**Agents of Change: Print Culture and Publishing in Southern Africa**

**23rd – 24th May 2018**

**University of Pretoria**

8.30-9.00 Coffee and registration

9.00 Welcome by Caroline Davis and Elizabeth Le Roux

9.15 Keynote Talk: Mpuka Radinku, Executive Director, Publishers’ Association of South Africa

10.00 Panel Session: Publishing in South Africa: Key Challenges and Ways Forward

Chair: Elizabeth Le Roux

* Veronica Klipp, Wits University Press
* Thabiso Mahlape, Jacana Media
* Mpuka Radinku, Publishers’ Association of South Africa

11.00 Coffee

11.30 ‘What Charlie Immelman read: circulating fiction at the Cape, ca. 1885-1930’,

Archie Dick, University of Pretoria

12.00 ‘Woman Readers and Writers in the African Press: The Case of the *Bantu World’*

Corinne Sandwith, University of Pretoria

12.30 ‘Printing Black Radicalism: South Africa in the 1920s’

Khwezi Mkhize, University of Cape Town

1.00 Lunch

2.00 Contemporary Small Magazines: Corridors of Storytelling

Christopher Ouma, University of Cape Town

2.30 Ravan Press and the challenges of researching recent publishing history

Beth Le Roux, University of Pretoria

3.00 Indispensable finds and disposable acquisitions: knowledge, ideology, agency and the shelf-life of (some) books in my university library

Lize Kriel, University of Pretoria

3.30 Tea

4.00 Panel Session: Publishing in Zimbabwe and Tanzania: Key Challenges and Ways Forward

Chair: Caroline Davis

* Zamda Geuza, University of Dar es Salaam
* Nda Dlodlo, National University of Science and Technology, Bulawayo
* Mass Tapfuma, National University of Science and Technology, Bulawayo

5.00- 5.30 Launch of ‘Print Culture and Publishing in Southern Africa’ special issue, *Journal of Southern African Studies* introduced by Archie Dick, Elizabeth Le Roux, Caroline Davis (guest editors)

**5.30-6.30 Wine Reception**

**Day 2: Workshop: Future Research Directions**

8.30-9.00 Coffee

**9.00-10.00 Panel 1: Making an Impact**

Chair: Archie Dick

Veronica Klipp, Thabiso Mahlape, Khwezi Mkhize, Samantha Buitendach, Jana Klingenberg

* Can research in print culture studies help address key challenges in knowledge production and access in Southern Africa?
* How can we deal with histories of authorship, reading and publishing in a manner that work towards greater justice in the present and future?
* Ideas for addressing problems of racial and linguistic inequalities in the publishing industry in South Africa?
* Public engagement: how can our research reach a wider audience?
* How can partnerships between publishers and researchers be usefully established and consolidated?

**10.00-11.00 Panel 2: Developing Print Culture and Publishing Studies**

Chair: Beth Le Roux

Ndabezinhle L. Dlodlo, Zamda Geuza, Laetitia Cassells, Colleen Dawson

* How can university programmes in print culture and publishing studies be developed and supported?
* How can further research and scholarship be encouraged and developed in this field of study? (e.g. MA research, PhD research and post-doctoral research)
* Problems and advantages of interdisciplinarity
* What type of international research networks might be useful? How can sustainable collaborations be formed?

**11.00-11.30 Coffee**

**11.30-12.45 New Priorities and New Directions**

Chair: Caroline Davis

Panel: Lize Kriel, Mass Tapfuma, Christopher Ouma, Beth Le Roux

* What are the key priorities for new research projects in print culture studies?
* Who are the possible partners for future research projects and networks ?
* Ideas for new funding bids and for shaping new collaborative research projects.

**12.45Concluding Comments**

**1.00-2.00 Lunch**

**Conference Close**

**Abstracts and Biographies**

**What Charlie Immelman read: circulating fiction at the Cape, ca. 1885-1930**

**Archie L Dick, University of Pretoria**

J. M. Coetzee encouraged his students in 1980 to, among other things, investigate the location of bookstores in the Cape Peninsula, and the library services in the black residential areas of the Cape. He forewarned them that his *Book in Africa* course would involve ‘bibliographical ferreting’ and ‘practical investigative research’. Those activities are applied in this presentation to gain a general understanding about how, and how much, fiction circulated at the Cape between 1885 and 1930. Carel Pieter Immelman’s reading during these years also tells the wider story of booksellers and rural public libraries during the transition of the Cape from a colony to a province in the Union of South Africa. Although this is still a work under construction, it reveals insights into the formal and informal circulation of books and ideas, and characterises the research sites for collecting evidence.

