on Terry’s behalf in 2010, and to read out his lovely acceptance speech. One has to just accept the passing of a great person, of course, but it is impossible to think of the field of Zimbabwean history without the figure of Terry Ranger beside it, always nurturing, analyzing, prompting, reflecting, researching. He was an intellectual father of all of us, and now we have lost our father.

Many of the things that Terry said and wrote ring in my ears:

My very favorite quote is from the activist Terry, from a speech he made about academic freedom at the University of Cape Town in 1981. UCT has an annual academic freedom lecture, and Terry said, “Academic freedom is not something to be claimed. It is something to be exercised.” This simple and profound truth cuts through all the usual cant and angel-pinhead debate about managerial freedom, institutional autonomy and whatnot, and reminds me that the activism of historians is really rooted in the work they do and the way they do it.

My next favorite quote comes from “Are We Not Also Men,” the Samkange family biography. One of the chapters ends with the sentence, “But things were not as they seemed.” I always aspired to have the power to write like that, to be the kind of historian who could draw such a dramatic distinction
between the obvious superficial and the subterranean forces rumbling underneath.

Running a close third is Terry's evocation of the rustling of crisply starched 1950s township petticoats in “Bulawayo Burning”. One day I would like to teach a whole course on Yvonne Vera’s “Butterfly Burning” in conversation with “Bulawayo Burning”. I could have whole weeks of the two talking to each other, what a pleasure that would be.

I remember Terry saying flatly and unapologetically, in fact, provocatively, “I am a relentlessly narrative historian.”

When he came to Illinois in 2010 it was October, chosen because it wouldn't be cold yet. Terry wore his slippers throughout. When I saw how slowly he was walking, I rushed out and bought a collapsible wheelchair; the distances between his room in the Illinois Union and various speaking venues seemed, all of a sudden, quite vast. Terry was quite content with the chair, content to put his feet up and be maneuvered through the American undergraduates like a big Britain/Zimbabwe Society flagship. Content to dazzle us with his reminiscences, the precision of his memory, to have us in stitches with the impeccably droll delivery of his one-liners, content to meet and charm everyone who came his way: students, historians, the dean, high school teachers.

Lastly I remember and salute Terry’s love and devotion to Zimbabwe. In our 2010 conference he said, “I feel like I was born when I went to Zimbabwe.” No one else returned year after year, either for research or to teach undergraduate classes, to work alongside and inspire young Zimbabwean historians. He also said once, “I felt that all the power would go out of my body if I didn’t return to Africa every year.” I think he always wanted to breathe in the red dust kicked up along the sides of the roads, and feel the crinkly carbon paper files in the National Archives sigh between his fingers. So as his strength failed and the trip became impossible, I guess he was right.

Looking for a correct date for this piece, inevitably and fittingly the Internet pulled up a speech Terry gave at the University of Virginia in 2001 which begins with a mention of his friend, Jeff Guy. I think the community of historians of southern Africa will always remember this transition from 2014 to 2015 as the turning point when we lost both Jeff and Terry.

Rest in peace, Professor Terence Osborn Ranger. The world is a better place because of you.

**Teresa Barnes, Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Illinois**

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**From Enocent Msindo**

**Tribute to Terence Ranger**

When I was doing my high school in Zimbabwe, I used to read with great admiration the works of Terence Ranger, including the debates between himself and Julian Cobbing and David Beach. To-date, there is no single scholar that I have read so avidly like Terence Ranger! I did not know that I would be one of the lucky ones to be taught by him for two of my three years at the University of Zimbabwe in the 1990s. Terry was a model and mentor to me. It is now trite to say the obvious, that he was a very well accomplished scholar and teacher. He had great passion for empowering Black African
students and is the reason why I took African history seriously for my post-graduate studies. In the 1990s, Terence Ranger worked with a number of Black Zimbabwean students who are now senior scholars on Zimbabwean history and African studies generally. These include myself; Gerald Mazarire; Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni; Jocelyn Nhongo-Simbanegavi; Busani Mpfu, and many others. As we remember Terence Ranger, we should not try to imagine what else he would have written about had he still been alive. I think Terry did all that he could in his time. He raised a generation that will forever learn from his accomplishments, whether we agree with his views or not!

Terence Ranger had an infectious personality. He had a subtle way of getting students to be interested in studying African History, this included throwing some debatable issues to the students so as to generate in-class discussions. He also made sure that we became keen to get to the National Archives by setting essay questions that develop one’s appetite to want to hear from the archive itself. He also did not take it personal when his writings were criticised but dealt with issues as a measured gentleman. I remember writing an undergraduate essay on the historiographies of the 1896 risings where I criticised Terry’s work, Beach’s and Cobbing’s all at once for not giving us sufficient clues about the 1896 wars. He awarded it a distinction, but he commented, “Good work, but how can you be more objective?”

In 1999, Terence Ranger shared with me proofs of their book, Violence and Memory, a year before it was published. Very well written and indeed challenging, I instantly developed an interest in researching on the histories of Matabeleland. He was of course very happy to support my Gates Cambridge Scholarship application for my MPhil and PhD degrees under John Lonsdale, a colleague of him who was part of the founding of the Dar Es-Salaam School of Africanist historiography which revolutionised academic African history, not only in East and Central Africa, but continentally. We will forever miss a very serious historian, but his legacy lives on.

Enocent Msindo is Associate Professor of History at Rhodes University, South Africa. He writes in his personal capacity.
Terence Ranger: the Dissident Activist Scholar

From Timothy Scarnecchia

Like many academics working on Zimbabwean history, I was always careful in my professional relationship with Terry Ranger. He could be a very prickly person, and at times his ego could be, like his career, indeed larger than life, as a colleague recently put it. He had a way of making life-long enemies as he did life-long friends. I would not consider myself to have been a close friend of his, but I appreciate all that Terry did for me in my career. I was never a student of his but he did a great deal for me and for that I am forever grateful. What I want to write about here though is the inspiration he gave to me, and for that I am forever grateful. What I want to write about here though is the inspiration he gave to me, and for that I am forever grateful. What I want to write about here though is the inspiration he gave to me, and for that I am forever grateful. What I want to write about here though is the inspiration he gave to me, and for that I am forever grateful. What I want to write about here though is the inspiration he gave to me, and for that I am forever grateful.

and I think that is a good way of looking at his consistent and meaningful contributions throughout the many active years of his career. We can also learn from Terry’s example about the importance at times to make ourselves heard, because we are in positions that generally allow us to be heard, and at times to act behind the scenes quietly and without public notoriety because it is the right thing to do. Terry did both of these things, as exemplified by many of his public positions and support for Zimbabwean nationalists, and at times his quite devotion to helping those who suffered from the harsh brutalities of tyranny in Rhodesia and later in Zimbabwe too.

In the early 1990s, when I first spent some months in Oxford to meet him and his students and work in the Rhodes House Library collection, I was very surprised that someone at Oxford would be so generous and open with his time. I attended his seminars in his office at 100 Woodstock Road and enjoyed his generosity and that of his students who were there, as well as from Phyllis Ferguson who ran the office for Terry at that time. When I left from Oxford to live in Harare for a
year and a half, I would see Terry when he came to the National Archives of Zimbabwe. These were very good years to be working on Zimbabwean history in Harare. What I remember about my encounters with Terry then is that he always wanted to know how my work was going and that he encouraged me to go and do interviews to find out as much as possible about the African voice in township politics during the 1940s to the 1960s.

When I would do interviews in Mbare and Highfield, former participants in the early years of the NDP and ZAPU would ask me if I knew about professors John Reed and Terence Ranger, as they were two of the white members of the NDP and ZAPU they remembered giving speeches and holding meetings in Salisbury during those years. I had the chance to interview Terry in 1996 about his early experiences and his observations of the formative years of what would become Zimbabwe’s two main nationalist organizations. It was an insightful interview and fortunately Terry has written extensively now on these years in his memoir, Writing Revolt. What I remember most about the interview was that Terry credited his wife Shelagh with being the braver of the two. She had joined the National Democratic Party (NDP) first and she and others in the NDP would stage silent protests in Cecil Square during Founders Day, getting spat on and cursed at by angry whites etc. Terry also credited John Reed, who taught English at the University, with being the wiser in their partnership about working class politics and trade unions, and you can see in Terry’s recent memoir this respect and admiration for Reed’s observations and advice to Terry who was, as he tended to put it, always a bit out of his element even as he had the conviction and guts to take risks whether in the campaign to desegregate Salisbury’s public spaces, to bring food and money to the families of political detainees, or to write revealing and critical articles about police brutality and abuses of Africans in the townships by the Rhodesian authorities and their police. Writing Dissent with Reed, which they would mimeograph in the basement of the Methodist church in Salisbury, was one of these exercises. Similarly, he and Shelagh would have their house searched on occasion for incriminating materials by the CIO late in the night. He received death threats from racists and he was eventually made a prohibited immigrant and left Rhodesia in 1963, just as the split between ZAPU and ZANU was underway.

