



## IARA YEAR REPORT 2007

### Change of name

2007 was an important year for the IARA research unit. First of all, the former Africa Research Centre changed its name and logo to become the **Institute for Anthropological Research in Africa (IARA)**. Like the ARC before, IARA continues to be committed to anthropological research in and on Africa. It therefore favours participatory and sited research ('fieldwork'), qualitative case-studies and contemporary historiography to shed an anthropological light on the social and political challenges facing Africans today.

### Expansion

Together with this change of name, the Institute expanded, both in terms of its research capacity, as well as in terms of the size of its teaching staff:

#### (1) Teaching staff

Dr. **Mark Breusers** joined our staff as a part-time lecturer (in charge of a course on *Economic Anthropology*). Another part-time lecturer who joined the IARA staff is Dr. **Knut Graw**, with a new course on *Anthropology and Islam*, offered for the first time to students this year.

The IARA academic staff was further expanded with a new assistant position, taken up by **Dominique Joos**. She started working with Prof. Ann Cassiman in October 2007.

#### (2) Researchers

January 2007 saw the start of the Kunene Borderlands project: *Beyond the Border: the political ecology of the Kunene frontier, 1850-1950* (promotor Prof. Steven Van Wolputte). Funded by the Fund for Scientific Research-Flanders, two researchers with 4-year full-time doctoral fellowships started their research within this Kunene project: Dra. **Laura Bleckmann**, who is doing her research in Namibia, and Dra. **Els Hoorelbeke**, who is working on the border between Namibia and Angola.

In October 2007, then, two more new researchers joined the Institute: Dra. **Kristien Geenen**, who is carrying out field research in Butembo (Democratic Republic of Congo), and Drs. **Frederik Lamote** (who has started to work in Bawku and other small towns in Ghana). Both researchers were hired full-time for four years within the framework of a new research project on Secondary Cities in Africa, coordinated by **Filip De Boeck** (promotor), **Steven Van Wolputte** and **Ann Cassiman** (co-promotors). This project started in October 2007 and is financed by the Research Fund of the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL). It gives a new major research impetus to the Institute, in a strategic step towards streamlining and coordinating the research carried out by IARA's members within the field of a more urban oriented anthropology.

In all, the current number of doctoral research projects supervised by IARA staff (De Boeck, Devisch, Van Wolputte, Cassiman) amounts to 15. During 2007 IARA researchers carried out field research in Ghana, DR Congo (Kinshasa, Kahemba, Luambo, Lubumbashi, Butembo), Burkina Faso, Namibia and South Africa.

### Doctoral seminars, guest lectures, conferences organised by IARA

In January 2007, IARA started the year with a two-day doctoral seminar in Uppsala, Sweden. The seminar was jointly organised by IARA (Coordination: Ann Cassiman) and the department of Anthropology of the University of Uppsala. This year's theme was *Ethnographies of Knowledge, and Ethnographic Knowledges*. 4 IARA staff members and 4 doctoral students presented papers. This doctoral seminar was the fourth in a continuing collaboration between the two institutions.

In February 2007, with the financial support of the Fund for scientific research, Flanders, IARA hosted an international workshop on "beer as a local and transnational commodity in Africa". Organised by Prof. **Steven Van Wolputte**, this workshop concentrated on the role of beer in Africa's recent past and present. Taking beer and drinking as a tangible lead to study agency and subjectivity, this workshop's ambition was to explore new, exciting and especially different pathways to study the cultural, social and political dynamics of colonialism and modernity. Other than IARA-members **Ann Cassiman**, **Peter Crossman**, **Steven Van Wolputte** and **Filip De Boeck** speakers included: **Gregor Dobler** (Ethnology Seminar, Basel, Switzerland); **Mattia Fumanti**, Institute for Law, Politics and Justice, University of Keele (UK); **Simon Heap**, Global Research Portfolio Co-ordinator, Plan International, London (UK); **Sigrun Helmfrid**, Department of social anthropology, Stockholm

University (Sweden); **Detlev Krige** Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER), University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa; **Patrick McAllister**, Department of Sociology and Anthropology University of Canterbury (NZ); **Jonathan Roberts** Hartwick College, NY (USA); **Ute Rösenthaler**, J.W.G.-Universität Frankfurt, Institut für Historische Ethnologie (GER); and **Jacqueline Woodfork**, Whitman College, Washington, (USA).