*Professor Archie L Dick* is Head of the Department of Information Science, and Chairperson of the School of Information Technology at the University of Pretoria. He previously taught at the University of the Western Cape, and the University of South Africa. From 2009 to 2011 he was the Deputy Chairperson of the International Federation of Library Association’s committee of Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression, and he was the Chairperson of the National Council of Library and Information Services (NCLIS) in South Africa from 2012 to 2014. He has been a Visiting Professor at Wayne State University and the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, and an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Centre for the History of Print and Digital Culture. His most recent book is *The Hidden History of South Africa's Book and Reading Cultures* (University of Toronto Press, 2013).

**Dr (Rev) Ndabezinhle Luke Dlodlo** was educated and worked in Midlands as a Teacher at Amaveni Primary School, Gresham Primary School, Mashoko Mission Primary School and Mokopane Primary School in Ramotswa Botswana [during 1964 to 1974]. He obtained a Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Government and Politics from Brunel University (UK) in 1979 and joined Longman Zimbabwe as Editor and Publisher in 1979. He obtained a Masters Degree in Public Administration [MPA] from the University of Zimbabwe in 1993 and became MD of Longman Zimbabwe the following Year [1994]. Hetransferred to South Africa as Regional Director for New Companies Development in 1999 and retired from Longman companies in 2004. While in South Africa, he obtained Distance Learning Doctor of Divinity Degree and was Ordained as a Reverend of the United Christian Fellowship. He joined NUST (National University of Science and Technology, Bulawayo) in 2005 as a Lecturer specifically to start a Department of Publishing Studies and a publishing company called NUST Press P/L.

**Indispensable finds and disposable acquisitions: knowledge, ideology, agency and the shelf-life of (some) books in my university library**

**Lize Kriel, University of Pretoria**

Quite by accident I came across the disposed files with correspondence of the long-since dissolved Dutch-Afrikaans Institute at the University of Pretoria. They give an impression of the particular care that had been taken by the Institute from the 1960s to the 1980s to acquire appropriate and representative books for their library. The acquisitions seem to have been driven by a belief in the significance of links with the Dutch homeland for the maintenance of Afrikaner culture and civilisation. When the Institute was dissolved, their book collection was integrated into the University of Pretoria Library system. Being a utility rather than a deposit library, university librarians have over the years considered discarding many of these books which had fallen into disuse. The fact that what at some point had been accumulated with so much discernment had apparently become so utterly obsolete within the span of a few generations, raises questions about the roles of ideology, shelf space, funding and agency in the shaping of a university library’s offering. These questions press themselves on me as a special category of library user: the academic staff member who has significant input in what the library will order related to my field of teaching and research.

The biggest challenge perhaps is that it is not necessarily so obvious at a particular moment in time what will become disposable and obsolete in the future, even if the contemporary new knowledge order might be as blatantly obvious as a more Africa-focused, decolonial approach to knowledge production. There are, after all, serendipitous donations to the library which have fermented into increasingly usable resources as time went by: praise poems and ethnographies typed up in the indigenous languages, as collected by the State Ethnologist N.J. van Warmelo in the 1930s and 1940s, amongst other things. There are also collections of essays and fiction in European languages containing valuable chunks of precolonial history, African agency, and perhaps even African-European conviviality, worthy of being chiselled out of the more conspicuous ore of colonial discourse. With increasing possibilities for digitising archival records, periodicals and books, academic users of information like myself, are increasingly being involved in decisions on prioritising and disseminating information. Pondering for a moment about what had been so indispensable for an earlier generation of Afrikaner scholars, and what had become so disposable for the next generation, laying bare their ideologies and presumptions about their responsibilities for posterity, may perhaps guide us to be, if not more visionary, inclusive and responsible, at least more self-conscious and accountable about our own practices as (academic) library users.

*Lize Kriel* was trained in history and now teaches Visual Culture Studies at the University of Pretoria. Most of her research resulted from time spent in the Special Collections Section of the University of Pretoria Library, and various missionary archives. Working in a Visual Arts Department she has also become intrigued by image as text, as well as visual representations of reading and writing.