After leaving Rhodesia and ending up at the University of Dar es Salaam, Terry went on to write and publish many books and many more articles but he still remained engaged in political debates and kept his pulse on what engaged students and politically minded scholars. He tells a classic Ranger story in his memoir about his attending a talk by Stokely Carmichael at the University in Dar in early 1968. According to Ranger, one of the messages Carmichael wanted to get across to the packed auditorium of Tanzanian students was that it “was necessary, but hard, to hate the whites.” Ranger writes, “A history student, sitting next to me, was shouting ‘I do hate the whites, I do hate the whites’, pausing to whisper to me ‘I don’t mean you, Professor Ranger.’ Stokely’s then wife, Miriam Makeba, sang ‘Nkosi Sikelele Afrika’, a moment of true emotion. It was the only meeting I have ever been to at which it was impossible for me to raise a question or to make an objection.” Terry loved being the center of attention and he would make sure he was recognized in a room such as this. But Carmichael’s speech and topic had silenced him, if only this once in
his career. He also genuinely would have been moved by the scene and so many years later still recalls it as an important emotive example of pan-African nationalism and black power, a movement Terry would contribute to in Zimbabwe, in his own way, through his early nationalist histories written for Zimbabweans.

Whatever faults and criticism these early works have received, their emotive power is difficult to match. Assigning sections of Revolt in Southern Rhodesia to students today recalls the power of his argument and prose, and his conviction that history was on the side of African interests fighting against an unjust and brutal settler state.

Once back in the UK at the University of Manchester he continued to stay in contact with Zimbabwean nationalists in Zambia and Tanzania during the crucial decade of the liberation war. Many critics of Terry would later over simplify, in my opinion, his relationship with ZANU as someone who blindly defended ZANU throughout his career. Based on Terry’s personal letters available in the Aluka collection, it is possible to see that his personal relations with many nationalists meant that he had misgivings about ZANU’s ability to “go it alone” without ZAPU. He expressed this to Fay Chung in 1975. When Fay Chung asked Terry to serve on an advisory board to help defend ZANU detainees arrested after Herbert Chitepo’s assassination in Zambia, Ranger wrote that he could not do so. One of the reasons for his decision to not support a pro-ZANU solidarity group was that he was not convinced that ZANU’s decision to ‘go it alone’ without ZAPU was a good one. Ranger also writes in his memoirs about his difficulties relating to his nationalist friends after the split in 1963, and it is therefore a stretch to say that he was a ZANU stalwart during all these years, as some suggest. He was, as he writes, always a dissident voice.

In the 1980s and 1990s he continued to stay current with academic and political trends, writing about subaltern studies, for example, and how these new post-colonial theories built on what he and Eric Hobsbawn had so effectively translated earlier into the “Invention of Tradition.” In the 2000s he was still debating and talking about race and politics with academics around the world. While the crisis in Zimbabwe developed, Terry became very involved in providing expert testimony for asylum cases in the British courts on behalf of Zimbabweans attempting to escape political violence. We have included as an appendix in this tribute an example of Ranger’s expert testimony during 2008 at the height of the political violence. Like his earlier convictions to reveal the brutality and injustice of the Rhodesian past, he had the same conviction in the 2000s. Once again the target of his writing was the abuse of power and the dangers that come from one group feeling they have an intrinsic and historical right to subject other groups to humiliation and physical abuse for their beliefs and their commitment to change.

There is something very remarkable about Terry Ranger as a model of the activist scholar. He could have easily lived a “life of academic elitism” once he landed his impressive position at St Antony’s but that wasn’t his personality. He was an extremely driven scholar, and as much as he would always say he felt most alive when he was in Harare, Bulawayo, or Dar, he never stopped turning the energy he gained from his African experiences into real contributions, both academically and politically. Nothing seemed to make him happier than the success of his
Zimbabwean friends and students. His commitment to the University of Zimbabwe's history departments is well known. I also remember Terry's devotion to the late Zimbabwean novelist Yvonne Vera and the respect he expressed for her work and life. When he gave a talk at the University of Illinois in 2010 about her and how her work inspired his book *Bulawayo Burning*, I remember his talk as quite impressive and moving.

As many others will attest, Terry could often transcend the barriers that most of us get trapped in, whether defined by race, class, gender, or by expat vs. national, and all the attendant privileges within these structural divides. That is why whatever criticism were cast at him for his intransigence, egoism, academic feuds, etc., he still had a compassion and gift that helped many of us find a way forward in a discipline and field that is far from easy to navigate, especially in the early years of one’s career. Hopefully, those of us working to contribute to Zimbabwean historiography can now reflect on Terry's lifetime of activism and intellectual dissidence in order to find ways to continually challenge these barriers in the future. Whatever his critics may say about him, they cannot fault him for his ability to act and to speak his own mind and to fight for what he saw to be much more serious goals than those of academic honors. Most importantly, he achieved all of this while demonstrating the courage of his convictions.

Timothy Scarnecchia, Associate Professor, Department of History, Kent State University.

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From Marcia Lynne Tiede:

My only encounter with Terence Ranger was in attending the 2010 conference at UIUC. I am passing along my primary memory from that event -- certainly not an example of Great Intellectual Influence, but just what I retained, and have recounted several times since. He was describing a visit to a church in Zimbabwe, and the records of that church had been moved into a garage or storage shed, where he was shown them by the person in charge, who said something about probably tossing them soon. Ranger was then left alone with the files. He proceeded to do "what any self-respecting archivist would do", which was to stuff as many of the papers into his pants as he could before leaving.

Marcia Lynn Tiede, Catalog Librarian, Herskovits Library of African Studies, Northwestern University
Terry Ranger: Writing Revolt launch

by Robin Palmer

[Below are extracts from a speech I made at the launch of Terry's final book, Writing Revolt at the Friends Meeting House in Oxford on 5 March 2013]

Last October, Terry sent me the MS of his latest book with the comment that he was doing so because I was one of the few people mentioned in the book who was still alive! I guess that I’ve been asked to speak this evening on the same principle!

But seriously, it’s a great privilege to be asked to do so.

In early 1960, 3 Kingsley Fairbridge scholars travelled out by boat from Southampton to Cape Town and up by rail to Bulawayo and then on to Salisbury, the capital of the ill-fated Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. I imagine the idea was that we fine British chaps would help to stiffen the Empire! I was one of the 3.

We enrolled at the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (UCRN), which took students from all 3 federal territories and offered external University of London degrees. I started a B.A. General degree, but the following year the History Department initiated a History Honours course, in which I and 11 others enrolled. Half of us went on to collect PhDs, which is not a bad strike rate!

The Department comprised Professor Eric Stokes, Dr. Terence Ranger and Mr. Richard Brown. All 3 were wonderful people – Richard Brown and I opened the batting for the university cricket team – but Terry was clearly out on his own as a brilliant and inspirational lecturer.

He of course went on to do great things in Dar es Salaam, California Los Angeles, Manchester and then up the road here in Oxford. But I derive much satisfaction from the fact that the UCRN class of 1961 were the first honours students to benefit from, and be inspired by, his lecturing skills. We got him first! Only later, when some of us could compare, did we fully realize how very fortunate and privileged our small first group of history honours students was.

In due course I went on to become a history lecturer myself in what Ian Smith used to call ‘certain countries to the north of us.’ I could not have had a finer role model, both as a lecturer and as a scholar who always took the time to encourage young scholars and their work, including myself. It was a characteristic which I greatly admired and sought to emulate.

(Moving ahead somewhat, when I left the University of Zambia in 1977, Mike Kelly, the Dean of Education, wrote me a farewell letter, praising my conscientious teaching, my imaginative stimulation of student research, my rigorous standards, and in particular all I had done in building up the History M.A. He concluded, 'Professor Ranger's recent report is a most excellent tribute to you.' This was Terry in his unglamorous but much appreciated role as External Examiner.)