In November 2007, **Steven Van Wolputte** –who acted as the president of the Belgian Association of Africanists (BVA) between 2005 and 2007 – and IARA also organised a second international conference, in collaboration with the BVA. The conference, which was hosted by the Africa Museum in Tervuren, had as its theme “Borderlands and Frontiers in Africa”. The event was sponsored by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO-Vlaanderen), the Royal Museum for Central Africa, and by the IARA research project “Beyond the border”. **Filip De Boeck** delivered the colloquium’s keynote address. Other participants included : **Oliver Bakewell**, Oxford University, United Kingdom, **Ira Dworkin**, Gettysburg College, PA, USA, **Camille Lefebvre**, CEMAF, France, **Gillian Mathys**, Univ. Ghent, Belgium, **Cristiana Panella**, Royal Museum for Central Africa Tervuren, Belgium, **Timothy Raeymaekers**, Univ. Ghent, Belgium, **Ana Cristina Roque**, Tropical Research Institute, Lisbon, Portugal, **Kristof Titeca**, Univ. Ghent, Belgium, **Eline Versluys**, University Antwerp, Belgium, **Petra Vervust**, Univ. Ghent, Belgium, **Koen Vlassenroot**, Univ. Ghent, Belgium, **Sarah Whiteford**, University St. Andrews, United Kingdom, **Wolfgang Zeller**, University of Helsinki, Finland, and **Clemens Zobel**, Coimbra University, Portugal.

In December 2007, **Ann Cassiman** obtained a grant from the Fund for Scientific Research Flanders and co-organized the APAD international conference ‘Development, Liberalism and Modernity: Trajectories for an Anthropology of Social Change’. The conference was hosted by the Royal Museum for Central Africa ,Tervuren and the Catholic University of Louvain-la-Neuve, from 13 to 15 December 2007.

In October and December 2007, two doctoral seminars and two workshops were organised as part of IARA’s secondary cities project. The first seminar and workshop meeting was given in October by Professor **Dominique Malaquais** (CNRS, Paris), who presented parts of her forthcoming book on urban life in Douala; the second seminar and workshop was presented and directed by Prof. **Steve Pile** (Geography, Open University, UK) in December 2007. Prof. Pile presented material from his recent book *‘Real Cities. Modernity, Space and the Phantasmagorias of City Life’* (Sage: 2005). Another speaker invited by IARA in November 2007 was Professor **Michael Lambek**

(London School of Economics, U. of Toronto), who examined a set of Malagasy myths and associated performances of spirit possession in which violence against women is linked to questions of childbirth and royal succession.

Furthermore doctoral seminars were given by the following IARA doctoral students: **Julie Poppe** (October 2007), **Jeroen Cuvelier** (November 2007), **Tom Devriendt** (December 2007)

Finally, within the frame of the CADES courses following international guest speakers were invited and gave lectures for IARA staff and students: Prof. **Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan** and Prof. **Mahamane Tidjani Alou** (LASDEL, Niamey), Prof. **Sten Hagberg** (U. of Uppsala).

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### Institutional academic affiliations

In an effort to expand its scope and embed its research activities in a wider network of international contacts and collaborations, IARA strengthened its ties with other Africanist research institutions in Europe and Africa.

IARA was accepted as an associated member of the European AEGIS network and will become the organisation’s gateway to Africanist studies in Belgium once it has obtained full membership in September 2008. AEGIS stands for the Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies (<http://www.aegis-eu.org>) and constitutes a network connecting some of the most prominent European Africanist Research Centres (Barcelona | Basel | Bayreuth | Bordeaux | Copenhagen | Edinburgh | Göteborg | Hamburg | Leiden | Leipzig | Lisbon | London | Mainz | Naples | Oxford | Paris | Porto | Trondheim | Uppsala).

**Ann Cassiman** was voted into the board of APAD, the Euro-African Association for the Anthropology of Social Change and Development. APAD is a wide-ranging network promoting dialogue between African and European researchers in the social sciences as well as with developments agents. Initially devoted to the empirical studies of interactions brought about by development, APAD’s approach has evolved towards research regarding social change on the African continent in its broadest sense. Through the APAD membership IARA will be able to participate in the yearly Doctoral Schools organised by APAD.

As a member of the board of the International African Institute (IAI –London), and a member of the editorial board of *Africa*, the IAI’s journal, **Filip De Boeck** attended the IAI’s annual board meeting, which took place in Leiden, The Netherlands, in July 2007.

**Filip De Boeck** became a member of the international editorial board of the new journal *African and Black Diaspora. An International Journal*. Published by Routledge, this journal launched its first issue in January 2008.