**Elizabeth le Roux**

**Ravan Press and the challenges of researching recent publishing history**

Historians are accustomed to using archival sources, and in stitching together fragments to create a story about the past. When one is dealing with recent or contemporary history, however, the problem is not fragments, but an abundance of material. In addition, many of the main actors will still be living, and have opinions and perspectives that need to be considered. But this research can be very rewarding, and can have direct relevance to ongoing events. It is also, in a country like South Africa, more common for a historian to be working on a more recent event. In my research on Ravan Press – an anti-apartheid publisher that functioned between 1972 and about 2000 – I have had to learn how to manage issues of writing about business practices when the business still considers this confidential; accessing archives when parts of them are still considered active files; reconciling archival evidence with interview data; dealing with the sensitivities and prejudices of publishers, authors and readers. Through my own experiences, I will consider some of the main challenges and pitfalls, as well as the ways in which this research can contextualise the present and be made relevant for current publishers.

*Elizabeth le Roux* coordinates and lectures in Publishing Studies at the University of Pretoria, and conducts research in the fields of publishing history and book history. She is the author of A social history of the university presses in apartheid South Africa: Between complicity and resistance﻿ (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2016), and with S. Naidu, S of  A Survey of South African Crime Fiction. (Pietermaritzburg: UKZN Press, 2017). She is the co-editor of Book History.

**Printing Black Radicalism: South Africa in the 1920s**

**Khwezi Mkhize, University of Cape Town**

This paper explores black radicalism in printing in South Africa during the 1920s. The interwar period saw the emergence of radical black internationalism in South Africa. In 1919 the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union was formed and during the 1920s the number of black people in the Communist Party of South Africa increased exponentially. While the radicalisation of Africans after the First World War saw the capitalist financing of periodicals such as Umteteli Wa Bantu and The Bantu World, radical black organisation, much like their predecessors, ran smaller printing ventures in accompaniment of their political work. Radical black print culture asks us to consider how we think about publishing at a scale much smaller than mass circulation and in relation to repressive state politics. What is the place of radical black print culture in larger debates about print culture in South Africa? How does it alter how we think about categories such as South Africa and what kinds of imagined communities does it invoke? In this paper I begin to think about these issues. Bio:

*Khwezi Mkhize* is lecturer in the English Department at the University of Cape Town. He received his PhD from the Department of Africana Studies at the University of Pennsylvania in 2015. He is currently working on a book manuscript based on his PhD thesis provisionally titled A Home-Made Empire: South Africa and the Imperium Before World War II.

**Zamda R. Geuza** teaches communication skills, publishing and editing at the University of Dar es Salaam in the Centre for Communications Studies. She hold a B.A Literature and Language Studies (Hons) from the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and an MSc. in Publishing Studies from Moi University, Kenya. She has worked as an assistant sub editor for *The African* newspaper, and has worked in several publishing firms, including the New Habari Corporation and at Mkuki na Nyota Publishers Ltd (2012 - 2013), the leading indigenous publishing company, as an English and Swahili editor and a translator. Her research interests include textbook provision, and the textbook vetting and evaluation process in Tanzania, as well scholarly publishing. Currently, she is carrying out research on enhancing children’s readership. Zamda Geuza has coordinated various publishing projects such as The Mwalimu Nyerere Chair in Pan African Studies books, the Children’s Book Project of Tanzania awards, the Muhimbili & JHPIEGO Reproductive Health Project, The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] Tanzanian Literation Heritage Project, the Amb. Christopher Liundi Book Project, and the Dr. Ediho Lokanga Project.

**Veronica Klipp** has been the publisher at Wits University Press since 2002. In this role she has helped grow the Press into one of the leading scholarly publishers on the continent. Before that she was a commissioning editor at University of Natal Press (now UKZN Press). Her entry into the world of publishing began with the establishment of a small independent press, Gecko Books, that published children’s books in a number of South African languages. Her formal education focussed on literary studies, and she graduated from the University of Cape Town in 1991 with a Master of Arts degree in German literature. Veronica is an elected member of the Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa (CSPiSA), Academy of Science of South Africa. She is currently co-editing a book on the politics of publishing in South Africa with Beth le Roux and Monica Seeber, to be published by UKZN Press in 2019.