Apart from being a rather good lecturer and a brilliant warden of a hall, which he talks about a bit in Writing Revolt, Terry also found the time to be a keen supporter of some of the university sports teams, which was much appreciated.

In his new book, Terry writes engagingly about the campaign against the colour bar and of course about his deep involvement in nationalist politics, which so enraged many white Rhodesians. Ultimately, he was deported, in February 1963. This is depicted on the front cover of Writing Revolt. It was a time, as you can see, when people wore very silly hats. I think that deportation enraged
many in the country, not least we History Honours students who still had a year to go before we graduated! The Rhodesian Front had just come into power and all hopes of any political compromise in Southern Rhodesia rapidly faded.

In recent years, I've had the great good fortune to have engaged with - and sought to encourage – a number of young Zimbabwean scholars working on post-Fast Track land reform, in the teams led by Prosper Matondi and by Ian Scoones. I've stressed to all of them my huge debt to the university in Harare and stressed to myself the desire to try to pay something back for the wonderful and privileged education that I received there half a century ago. Two factors about these young scholars stand out for me. First, is their commitment to undertake good, old-fashioned serious, rigorous research in the most challenging environment imaginable post-2000. Second, they invariably address me as Professor!

So thank you Terry, for your key role in my educational upbringing – and thank you on behalf of so many of us for all the inspirational books and articles which you've written on Zimbabwe and elsewhere over the years, and which take 11 pages to list at the back of your new book. And thank you to James Currey Publishers for having the wisdom to publish them.

Robin Palmer, Land Rights Adviser, Mokoro

From Stephanie Kitchen:

I first focused Terence Ranger’s work in 2001, when I was employed as a publishing administrator for the African Books Collective in Oxford. I had to enter new titles received by the collective/distributor into our database. The Historical Dimensions of Democracy and Human Rights in Zimbabwe, edited by Ranger and Ngwabi Bhebe, made an immediate impression on me. I was very much a novice in ‘African studies’ then and largely unaware of the debates this text evoked around historicizing and contextualizing ‘human rights’. But the book (and its follow-up volume) struck a chord. Its content – and form – inspired me. I still remember it's clear and direct style and the inherent inclusivity of such a writing strategy. I felt Ranger was also writing for the non-academic, for me, for the African student.

I soon learned that Ranger was a longstanding resident in Oxford and also a founder of another keen interest of mine, the Oxfordshire based charity Asylum Welcome, which worked on behalf refugees and immigration detainees housed in the infamous Campsfield House Immigration Removal Centre close to the city (I subsequently became a trustee of the same organization alongside Terry). Terry was perhaps equally concerned about the human rights abuses in this affluent liberal university town as he was about his first love (Zimbabwe). I don’t think the local charity and activists necessarily realized he was such a towering figure in African history. He had a kind of historical vision that easily encompassed and joined up the local, the international and the postcolonial.

He worked tirelessly representing Zimbabwean refugees, sometimes in the highest courts in the country, always a thorn in the side of UK Home Office officials: puncturing their ‘cases’ to deport Zimbabwean refugees with his expert knowledge of the country. [See Appendix B for an example of one of his Expert
Testimonies from 2008] He was also an instrumental figure in the first wave of opposition to a possible second detention centre in Oxfordshire (near Bicester). The campaign was successful.

My second stand-out memory of several encounters with Terry came some 10 years later. Then, as managing editor of the International African Institute/Africa the book reviews editor and I invited Terry to review for our journal five new books that had recently come out on Zimbabwe. Bearing in mind it can be difficult to get busy, senior academics to review a single work, Terry replied promptly in the affirmative offering to review ‘all’ the important new work coming out on the country. When the review article came back (subsequently published as ‘Zimbabwean Diamonds’ in *Africa* 81(4), 2011, pp 649-61) it included no less than 13 books (including his own recent book!), noting en passant that ‘It could easily have been twice that number if I had included all the journalist quick fixes, the inexplicably popular white Zimbabwean memoirs, and the necessary but short-lived accounts of the brutal violence of 2008’. The piece finished on a personal note expressing characteristic enthusiasm and encouragement for the field of Zimbabwean scholarship: ‘As a Zimbabweanist I rejoice in this abundance of books and hope it will continue. As a historian I hope there will be more books which make a deep connection between the present and the past. I think the time has come for Zimbabwean scholars to move from historiography to history even if it is sometimes ‘empiricist’...we can look forward in the next two years to Jocelyn Alexander’s study of imprisonment and restriction in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe; to Joost Fontein’s monograph on the Africanization of a European landscape at Lake Kyle; to a revision of Gerald Mazarire’s masterly doctoral thesis on the imagined landscape of Chisanga, which is a landmark in pre-colonial history; to Busani Mpfu’s history of Bulawayo from 1960 to the present; probably to several works by the prolific Ndlovu-

**Stephanie Kitchen, Managing editor/Chair of the Publications Committee, International African Institute, London**

**A tribute to Terry Ranger**

**Murray McCartney, Weaver Press, Harare**

The depth and distinction of Terry Ranger’s scholarship is well enough known to students of African history and sociology. Less well known, perhaps, is the stalwart support and generous credit he gave to publishers on the continent, particularly in Zimbabwe.

In May 2012 Terry sent us the ms of his last book, ‘Writing Revolt’. His decision to have it first published in Harare was a rare and heartening act of solidarity, and it was fitting that I undertook the editing two months later in Akçabuk, southern Turkey, a stone’s throw from the birthplace of Herodotus.

Prior to ‘Writing Revolt’, Weaver Press co-published (with James Currey) ‘Bulawayo Burning’ and ‘Violence and Memory’; prior in turn to those, Baobab Books co-published
(again with Currey) 'Voices from the Rocks' and 'Are We Not Also Men?'

Such collaboration with small – and often struggling – African publishers is not as common as it might be. James Currey himself was of course an imaginative pioneer in this regard, but without academic writers to fan the embers and carry the torch, western publishers are less and less likely to follow in his wake.

Local sales of titles such as these are never going to hit the thousands, and certainly no fortunes will be made; but without the likes of Terry batting for us – or David McDermott Hughes sweethearting Washington, or Luise White nagging Chicago – the books wouldn’t be here at all.

We have other reasons to be grateful to Terry. His championing of the Zimbabwe International Book Fair, and the attendant Indaba, in their heyday; his wide knowledge of – and enthusiasm for – Zimbabwean fiction; his patronage of Harare’s Book Café; for all of these he was a tireless advocate.

In 1999 he wrote a review article for JSAS (Vol. 25, No. 4), 'The Fruits of the Baobab: Irene Staunton and the Zimbabwean Novel'. An elegantly written tribute to a woman who receives few enough tributes – elegantly written or otherwise – by a man who knew the country’s fiction as well as he knew its historiography. We need more like him.

Murray McCartney, Weaver Press, Harare.

Editor’s note:

The following Bibliography was produced and checked by Murray McCartney and Irene Staunton of Weaver Press, Harare, for Terry’s memoir, Writing Revolt. Murray and Irene were kind enough to allow us to reproduce it here. For an interesting read and to get to know Terry Ranger’s own views of his influential political and academic years, be sure to locate a copy of his memoir.

You can find it at the Weaver Press website as well as on the James Currey website.
Terence Ranger
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D.Phil Thesis

Books


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**Articles**


Representations (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan).


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Terence Ranger

I am touched and delighted to receive this award. I am only sorry I cannot come in person to accept it because I was already booked to launch my latest book, Bulawayo Burning, in Bulawayo itself at the National Gallery at the same time. This Bulawayo launch is emotionally important to me because Bulawayo Burning is dedicated to my great friend, the late Yvonne Vera, who was Director of the Gallery and held some wonderful township photo and art exhibitions there. I spoke myself at the launch of Yvonne’s novel of township life Butterfly Burning to which the title of my own book obviously relates. That launch was a great occasion, with myriads of butterflies crafted in all materials by Voti Tebe, and the legendary Cool Crooners performing township jazz. My own launch this month won’t be anything like as colourful but I hope both official and unofficial Bulawayo will be pleased at my tribute to their history. It says a great deal for the charms of San Francisco that I seriously considered for a moment cancelling my Bulawayo launch and coming to the ASA instead. I apologise to the Association and to all my American friends that I stuck to Bulawayo. No doubt this was partly because I celebrate my 81st birthday three days after the launch and plan to spend it in my favourite landscape – the Matopos hills.