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### IARA Visitors

In the Fall of 2007, IARA welcomed **Joshua Walker**, a PhD. student from the Anthropology Department of the University of Chicago (supervisor Prof. Jean Comaroff) who joined the Institute for a trimester as a visiting fellow in order to prepare his research on diamond mining in Mbuji Mayi (RD Congo).

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### Awards

On April 4 2007, **René Devisch**, founder of the former Africa Research Centre, and a current IARA staff member, was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Kinshasa, D.R. Congo.

**Filip De Boeck** became a full member of the Belgian Royal Academy of Overseas Sciences (KAOW/ARSOM).

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### Lectures and conferences given by IARA members

#### *Ann Cassiman*

Mothers and migrant daughters: Absence, presence and migration in rural Northern Ghana. Paper presented at the AEGIS European Conference on African Studies, African Studies Centre, Leiden, The Netherlands, 11-14 July, 2007.

Sounds and Visions of Rural Dwelling: Representing the Rhythms of the House in Northern Ghana. Paper presented at the panel session (Im)possibilities of Representing Cultural Production in Postcolonial Africa: Still Images, Architecture, Video, Live Performances (chaired by F. De Boeck), New York, 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, 19 October 2007.

Bodies of belonging. Rhythms of a Kasena house. Lecture for the "Cycle de conférences en anthropologie du CAC (Centre d'Anthropologie Culturelle), ULB", 19 November 2007.

Delayed Modernity or Alternative Traditions? Temporalities of Development in Rural Northern Ghana. Paper presented at the APAD Conference,

Royal Museum of Central Africa, 13 Dec 2007.

#### *Jeroen Cuvelier*

'Reflections on masculinities in the wage labour economy of late colonial Katanga', paper presented at the AEGIS European Conference on African Studies in Leiden, 11-14 July 2007

'The life and times of Patrice Mwesa: a garment trader in the Katangese Copperbelt', paper presented at the Central African Routes & Transport workshop, CNWS, Research School for African Asican and Amerindian Studies, African Studies Centre, Leiden, 11-12 October 2007.

#### *Filip De Boeck*

The Urban factor: anthropological perspectives. Discussant remarks, International Conference 'The Urban (F)actor: Challenges to Support Sustainable Urban Development.. Organised by the Belgian Technical Cooperation, Brussels, 18 December 2007.

The Case of Kahemba: Managing Cross-border Conflicts. Paper presented at the international conference 'Democratic Republic of Congo and its Neighbours. The Regional Integration Challenge in Central Africa. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Egmont Palace, Brussels, 12 December 2007 (Convener: K. Vlassenroot, U. Gent).

Notes on the Invisible City. Keynote lecture delivered at the International Conference 'African Perspectives. Dialogues on Urbanism and Architecture. Faculty of Architecture, U. of Delft, Netherlands, 8 December 2007.

Between Shadow and Line: Re-Imagining the Local. Invited Lecture for the Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden, 6 December 2007.

Borders and Frontiers in Africa: Reflections from Anthropology. Keynote lecture at the International Conference 'Borders and Frontiers in Africa', Royal Museum of Central Africa, Tervuren, November 23, 2007.

(Im)possibilities of Representing Cultural Production in Postcolonial Africa: Still Images, Architecture, Video, Live Performances. Panel organised and chaired by Filip De Boeck, Bogumil Jewsiewicki (U. Laval) and Enid Schildkrout (Museum of African Art, New York) for the 50<sup>th</sup> meeting of the African Studies Association, New York, 19 Oct 2007.

The World According to Bylex: Visual Representations of Local Imaginations in Kinshasa. Paper read at the 50<sup>th</sup> African Studies Association Meeting, New York, 19 October 2007

Repenser l'urbain entre l'ombre et la ligne. Paper read at the International Conference on "Histoire Urbaine en Afrique Centrale: Lieux, Regards et Espaces. Nouvelles méthodologies dans l'historiographie des villes", University of Kinshasa, RDCongo, Sept 17, 2007 (Conveners: Prof. J. Sabakinu (UNIKIN), Nancy Rose Hunt (U. of Michigan), J. Lagae (U. of Gent), Bruno De Meulder (U. of Leuven)).

Re-imagining the Local. Between the Shadow and the Line. Paper given at the international workshop on Re-inhabiting the Local, organized by Prof. Veena Das & Professor Deborah Poole, Anthropology Dept, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 15-16 May 2007.

Death and Development. How the local management of death impacts upon development and social changes. Debate with A. Abassi and Filip De Boeck, Interfaculty Debate Series (PF91), KULeuven, March 13, 2007.

An Anthropology of Lines to Read the City. Guest seminar at the Open University, Milton Keynes, UK, February 21, 2007 [upon invitation by Professor Jennifer Robinson, Dept of Geography, Open University].