**Thabiso Mahlape** holds a Bachelor of Information Science specialising in Publishing from the University of Pretoria. She worked at Jacana Media from 2010 where she honed her skills as publisher with several highly acclaimed bestsellers; *Endings & Beginnings* by Redi Tlhabi, *My Father My Monster* by Mcintosh Polela, Malaika wa Azania’s *Memoirs of a Born Free*, Bonnie Henna’s *Eyebags & Dimples* and Zoleka Mandela’s *When Hope Whispers*. She is now a partner on Jacana’s imprint Blackbird Books. Founded in August of 2015, this is ground-breaking move in the South African literary landscape, offering a pioneering framework for new South African narratives. Mahlape is a columnist for the *Sowetan* and focuses on issues that she and many other women face in South Africa. She is part of the *Mail & Guardian* Top 200 2017.

**Contemporary Small Magazines: Corridors of Storytelling**

**Christopher Ouma, University of Cape Town**

Since the turn of the millennium there has been a resurgence of small magazines in the field of African literary and cultural production. These publications form part of a broader wave of print cultures in the continent, in the form of periodicals, literary magazines, literary journals or cultural magazines. These contemporary publications whose modes of production, circulation and consumption are increasingly visible as part of a re-articulation of contemporary African cultural production, arise out of ‘alternative’ and ‘unofficial’ sites of cultural value. They come out of specific socio-cultural, political and economic conditions of not just production, circulation and consumption but also valuation. Their habitus defines the ways in which Africa’s contemporaneity is visibilised within global imagination. In addition, the magazines have occupied a significant yet understudied position in literary and cultural production in the continent since the turn of the century. This paper seeks to begin engaging with how these magazines have constructed a dominant literary and cultural ecologies around the production and circulation of ‘the idea’ of contemporary Africa, while providing most of the imaginative capital that has given significant life to contemporary African identities.

*Christopher Ouma* holds a Doctorate from the Department of African Literature at University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. He is a senior lecturer in the Department of English at the University of Cape Town. His research and teaching interests include the broader field of contemporary African and African Diasporic literary and cultural production. He is interested in African popular culture, black print cultures particularly small magazines, literary journals and literary periodicals. He has held fellowships at the Open University, Milton Keynes London and University of the Johannesburg. He has co-edited The Spoken Word Project: Stories Travelling through Africa, and recently co-edited a special issue of The Black Scholar titled “After Madiba: Black Studies in South Africa.” He has published a number of books chapters as we as articles in Research in African Literatures, *East African Literary and Cultural Studies*, *Matatu*, *Kunapipi* amongst others. He is currently co-editor of the Journal *Social Dynamics: A Journal of African Studies.*

**Woman Readers and Writers in the African Press: The Case of the *Bantu World***

**Corinne Sandwith**

Some months after its launch in April 1932, the Johannesburg weekly newspaper, the *Bantu World*, published a letter from Mrs Gladys Ramokwena. Describing herself as one of the newspaper’s ‘lady readers’, she notes the absence of articles by women writers and concludes that the number of women readers of the newspaper must also be very small. The next week, in a small insert, the newspaper reported that it did indeed have many women readers, reassuring Ramokwena that it would be ‘only too glad to publish articles from women writers, dealing with the life and problems of their sex’. Sometime later it also launched its own ‘Woman’s Page’, the first of its kind in the history of the black press in South Africa, whose ‘Editress’ was the popular (male) journalist and writer, Rolphes Dhlomo. Ramokwena’s correspondence with *Bantu World* raises questions about the ways in which African women were able to insert themselves into the male-dominated world of commercial black newspapers in early twentieth-century South Africa and the terms on which this participation took place. In this chapter, I trace a history of women’s involvement in the African press – and the *Bantu World* in particular – focusing on the kinds of interventions that women were able to make and the ways in which these were framed and articulated. I argue that the notion of the ‘woman’s sphere’ – as exemplified in the enduring, generally conservative, genre of ‘The Woman’s Page’ – both enabled women’s access to print culture and set limits on the ways in which women’s writing was pursued.

*Corinne Sandwith* is Associate Professor in the Department of English at the University of Pretoria. She is the author of W*orld of Letters: Reading Communities and Cultural Debates in Early Apartheid South Africa* (2014) and co-editor of *Africa South: Viewpoints, 1958-1961*. Her research interests include the history of reading, criticism, publishing and public debate in early apartheid South Africa with a particular focus on marginal print cultures and the dissident press.

**Mass Tapfuma**

Dr Mass Tapfuma trained as a librarian and worked for a Newspaper publisher, Southern Africa Printing and Publishing House. She joined Nust (National University of Science and Technology, Bulawayo) in 2007 as a lecturer in Library and Information studies but transfered to the newly established Department of Publishing studies in 2009. She is also a postdoctoral fellow at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Information Studies department in the School of Social Science.