This is a generous award, I think, because I have not been deeply and continuously involved with American African Studies. In fact I have attended only two of the ASA conferences – the fractious one in Montreal and a huge affair in New Orleans. I remember some of my UCLA graduate students attending an ASA meeting and Robert Rotberg asking where I was. ‘Oh, I had forgotten’ he then said. ‘Ranger is a small conference man’. And it is true that I have always preferred meetings where all the sessions are plenary and everyone has the same experience. When my term as President of the UKASA was over I organized such a series of plenaries in Oxford on whites in Africa. But when William Beinart’s presidential conference took place in Oxford this year there were over 300 papers delivered to multiple simultaneous sessions. It is encouraging that in these hard times African Studies is still so strong.

I did of course have five years of experience at a Centre of African Studies in the United States, though that was a long time ago: UCLA, 1969 to 1974. I had completed six years as Professor in Dar es Salaam and wanted to make way for an African successor. Somehow I found myself moving from one of the poorest countries in the world to one of the richest of the United States. It was a moment when there was a critical shortage of middle aged American Africanists. I did not realize how exceptional it was that I should be offered Professorships in North-Western, Wisconsin and UCLA, all at the same time. I did no bargaining but chose between them solely on climatic grounds. It was March. The lake was frozen solid at Northwestern; the streets of Madison were decked with snow. I must be the only man sold a job by landing at Los Angeles airport – there was sun, there were palm trees, there was the sea. Give or take a few differences it was Dar es Salaam all over again. (Though the differences were
mind boggling. It took me weeks to recover from my first visit to a Californian supermarket).

My wife accompanied me very reluctantly. California represented everything she disapproved of. We had to go, she thought, in a missionary spirit and it was appropriate that we ended up living in a little house in the central mission enclave of Pacific Palisades, Haverford Avenue, named for the pioneer Quaker missionary to western Kenya. It was a little house and one of Shelagh’s prosperous Catholic friends on visiting it told her sincerely ‘I do so much admire your witness to poverty’. But after a year or two Shelagh examined me closely and said accusingly: ‘You are enjoying this’. And I did enjoy UCLA.

As a veteran of Rhodesian confrontation I was amused by the Cambodian invasion protests at UCLA, where the Faculty interposed their bodies between the police and the students, wearing PM armbands, as Peace Marshalls. I did not join the academic strike, arguing that all my teaching was anti-imperialist anyway. The History Department was very strong. My Africanist colleagues included Ned Alpers and Chris Ehret, stalwarts at UCLA ever since. But above all there were the students. No quota had yet been imposed so UCLA was awash with graduates. A good audience was guaranteed for any course one chose to offer. And although the students were profoundly critical of their government and of the system, they were critical in an optimistic way, very different from the cynical pessimism of British students at that time. They were great to teach. For their part they found me formally British – ‘We are afraid to come before you with our participles dangling’ one of them told me. Fortunately for me the great Basil Davidson came for a term and made a much more squirarchical impression. I was able to return to Africa to research every year. There was an Ashanti Master Drummer and great art holdings. What was there not to enjoy?

Yet we left UCLA in 1974 in a real missionary spirit. When I became Professor of Modern History in Manchester I took a 50% salary cut and undertook three times as many contact hours. Much of Manchester still bore the scars of war-time bombing. Britain was in economic and political crisis. My children still think of California as a Garden of Eden from which their parents were expelled for some very original sin. The main effect on me was that I virtually stopped going to the United States. Manchester terms were long. I believed almost irrationally that all the power would go out of me if I did not get to Africa every year. And by hook and by crook even without the UCLA research grants I have managed to visit Africa every year for the last fifty years. By contrast I have visited the United States only four or five times. I have never done research in an American archive – all my books are based on sources in Africa. I didn’t even produce a first batch of doctorates from UCLA since five years turned out to be too short a time to bring my students to completion. The fifty or so accomplished doctorates which I now have to my name are the product of my Oxford period.

I do not think I could have let my American connections become so attenuated had I been working on East Africa. The renaissance of Tanzanian history, for
instance, has come largely through American scholarship in alliance with Tanzania. But the one part of Africa for which there is real strength in British African Studies is Southern Africa. I have been blessed, for example, by the collaborative and vibrant cluster of British Zimbabweanists who work so closely with the wonderful school of young Zimbabwean historians. As I have discovered very recently, at the workshop on ‘Making History; Terence Ranger and African Studies’ at the University of Illinois there are indeed rich veins of southern African historiography to tap in the US. But essentially my work since UCLA has been a British/Zimbabwean project.

And this is why, in conclusion, I think this award is such a generous one. You are not honouring me for services to American African Studies or for services with American African Studies. You are honouring me for services to Africa and in this spirit I accept the award with pride and joy.

Terence Ranger

Appendix B: Terry Ranger’s expert testimony in an asylum case for a Zimbabwean seeking to remain in the UK because of political violence and threats in Zimbabwe. Terry wrote 175 of these before submitting this one. We have truncated this version.

August 13 2008

In your email of August 6 you asked me to prepare a general report on conditions in Zimbabwe and to answer some specific questions. I present the report first and answer the questions at the end largely on the basis of material contained in this assessment.

The grounds of my expertise on Zimbabwe.

I have been familiar with Zimbabwe and its African politics since 1957. In 1963 I joined the National Democratic Party (in the same month as Robert Mugabe) and thereafter joined its successor, the Zimbabwe African Peoples’ Union. I was deputy chair of the Salisbury district committee of ZAPU and a frequent speaker at nationalist rallies. I was on terms of close friendship with many of the late leaders – Joshua Nkomo, Leopold Takawira, Herbert Chitepo, Sketchley Samkange and many others. I have known Robert Mugabe since 1960 but never intimately. In those days the explicit ideology of the nationalist movement called for democracy and human rights – now
stigmatized in the Zimbabwean state press as neo-liberal hypocrisies.

I was declared a prohibited immigrant in 1963 at the instigation of the Federal Government of Sir Roy Welensky. I left the country, to which I was unable to return until 1980, but I continued my study of and my connection with its nationalist movement. While I was Professor of History at the University College of Dar es Salaam I wrote and published two books, *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896-7*, HEB, London, 1967; and *The African Voice in Southern Rhodesia, 1898-1930*, HEB, London, 1970. I returned to Zimbabwe in 1980 and commenced research on the guerrilla war, publishing in 1985 my *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War*, James Currey, London. Since then I have been in Zimbabwe every year between 1980 and 2006, my wife’s and my own health making it impossible for me to go last year. After my retirement from my Oxford Chair in 1997 I spent the years 1998-2001 teaching at the University of Zimbabwe. I have published four more monographs on the modern history of Zimbabwe, edited some 15 collections and written very many articles.

In 1981 I established the Britain Zimbabwe Society of which I am now President. The BZ was designed as a friendly society, committed to the interests of the people as a whole rather than to any particular party or regime. It protested against the violence of the newly independent state in Matabeleland – *Gukurahundi* – and over the years it has become very critical of the authoritarian nature of the Zimbabwean regime. In 1985 I resolved myself to discover what had happened in Matabeleland and I diverted my research there for several years. Eventually I published two books, one about southern Matabeleland, *Voices From the Rocks*, James Currey, Oxford, 1999, and one (with Jocelyn Murray and JoAnn McGregor) about northern Matabeleland, *Violence and Memory*, James Currey, 2000). Research for these books intensified my disillusionment with the results of the victorious nationalist movement. The earlier aspirations for plural democracy and human rights had been replaced by a ruthless one-party majoritarianism, ready to repress any opposition. In 2003 the University of Zimbabwe published my edited collection, *The Historical Dimensions of Democracy and Human Rights* in which I and my contributors trace the development within the nationalist movement from emancipation to totalitarianism. I have also published an eye-witness account of the 2002 presidential election and an influential article on the regime’s ‘patriotic history’.

As President of the Britain Zimbabwe Society I am also a member of its panel of expert asylum assessors. In this capacity I have written several country judgement opinions and some 175 individual assessments. The material which I have seen provides abundant proof of the patterns of regime violence in Zimbabwe since 2000.

I am not a member of the Movement for Democratic Change or any other Zimbabwean organization and aim in my expert opinions to provide objective and informed assessments.