On the Urban Imagination. Invited Lecture for the 'Urban Salon', King's College, Dept of Geography, London, February 19, 2007 [Organised by Professor Jennifer Robinson. Discussant: Prof. Steve Pile]

Death, the Occult and the City: Towards a Shadow-graphy of Urban Life in Central Africa. Lecture for the Research Seminar on Anthropological Theory, Dept of Anthropology, Seligman Library, London School of Economics, London, February 9, 2007. [Upon invitation by Professor Michael Lambek]

The Occult in Urban Central Africa. Paper for the research workshop "Confrontation and Conviviality: Negotiating Worldviews, Spiritualities and Everyday Lives in Colonial and Postcolonial Congo. Schaeffergården and Nationalmuseet in Copenhagen, Denmark, 12-14 January, 2007.

### *Rene Devisch*

Buitentalige' glossolalie in Kinshasa's gezingskerken, Seminar Psychoanalytisch Studiecentrum Diest, 9 March 2007.

Qu'est-ce qu'un anthropologue?, Lecture at the occasion of honorary doctorate, Université de Kinshasa, 4 april 2007.

Van basaal ritme naar rituele heling bij de Yaka van zuidwest Kongo en Kinshasa, Paper presented at the 'Nationale studiedag voor muziektherapie', KULeuven Universitair Psychiatrisch Centrum Kortenberg, 25 May 2007.

Vader betekenaars, voorouders en moederlijke oom in de onzegbare verweving van verlangen en Wet, intercultureel benaderd. Paper presented at the Nationale studiedag Belgische School voor Psychoanalyse -Ecole belge de psychanalyse, Oostende, 16 June 2007.

The paternal metaphor revisited in post-Freudian French religious anthropology. Paper presented at the International Symposium on (Post-)Freudian psychoanalytic approaches to religious phenomena, Amsterdam, Convener prof. Jacob van Belzen, Theologie- en religiestudies Universiteit Amsterdam, 16-19 July 2007.

Dream as authoritative source of relationality in peri-urban Kinshasa, paper presented at the AAA (American Anthropological Association) Annual Meetings, Washington, Session on Reconstituting Political and Legal Anthropology in Africa, Conveners Dr. Knut C. Myhre & Dr. Todd Sanders, 29 November 2007.

Vader betekenaars bij Freud en zijn franstalige, Afrika-relevante blikverruimers, Paper at the Seminarie Psychoanalytisch Studiecentrum Diest, 14 December 2007.

### *Knut Graw*

Barça am Barzakh: Life Histories and Social Theory from the African-European Borderzone. Paper presented at the International Conference Migration, Islam and Masculinities, Carl von Ossietzky University, Oldenburg, April 12-14, 2007.

Divination as Access to the World: Reflections on Globalization, Migration, and Subjectivity in Senegambian Divinatory Praxis. Paper presented at the Cadbury Interdisciplinary Conference 'Travel, Environment and Local Knowledge', Centre of West African Studies, University of Birmingham, May 18-19, 2007.

Divination as Visionary Praxis & Dream and Imaginary as Space of Cultural Mediation, Double presentation at the SIAS Institute 2007/2008 'The Vision Thing', Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS), Stanford, June 25-July 6, 2007.

Divination as Hermeneutic Encounter: Understanding, Dialogue and the Intersubjective Constitution of Knowledge in Senegambian Divinatory Praxis, contribution to the panel 'Networks of Knowledge across Africa and beyond', organized by Kai Kresse, 17th Afrikanistentag, University of Vienna, July 23-25, 2007.

### *Katrien Pype*

"Mimesis in Motion. Embodied Experiences of Producing and Consuming Popular Culture in Kinshasa" Presentation at the conference 'Aesthetic

and Epistemological Traces of Congo: Art, History and Popular Culture in Central-Africa (International multi-disciplinary workshop at the Museum of Cultural History and Voksenasen Cultural Centre), Oslo, September 15 2007.

### **Koen Stroeken**

'Why meaning is the harder matter: a Boh(e)mian anthropology'. Oral presentation at 3rd Quantum Mind congress, Salzburg 17-20 July, 2007.

'Immunity through contagion: streetwise philosophy, hip hop and Tanzania's new generation'. Invited speaker at Ethnologie Institutskolloquium "Kunst und populäre Kultur in Afrika und anderswo", Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz. 12 June 2007.