Patterns of Political Violence in Zimbabwe
Most of what follows cites reports and testimonies for the period between March 2008 and the present. I can claim no first-hand experience since I have not been in Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, what has been happening fits into a longer pattern with which I am familiar as a historian. Robert Mugabe, a very able but introverted man, has dealt ruthlessly with opposition throughout his career. He did so in Mozambique during the 1970s; he did so in Matabeleland in the 1980s; he did so in breaking the challenge of Edgar Tekere’s Zimbabwe Unity Movement; he did so during the presidential run-off campaign between March and June this year; and the evidence suggests he is prepared to do so again should the current talks break down. What we have been seeing this year is the worst violence for years but it falls into and repeats long established patterns. In terms of ZANU/PF’s ideologies of ‘national democracy’, we have moved from Eddison Zvogbo’s declaration in the 1980s that ‘we worship the majority as Christians worship Christ’ to an editorial in the Herald of 3 May 2008 which takes the majority to task for betraying the revolution. Its author, George Charamba, Mugabe’s publicity secretary, laments that ‘a mere X on a piece of paper, all done in time shorter than life-creating ecstasy, can steal a free people, steal a heritage, steal a freedom, steal a land, steal a future’. Maybe, he says, we shall have to ‘shoot – yes shoot – the ballot box for the preservation of your independence’. The presidential run-off was announced as the people’s ‘last chance’ to avoid a resumption of revolutionary war and Mugabe himself declared that he was prepared to go back into the bush if he were again defeated at the polls.

The regime believed that it lost the March 2008 elections because voters were bribed by promises of western aid; because polling officers were trained by western agencies; because churches, indigenous NGOs, teachers and nurses influenced rural people against the government; because voters were too cowardly and self-interested to defend the revolution. Between March and the June presidential re-run a co-ordinated campaign was set on foot to ‘remedy’ all these weaknesses. In a real sense the ballot box was shot.

Poll Postings and Retaliation

One of the democratic assets of the March elections was turned to devastating account. A wholesale distortion of the March votes was made impossible because details of voting were posted outside every counting station. Accumulated photographs of these notices made large-scale rigging very difficult. Even the recounting exercises demanded by the government changed no results. Hence control of the House of Assembly was lost by ZANU/PF and although very many people still believe that Tsvangarai in fact achieved more than 50% of the presidential vote at least it was not possible for ZANU/PF to conceal that he had won more votes than Mugabe.

But these locally posted results allowed militia gangs, soldiers and CIO to identify targets. By early May many press reports were appearing of retaliations. On May 8, for instance, the Globe and Mail carried a report from Stephanie Nolen, drawing on unidentified colleagues in Zimbabwe. It
described how 'the worst violence in Zimbabwe's recent political history' had taken place in Mapondera village. There the posted results showed that 70 people had voted for the MDC and only 10 for ZANU/PF. Militia attacked at night, telling people that 'you made us lose and you have to pay for it ... They pulled out husbands and wives, separated them and killed them on the spot; then they proceeded to the school where they killed four teachers.'

Orla Guerin's report for the BBC on 6 May described wider scale threats:

The intimidation began at the top, with local chiefs, who then passed instructions down to village elders. 'The chief's headman told us the message for ZANU was go and tell the people to vote for the president', a village elder said. 'If you don't you will see what will happen to you'. This man knows only too well what to expect. He says his home was torched and his wife beaten back in 2002. At meetings called by the ruling party and its henchmen, explicit threats were made. 'They told us that if President Mugabe lost the run-off there would be war. They said what happened during the war of liberation would happen again. There would be a second round of that' ... Mixed with the threats was more than a hint of desperation. 'They said "We are begging you to vote for ZANU, in the name of Jesus".'

Another vivid and disturbing report had been filed earlier, on 16 April, by Chris McGreal. This described how nurses and patients were dragged out of Louis Guidotti hospital in Mutoko. They were addressed by armed men with the same message: 'This is your last chance. You messed up when you voted. Next time you must get it right or you die'.

Teachers as Targets

Teachers once again became targets, as there were in 2000 and 2002. Many of them had acted as polling officers and were subsequently accused of favouring the MDC. On May 3 the state Herald alleged that 'teachers who have been trained in South Africa and here to rig the poll started fleeing the country to avoid the long arm of the law. To this day they remain in exile.' The New York Times for May 8 quotes the Zimbabwe Teacher's Union to the effect that 2,700 teachers had fled or been evicted; dozens of schools had been closed; 121 were in use as militia bases. 123 teachers had been charged with election fraud and 496 questioned by the police. The Times correspondent quoted a ZANU/PF Politburo member as saying: 'We are giving the people of Zimbabwe another opportunity to mend their ways, to vote properly. This is their last chance ... Prepare to be a war correspondent'.

Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights issued a statement on 25 April on 'Continued Arrest and Harassment of Election Officers'. 34 had been arrested in Masvingo alone and while in police custody had been interrogated by war
veterans in an attempt to extract ‘confessions’. The Lawyers point out that presiding officers would be needed for the re-run and that very many of the same people would find themselves pressed into duty. On April 30 2008 the Institute for War and Peace Reporting issued a statement entitled ‘Zimbabwe: Teachers fall victim to rural violence’. This recorded ‘hate speech’ against and assaults on teachers countrywide. It highlighted the experience of Mavis Rugare, a teacher in Shamva. She was attacked by militia: ‘My house was burnt and everything was taken away from me, including my cell-phone and teaching items’. She fled to a safe house.

NGOs and Civil Society attacked

In April and early May 2008 there were many reports of attacks on indigenous NGOs. It was alleged that they were funded by the west; that they ‘invented’ human rights abuses in order to maintain this funding; and that under the guise of political education they taught people to vote for the opposition. The Zimbabwe Elections Support Network (ZESN) was an obvious target after its work in observing and verifying results in March. On 25 April CID officers raided its offices and took away all its records on the March election. On 13 May ZESN protested against harassment and the confiscation of its vehicles. It had ‘broken no Zimbabwean law and had conducted its electoral observation efforts in accordance with the laws of the country.’ It ‘urged the police to launch a massive campaign that protects observers, party agents and supporters of any political party’. For its part the government press described ZESN as ‘an American sponsored civil society appendage of the MDC’. In the June re-run election the ZESN was barely able to function.

On May 1 the Financial Gazette, in its ‘National Report’, documented an intensified crack-down on civil society. During the previous week police had arrested the information and policy manager of the National Association of Non Governmental Organisations, NANGO, Fambai Ngirande, who had presented a report on Zimbabwean violence to SADC. ZESN’s director, Rindai Chipfunde, had been detained and questioned. On 10 May the Standard described how ‘the police last week descended on civil society and the media, arresting two journalists, two trade unionists, a human rights lawyer and three student leaders’.

Reports in April and May

These and other examples of violence were documented in an unprecedented number of videos and reports. On 28 April the Solidarity Peace Trust issued a DVD, ‘After the Elections: A Crisis in Zimbabwe’, which showed horrifying pictures of murdered, mutilated and tortured people. The Kubutana Trust issued a power-point presentation, ‘Operation Mavoterapapi: who did you vote for?’, which it warned was not for ‘sensitive viewers’. These and other videos were used to great effect. They were shown, for instance, to President Mbeki’s various emissaries, one of whom Veritas quoted on 10 May: ‘We have seen it, there are people in hospital who say they have been tortured, you have seen the
pictures of houses that have been destroyed.’ Business Day reported on 14 May that South African generals sent to investigate allegations of violence had been gravely disturbed by the images they had seen. ‘What we have heard and seen is shocking. We have heard horrific stories of extreme brutality, and seen the victims’, said one of the generals. ‘We have seen people with scars, cuts, gashes, bruises, lacerations and broken limbs, and bodies of those killed. It’s a horrifying picture’.

In addition to these videos there were reports issued by the United Nations Special Mandate Holders on 29 April 2008 who asserted ‘organised and co-ordinated’ violence, expressing particular concern about hate broadcasting, including regular repetition of songs which incited violence against ‘sell-outs’; by the Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights on 25 April which described ‘grotesque, cruel and shameful acts of violence’; by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, which emphasized that ‘urban dwellers have also not been spared, as gratuitous assaults are the order of the day in the high density area’; by the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights on 25 April. Rarely had there been such unanimity about the fact of crisis. Even Dumiso Dabengwa, a ZIPRA war hero and until recently a leading member of ZANU/PF, declared that Zimbabwe is ‘virtually under military rule … the deployment of the army, the militia and the so-called war veterans smacks of a de facto coup’, (Standard, 10 May 2008).

Three Major Reports in June and July

After the presidential re-run had taken place, reports began to appear which were able to summarise and to bring out patterns from the violence of the preceding three months.

In late June 2008 Human Rights Watch issued ‘Bullets for Each of You’. State Sponsored Violence since the March 29 Elections, a 72 page long document. On 29 July the Solidarity Peace Trust issued Desperately Seeking Sanity: What Prospects for a New Beginning in Zimbabwe, a 44 page report. Meanwhile the Zimbabwe Peace Project issued a series of reports between March and June which climaxed with a cumulative report for January-June 2008 published on 28 July. Each of these reports was carefully researched. Human Rights Watch made ‘research missions’ in March, April and May; carried out 70 interviews, and received numerous documents. The Solidarity Peace Trust drew on reports from all the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGOs. The Zimbabwe Peace Project had ‘a permanent network of monitors’ resident in every constituency in the country. There can be no doubt of the objectivity of these reports despite what Human Rights Watch calls ‘the contradictory and grossly duplicitous’ denials of state sponsored violence by the Zimbabwean government.

Each found that the ‘overwhelming majority’ (HRW p.57) of violent incidents were the work of state agents or ZANU/PF activists. The Solidarity Peace Trust report (p.5) found that ZANU/PF was responsible for 82% of the violence and the MDC-T for 1%. Each found that this period saw ‘a phenomenal increase of violence’ (ZPP, June, p.1); that ‘the scope and scale of the post-election violence far exceeds that seen during past election years’.
(HRW, p.15); and that what had taken place was ‘the worst state-led violence’ since Gukurahundi in Matabeleland in the 1980s.

There is inevitably a good deal of repetition in these three reports, in estimates of deaths, abductions and other incidents, for example. It is probably safest to cite the figures given in the final cumulative report of the Zimbabwe Peace Project, namely that there were more than 16,400 incidents of violence and some 77 murders, while noting their caveat that these ‘figures were an underestimate as ... field workers had to flee from some of the most violent areas’. Nevertheless each of these reports has particular emphases which are worth noting.

The Human Rights Watch Report of June 2008 describes abductions, re-education meetings, torture camps, No-Go areas, urban ‘curfews’, looting and burning; attacks on civil society. It identifies and names the commanders responsible for co-ordinating the violence. It argues that ‘the violence has been concentrated in areas traditionally viewed by ZANU/PF as “strongholds”, in the provinces of Mashonaland West, Mashonaland Central and Mashonaland East’. It writes:

For the first time in its history, ZANU/PF either suffered heavy losses or won by much narrower margins than it expected in its “strongholds” in the parliamentary elections. For example, in Mashonaland Central, one of the areas of rampant ZANU/PF violence, ZANU/PF actually won 16 of the 18 contested House of Assembly seats. In Mashonaland East, another area that has seen high levels of ZANU/PF violence (almost 50 per cent of the cases documented by Human Rights Watch) ZANU/PF won 19 of the 23 contested House of Assembly seats. However, closer scrutiny of the polling station results indicate that the MDC made significant inroads in each of these provinces, losing by much narrower margins than ZANU/PF had expected. (p.15)

In these and other areas the report stresses that ‘ZANU/PF supporters and their allies have not found it necessary to prove that a person voted for the MDC before meting out “punishment”. Instead they have examined results posted outside polling stations to identify areas where people voted for MDC in large numbers, even if the MDC lost to ZANU/PF in those areas’. They beat men ‘simply because they believed’ they were MDC members. In Mudzi, Mashonaland East, ZANU/PF supporters accused their victims of ‘bringing the disease of MDC into the area’, thereby ‘necessitating a cleansing process that would be achieved through beating people into repentance’. In many places there were veritable ‘witch-hunts’ for suspected MDC voters. (p.16) ‘They even picked up relatives if they couldn’t find who they were looking for’. (p.50)

The Solidarity Peace Project report on 29 July 2008 documented the same abuses. It too emphasized the general nature of the violence. Only 43% of victims claimed MDC affiliation. The report stressed that ‘ZANU/PF had a recognizable policy of attacking not just key people in MDC leadership, but also of targeting their families and those who
sheltered them. It has been fairly unusual in Zimbabwe during the violence of the last eight years for families of the wanted to be specifically hunted down in the way that has occurred in recent months. The ruthless murder and beatings of wives and even children of MDC activists who may themselves have gone into hiding is a new and terrible phenomenon. Entire families, not just of MDC members, but of civic activists, were sought out in rural areas, beaten and/or had homesteads burnt down’ (page 29).

In addition to the provinces identified by Human Rights Watch as the epi-centres of violence, this report also spoke of ‘targeting MDC strongholds’:

For the first time, Harare became literally under siege ... as the state struck at the heart of MDC support. There was a clear strategy in Harare to target its leadership and key grassroots activists ... There were consistently reported death-lists and targeted abductions and assassinations ... The public visibility of the MDC was, in a few short weeks, reduced almost to nil ...

The party was effectively unable to meet or organize in any way with virtually their entire structures in Harare in hiding and on the run. (p.29)

The Solidarity Peace Trust has for years been involved with the discovery of the abandoned dead in Matabeleland, dating from the 1980s, and with arranging reburial and commemoration. Now it warns that abductions and murders constitute ‘a particularly pernicious form of extra-judicial killing with very severe long term consequences for families and communities. Families are left without closure, being thus deprived of the basic human right to mourn their dead.’ (p.23)

In its various reports the Zimbabwe Peace Project, while covering many of the same points as the others also makes some additional ones. So far as its monitors are concerned it has been Manicaland in eastern Zimbabwe which ‘tops the list of politically motivated violence’ (May, p.1). 18 out of 26 seats in Manicaland were ‘wrestled’ out of ZANU/PF control and the seven seats won by ZANU/PF were only narrowly gained. ‘A sustained campaign of fear, retribution, displacements, disenfranchisements and fencing off the province seems to be the only available route for the ruling party to reclaim its strength in the province.’ (June, p.18).

The sequence of ZPP reports proposes a sequence of violence. Initially violence was triggered against celebrations of MDC victories. The displaying of results outside the polling stations resulted almost immediately in unofficial curfews at most beer halls in high density suburbs of Harare’. But soon these immediate consequences of the March election gave way to thousands of abductions. In its May report the ZPP found that even animals were being killed since ‘the perpetrators believe that anything associated with the MDC should be killed.’ It found that:

Women, men and children are all victims of the violence ... [There are] numerous
cases where women and children are being taken as ransom and forcibly detained in set up bases until their husbands or fathers who fled violence return to their villages. Women are also being assaulted, tortured and sexually harassed ... The Internally Displaced Persons are in a desperate situation. Most of these people are farmers who have left their homes, fields, livestock and property unattended and this has created untold psychological trauma.

This was bad enough but in its June report the ZPP found ‘a phenomenal escalation of election violence.’ The nature of the violence had changed ‘to more extreme physical, systematic and retributive acts’. There was ‘a chilling craving to inflict physical harm, to eliminate, to disenfranchise, to displace and to starve ... features that are reminiscent of scorched earth strategies [in] a well co-ordinated programme of violence’ (p.3). And by early June ‘post-election and pre run-off violence had reportedly transformed into full state sponsored retributive violence with visible involvement of the police, army, prison officers and CIO operatives’ (p.14).

The report found a ‘resort to liberation war strategies characterized by the setting up of liberation war style bases, use of war language, fist pointing, hate speech and hate politics’ (p.21). It emphasized that so much damage had been done to social relations that it would be very difficult to restore anything like normality. The cumulative report for January-June reported 77 murders in June and continued violence even after the presidential polls. On July 4 and July 7 1980 the ZPP reported that ‘violence is still going on in most provinces’. Illegal roadblocks were still in place; people returning home from the towns were being beaten and fined; several murders were reported. ‘ZANU/PF attacked MDC refugees at Chinyaradzo in Gokwe on 6 July 2008, many people died and some were injured. Survivors were scattered in the forests’.

These reports were confirmed by items in the press. On 19 July the Standard reported that:

**Internally displaced MDC supporters who are returning to their homes ... are being hauled before village kangaroo courts chaired by war veterans to answer charges of ‘selling out’ and ‘seeking refuge’ in other parts of the country ... [In Mutambara MDC officials] were found guilty of seeking asylum ... The militia told the MDC activists that they had disgraced the country’s name by fleeing their homes and seeking sanctuary at embassies of foreign countries ... Headmen and village heads, affiliated to ZANU/PF were telling the returnees to join former British Prime Minister Tony Blair in London.’