### **Steven Van Wolputte**

Let us go back to the time when we wore skins: cattle and commodity in North-West Namibia. Central African Routes & Transport: A workshop on the socio-cultural interplay between people, migration, and technology, c. 1000 – 2007 A.D. CNWS, Research School for African Asian and Amerindian studies, African Studies Centre, Leiden, 11 – 12 October 2007.

Neither this nor that. Reflections on cattle, colonialism, and contradiction amongst the Ovahimba in north-western Namibia. ASC Seminars, Leiden, March 8 2007.

Beer, bullets, beads and bulls: reflections on an imaginary borderland. International workshop "Beer as a local and transnational commodity", Leuven, 15-16 February 2007.

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### **Publications by IARA members**

**Bleckmann, Laura E.** (2007). *Zur Verraumlichung von kollektiver Erinnerung: Landschaften in Preisgedichten der Herero/Himba im Nordwesten Namibias*. Köln: Kölner Ethnologische Beifriige Heft 21.

Bleckmann, Laura E. (2007). Poetry, Landscape and the spatialisation of collective memory in Otjiherero praise poems. In *Atlas of cultural and Environmental Change In Arid Africa*. Africa Praehistorica 21, edited by O. Bubenzer, A. Bolten. & F. Darius, pp. 116-117. K`In: Heinrich Barth-Institut.

**Cassiman, Ann** (2007) Home and Away: Mental Geographies of Young Migrant Workers and their Belonging to the Family House in Northern Ghana. Housing, Theory and Society [Published electronically May 2007; will be published in a paper version early 2008]

**De Boeck, Filip** (2007) Youth, Death and the Urban Imagination. A Case from Kinshasa. *Koninklijke Academie voor overzeese wetenschappen / Académie royale des sciences d'outre-mer. Mededelingen der zittingen/Bulletin des séances*. 52 (2): 113-125.

De Boeck, Filip (2007) Das Lachen Kinshasas. Eine postkoloniale Stadt und Ihre Architektur aus Worten und Körpern. *Lettre International* 76: 38-46.

AbdouMaliq Simone, Filip De Boeck & Vyjayanthi Rao, (2007), Non-Aligned Spaces. Conversation between AbdouMaliq Simone, Filip De Boeck and Vyjayanthi Rao. *Perspecta. The Yale Architectural Journal* (39) (Special issue on Re-urbanism. Transforming Capitals).

**Devisch, René** (2007) The University of Kinshasa: From Lovanium to Unikin. In: M.O.Afolayan (ed.) *Higher education in postcolonial Africa: Paradigms of development, decline and dilemmas*. Trenton, Africa world press, pp.17-38.

Devisch, René (2007) A psychoanalytic revisiting of the fieldwork and the clinical encounter. In: J. Mimica (ed.), *Explorations in psychoanalytic ethnography*. New York: Berghahn., pp. 121-147.

Devisch, René (2007) Feeling and borderlinking in Yaka healing arts. In: Roland Littlewood (ed.), *On knowing and not-knowing in the anthropology of medicine*. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, pp.117-135.

Devisch, René (2007) Intercultural borderlinking, intersubjectivity, and Bantu healing cults. *Medische antropologie* 19: 97-114.

Devisch René (2007) Van ritme naar rituele heling bij de Yaka van zuidwest Kongo en Kinshasa. *Nieuwsbrief BMT (Beroepsvereniging van muziektherapeuten - Leuven)* 9, nr 19, nov. 2007: 20-27.

**Graw, Knut** (2005) The Logic of Shells: Knowledge and Lifeworld Poiesis in Senegambian Cowrie Divination' *Mande Studies* 7: 21-48. (Published in October 2007)

**Pype, Katrien** (2007), Fighting Boys, Strong Men and Gorillas. Notes on the Imagination of Masculinities in Kinshasa. *Africa*, 77 (2): 250-271.

Pype, Katrien (2007, in press), "We Need to Open Up the Country? Development and the Christian Key Scenario in the Social Space of Kinshasa's Teleserials." *JAMS - Journal of African Media Studies*, vol. 1, No.2

**Stroeken, Koen** (2007) Jezelf genezen door anderen te verzorgen: een Afrikaanse formule voor

groepstherapie. *Psychiatrie en verpleging*, Vol. 83 (3): 186-195.

**Van Wolputte, Steven** (2007). Cattle works: livestock policy, apartheid and development in Northwest Namibia, c. 1920-1980. *African Studies*, Vol. 66 (1): 103-128.

Van Wolputte, Steven (2006), The Political ecology of water in Northwest Namibia. *Mededelingen der zittingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Overzeese Wetenschappen*, 52 (4), pp.459-477. (published November 2007).

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