**Reports on Women**

Among the many people attacked in rural violence were those who represented NGO networks autonomous of ZANU/PF. The party could not tolerate alternative leadership and blamed influential NGO representatives for
electoral defeats. As we have seen already, residential observers of the Zimbabwe Peace Project were attacked. So were members of the Zimbabwe Election Support Network. But the hatred of young militia members was particularly directed at women who had been working to improve rights for girls, especially access to education.

In late June the International Relief Service issued an Appeal for Zimbabwean Women in Mozambique. More than five thousand women, children and unaccompanied minors who had fled across the border had been registered by IRS. Thousands more were 'unreachable' in the mountains along the border. They came with no clothes other than those they were wearing, no belongings, no sanitary pads. IRS gave one example. This concerned Alice Mucheta (not her real name) who had worked as an activist for CAMFED, the Cambridge based charity for female education, and had collaborated with the Girl Child Network. She had 'sensitized churches on girl child rights'; CAMFED had paid for the erection of a hostel for thirty girls at the local secondary school and she became matron. In the March elections, however, her village gave only 4 votes to ZANU/PF. On April 16 five truckloads of soldiers came:

I was the prime target ... I was stripped naked, humiliated and tortured as other women were forced to dance. Circling and stomping around me, singing war jingles, condemning my community role with the Girl Child Network.

She was accused of receiving money and guns from overseas and left for dead. She crossed into Mozambique on 18 April and says: 'I will never forgive the Mugabe Government for destroying the spirit of girl child emancipation and defending women's rights'.

The founder of the Girl Child Network is Betty Makoni, a fearless activist who has established a number of village refuges for girls and who has rescued many girls given to placate the anger of ngozi spirits. Makoni has attracted the criticism of the state press because she has received international human rights awards. On August 7 2008 she gave a press conference at the International Aids Conference in Mexico City. She spoke of 'marauding gangs' punishing 'targeted victims' in the villages. They raped women 'in front of their family members; men have been forced to rape their mother in law; some women report having been stripped naked and flogged in public while others said that pesticide had been shoved in their vaginas.' Some were told 'We are raping you so that you will give birth to ZANU/PF babies'. 63 women had come forward to testify to rape, the latest case being on July 24, well after the beginning of talks between the parties and the supposed moratorium on violence. Makoni said that some of the women raped were 'church leaders from the Anglican Church and wives of ministers and members'; NGO workers; teachers. The organization AIDS-Free World announced on August 7 that it proposed to send lawyers to take statements from the abused women and to document a charge of crimes against humanity by the Mugabe regime.
**Violence and the Churches**

It is significant that Betty Makoni specifically mentioned Anglican churchwomen as victims of rape. Church congregations represent the biggest national network of non-party institutions in Zimbabwe. At the top level the Evangelical Fellowship, the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops’ Conference and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches combined on 23 April to accuse the state of genocidal violence – people were being ‘abducted, tortured, humiliated, and in some cases murdered. The deterioration in the humanitarian situation is plummeting at a frightful pace ... There is widespread famine. The shops are empty ... the victims of organized torture who are ferried to hospitals find little solace as the hospitals have no drugs or medicine to treat them ... We warn the world that if nothing is done to help the people of Zimbabwe from their predicament, we shall soon be witnessing genocide’. The church leaders were violently attacked in the state press. Catholicism, wrote George Charamba, entered Zimbabwe with imperialism, 'killing for the Eucharist'; the colonial sword ‘taught the cross how to pacify and then govern the natives through a rough and ready hand’. Anglicanism, the state church of imperial Britain, was even more ferociously indicted. And yet, ZANU/PF intellectuals complained, these compromised churches dared to talk about human rights. Robert Mugabe himself demanded that all churches in Zimbabwe be loyal to the 'nation' and throw off external affiliations. Immediately before the March 2008 elections Mugabe preached on a Sunday morning in the Apostolic Faith Mission church in Lobengula high-density suburb in Bulawayo. ‘Our people must be able to head, even the old churches and perhaps the new ones also. We want to see the Africanisation of the Church, which does not means bringing an African God because there is only one universal God, but the running of the Church’. He praised the self-promoted Archbishop Norbert Kunonga, who had broken away from the Anglican Province of Central Africa; declared his own Harare diocese autonomous; and defied the Archbishop of Canterbury as a 'pope'. (Kunonga, by now excommunicated by the Province, said the prayers at Mugabe's presidential inauguration in June). [Terence Ranger, 'Mugabe's Act of Supremacy', *The Tablet*, 21 June 2008].

The state's support for Kunonga involved more than just words. Police were sent to bar the way into the Anglican cathedral to supporters of the orthodox bishop, Sebastian Bakare; police broke into churches where clergy loyal to him were celebrating the eucharist; threw down altars; and beat members of the Women's Union. On May 29 the Archbishops of Canterbury and Cape Town met with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, and afterwards issued a statement. For Harare’s Anglicans, they said, 'harassment and intimidation is their daily bread'; they lived in a 'climate of fear'. The Archbishops asked what the UN and SADC were doing to prevent ‘people being torn away from altar rails on the orders of ruling party or state officials’.

At the grassroots level, too, there has been much violence directed against the churches. This has been documented in various denominational publications. On May 9, for example, the Presbyterian News Service reported that:
Churches and church hospitals are being targeted by supporters of Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe ... Representatives of the Christian Alliance, a loose grouping of Roman Catholic, Protestant and Evangelical churches and organizations, issued a recent warning of increased violence by pro-government forces ... Supporters of President Mugabe forced a church and two hospitals to suspend their operations recently ... The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association said in a report released on May 2 that at least five people had been beaten up at the Driefontein Sanitorium and the Muvonde Hospital in Mvuma, central Zimbabwe ... The mission includes a school and one of the country’s best hospitals for tuberculosis patients. Members of the gang raided their victims’ homes at night and broke doors with metal bars to force their victims to come out ... In Zimbabwe’s second largest city of Bulawayo, a grouping of pastors said on May 6, that the Assemblies of God church in the southern Bubi district was closed down after the resident pastor fled following attacks by militants ... The pastor, a prominent Christian leader in the area, is currently hospitalized, as he was traumatized by the threats and accusations.

On 11 June the Catholic News Service in Cape Town commented on the police raid on the Ecumenical Centre in Harare on June 9. It quoted Alois Chaumba, head of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace saying: ‘No-one is immune to these raids. [I am] afraid of what may happen to me and my family and my friends’. In the raid on the centre heavily armed police and CIO men arrested five staff members of the Student Christian Movement and the Christian Alliance. The Student Christian Movement issued a statement saying that the raid was ‘part of a broader campaign orchestrated against defenceless citizens’ and proclaiming ‘our sacred duty as civil society and opposition forces to continue fighting for the opening up of democratic space and justice in Zimbabwe.’ The time had come for church groups ‘not only to speak but also to act against injustice, oppression and corruption’. Chaumba also said that Anglicans in Zimbabwe ‘are being beaten up in their churches and are bearing the brunt of lack of freedom of worship’. Meanwhile Anglican bishops from Botswana, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe issued a pastoral in early June saying that the sufferings of Anglicans in Harare and the countryside ‘mirrors the persecution of Christians of the early church, and in this context we remind the perpetrators that then, as now, God still triumphs over evil.’

On 20 June the Church Times carried a long report on the harassment of Christian students, NGO workers and clergy after the suspension of the activities of all food aid agencies by government in mid June. It quoted Useni Sibanda of the Christian Alliance: ‘We have hunger here and things are just getting worse. The most vulnerable will be the most affected ... They are totally dependent on the food agencies’. It also quoted the Archbishop of Cape Town, Thabo Makgoba, declaring after a visit to Zimbabwe that the country was now a police state. Finally it quoted a delegation of Zimbabwean...
Churchwomen to the World Council of Churches in Geneva. ‘We are watching a silent genocide of the poor and powerless, due to politically induced murders, criminal actions and the collapse of basic services.’

Reports by Election Observers of the June presidential re-run

ZANU/PF overplayed its hand in its use of electoral violence. As many human rights reports note, unlike previous uses of political terror, this time there was no letting up in the days before the re-run vote. African observers could see for themselves the intimidation and harassment that was taking place, often in front of their eyes and sometimes directed against them. As a result the election was declared illegitimate even by those who had been allowed to observe it. No nation has recognized the legitimacy of the June re-run election.

The Botswana Observer Team were the most outspoken. On July 27 2008 they issued a statement. Botswana had provided 50 of the 413 SADC observers, drawn from all three parties represented in the Assembly, civic bodies, civil servants and academics. Its team ‘were able to cover all 10 provinces of Zimbabwe’. It found that Zimbabwean state TV and other media denied coverage to the MDC-T; that postal voting by police took place secretly and in the presence of Commanding Officers who ordered their subordinates to vote for ZANU/PF on pain of dismissal; that MDC rallies were ‘systematically disrupted’, the Botswana team and other SADC observers seeing for themselves on 22 June the breaking up of a Tsvangarai ‘Star rally’ by youths in ZANU/PF regalia, who beat and chased those attending while the police stood by. ZANU/PF youth ‘mounted illegal road blocks, forcing people to attend ZANU/PF rallies and had bases where they tortured perceived opponents under the guise of re-educating them’. The team observed a high level of intimidation and politically motivated violence that escalated with the approach of the run-off elections leading to injuries to persons, internal and external displacements of people, abduction, loss of lives, theft and looting. In short, the mayhem observed by the team had the effect of depriving the people of Zimbabwe [of] the opportunity to fully participate in the electoral process.’

‘Some Observers were subjected to harassment. On different occasions, some members of our team were chased away from rallies ... In some instances, Observers were threatened with violence’. They concluded that re-run was not free and fair but fatally compromised by ‘atrocities’.

The BBC reported the overall SADC findings on 30 June. They were briefer and less cogent than the Botswana statement but found that ‘the elections did not represent the will of the people of Zimbabwe.’ There was ‘politically-motivated violence, intimidation and displacements’. The Pan-African Parliament observers issued an interim statement on 30 June. It had deployed sixteen teams to all ten provinces. It found the ‘prevailing atmosphere tense, hostile and volatile’ with ‘high levels of intimidation, violence, displacements of people, abductions, and loss
of life.’ It saw traces of violence in all the provinces visited, with houses burnt down and people badly wounded. It ‘visited various locations of the evicted and displaced’. It also visited ‘aggrieved/bereaved families’ and ‘attended the funeral of one victim.’ ‘Political tolerance in Zimbabwe has deteriorated to the lowest ebb in recent history … neighbours have turned enemies, Zimbabwean against Zimbabwean’. In comments to reporters, the Chairman of the PAP team, Marwick Khumalo, spoke of a woman whose hands and feet were cut off – ‘she was chopped’ – and then thrown into her blazing house. This was only one of ‘so many horrendous stories’.

**State suppression of data on violence.**

Despite the observations of the African election observers the Mugabe regime proclaimed its own legitimacy and sought to suppress and refute documented allegations of violence. Botswana’s own condemnations were dismissed in the state press on the ground that President Khama was half British. Meanwhile action was taken against Zimbabwean activists.

On 25 July the *Herald* reported that Peter Muchengeti, regional manager of the Civic Trust, had been arrested ‘for peddling malicious falsehoods to the international media and hostile nations to Zimbabwe in a bid to portray the country as lawless.’ A document alleging ‘that ZANU/PF was perpetrating violence in the Midlands Province was seized together with diskettes and cassettes. The document was entitled ‘Blood by Tracks in Rural Midlands’ and had been sent to the Voice of America ‘pirate radio’. The Police said that they had received no reports of the incidents recorded. On the 26 July the *Herald* reported that the chairman of Transparency and University of Zimbabwe Politics Professor, John Makumbe, had ‘failed to substantiate claims of post June 27 presidential run-off violence admitting that he was relying on reports from a foreign pirate radio station and a foreign newspaper’.

On 31 July the *Zimbabwe Independent* reported that Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions President, Lovemore Matombo, and Secretary-General, Wellington Chibebe, were facing charges ‘of spreading falsehoods prejudicial to the state’. They had been arrested on May 8 and held for eleven days in jail before being bailed. They were charged with ‘inciting the public to rise against the government’ by telling a May Day rally that teachers in Guruve had been killed by ZANU/PF.

**Allegations Against the British Government**

During all this time the Zimbabwean government and the state media persistently denied any responsibility for the violence and blamed the MDC-T for attacks on ZANU/PF members. Allegedly MDC-T had a secret plan to form and arm terror cells, to dress its members in ZANU/PF or army regalia, and to carry out ‘dirty trick’ operations based on those conducted by the notorious Rhodesian unit, the Selous Scouts in the 1970s. The atrocities now being reported, it was said, were so horrendous that their only parallel was the Selous Scouts operations and clearly the Scouts were back. British ‘blood money’ had been paid to fund these operations. Yet
none of the Reports summarised above found any trace of such operations and police arrests and charges have produced no result. Desperate to find some genuine Rhodesian agents, the police raided the army veterans’ club, The Memorable Order of the Tin Hats, in Harare, finding, it was reported, dozens of weapons. But the weapons, like the old Rhodesian veterans who drank in the club, turned out to be antiques.

Lack of evidence did not hamper Robert Mugabe’s attacks on Britain in his election speeches. On March 27 he told a rally in Bindura that ‘the British were sending in clandestine operatives in a bid to compromise the peace and security situation’, including members of the SAS and Special Air Service. The MDC ‘might bring in arms caches or anything, and land, you know, in hidden places … The enemy has lots of plans against us’. (Herald, 28 March 2008). He was still attacking Britain in the run-off campaign. On June 19 the Chronicle carried a long report of Mugabe’s speech at Manama in Matabeleland South:

The British realized that they could not argue with us on the land issue and hatched a plan to rope in their allies into the dispute by fabricating excuses such as allegations that there was no democracy in Zimbabwe, no rule of law, no freedom.

Hakuna democracy. Was there freedom when maBritish ruled this country? Did they give you democracy? We had no vote at all … We figured that the only way we can now win, the only language which the settlers and the British understand is the language of the

bullet … Britain are the creators of the MDC to fight the revolutionary party of Mugabe and Nkomo.

Even after the Memorandum of Understanding was signed between ZANU/PF and the MDC these allegations continued. On July 26 in the Herald George Charamba, Mugabe’s information secretary, writing under his pen name, Nathaniel Manheru, repeated that the MDC was ‘an all-British company’. According to Charamba, the British tried, but failed, to dictate the terms of the Memorandum. There was:

Redhot anger in London and Washington … Chapter 7 of the UN Charter under which Britain, through the US and smaller states which sponsored the resolution against Zimbabwe in the Security Council is a war segment of the UN charter. Britain was and is ready to go to war over Zimbabwe, against Zimbabwe. The resolution was meant to be a phased declaration of war, adorned with a patina of international legitimacy. Had the resolution succeeded, Britain would have fought a second colonization war here, in the full joy of a UN mandate … a righteous war to unrighteous ends. That means the UN would have been complicit in inaugurating Berlin Conference 2 … But the message had gone home. Britain was and is ready for a dire decision against Zimbabwe … With Mugabe and Tsvangarai sharing lunch and thoughts Britain and her overriding interests were
temporarily impotent. The question is whether the British are permanently shut out ... The British are all out to wreck the project towards settlement here.

Mugabe’s speech at Heroes’ Acre on August 11 repeated this message.

.....[Editor’s Note: 15 pages omitted for space reasons]

I have tried to provide an objective assessment of the situation in Zimbabwe and to answer your specific questions. In doing so I have drawn on my knowledge of the facts and in full recognition that my responsibility is to the court.

Terence Ranger, D.Phil., D.Litt., FBA
Emeritus Professor
University of Oxford

To continue the tribute:

If you would like to add your own tribute to Terry Ranger to this issue, please read the call for tributes below and send us what you want to add, this edition will be updated in the future on the ACAS blog.

The Association of Concerned African Scholars (ACAS, founded in 1977 by scholars to organize scholarly analysis and action toward moving U.S. policy in directions more sympathetic to African interests) is putting together a tribute publication celebrating the life and work of Terence O. Ranger who passed away peacefully on January 3, 2015.

Teresa Barnes, Peter Limb, and Tim Scarnecchia would appreciate your sending your tribute/reflection piece/remembrance to us. We know that Terry touched the lives and helped advance the careers of many students and scholars around the world, and that his work contributed to the development of a counter-narrative to Eurocentric African studies, so we would like to hear from you and also ask that you share this invitation with others who you think would like to write something for this ACAS Bulletin and blog.

Please send your writing to either <tscarnec@kent.edu> or <limb@mail.lib.msu.edu>

For more information on the Association of Concerned Africa Scholars, please visit our website at:

http://concernedafricascholars.org/