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MISTRA's Monthly Briefing is a newsletter from the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection. It aims to inform MISTRA's partners about the Institute's research, strategic reflections, published papers, and other news relating to the network of people and organisations committed to MISTRA's strategic engagement with the issues facing South Africa. The briefing is issued monthly.

In issue **Number#18** we are proud to announce that MISTRA Executive Director, **Joel Netshitenzhe** will present the first lecture in the Pixley ka Isaka Seme Annual Lecture Series at Columbia University in New York on the topic: "***The Vision of Seme 107 Years On: Is Civilization Still a Dream and is the Regeneration of Africa Possible?***"

MISTRA is also happy to announce the commencement of a book tour of the United States by **Barry Gilder**, former Director Operations of MISTRA and current MISTRA Fellow, who will be speaking on his book ***Songs and Secrets: South Africa from Liberation to Governance***.

The Institute also takes great pleasure in announcing the release of the integrated research findings of two of its core research projects: ***Poverty, Inequality and Patronage*** and ***The Evolution Of The Post-1994 South African State***.

And we report on a recent dinner hosted by MISTRA Patron **Cyril Ramaphosa**, Chairman of the Shanduka Group in support of the work of the Institute.

MISTRA regrets to announce the postponement of the launch of the ***African Transformation Report*** compiled by the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), which was scheduled for release on Monday 11 November 2013.

We report on media articles by **Dr Mcebisi Ndletyana** on "***Progress is the essence of tradition***" and "***Why SA still love their ballot papers***".

And we are proud to announce the appointment of **Dr Tanya Abrahamse**, MISTRA Board Member and Chief Executive Officer of the South African National Biodiversity Institute, to a Scientific Advisory Board, announced by the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon. And also announce the appointment of **Dr Betchani Tchereni** as a Senior Researcher in the Faculty of Political Economy.

We hope you find our Monthly Briefings informative and invite you to visit our website, where you will find more information on our research, key papers, media on MISTRA, as well as an [Expression of Interest Form](#) if you are interested in participating in any of the Institute's research projects.

To subscribe to MISTRA's Monthly Briefing, please complete the [subscribe](#) form. If you wish to unsubscribe, please click on [unsubscribe](#) at the top of the newsletter.

MISTRA STRATEGIC REFLECTIONS

First Lecture in the Pixley ka Isaka Seme Annual Lecture Series by Joel Netshitenzhe at the Institute for African Studies at Columbia University



MISTRA Executive Director, **Joel Netshitenzhe** will present the First Lecture in the Pixley ka Isaka Seme Annual Lecture Series at Columbia University in New York on **29th October 2013**.

Hosted jointly by the South African Consulate General and The Institute of African Studies at Columbia, the title of the lecture is: ***"The Vision of Seme 107 Years On: Is Civilization Still a Dream and is the Regeneration of Africa Possible?"***

The Institute of African Studies (IAS) is Columbia University's central forum and resource for African-centered academic research, program development, curriculum administration, student advisement, and local, national, and international dialogue and action. Founded in 1959, the IAS prepares generations of Africa practitioners for

careers in academic research, teaching, development, diplomacy, business, governance, journalism, law, and human rights by sponsoring courses and offering events on Africa throughout the year.

Through its many lecture-series, conferences, seminars, and workshops, the Institute provides a special forum for the coming together of distinguished Africanist faculty, scholars, and students, as well as for the broader community engaged in policy initiatives on Africa.

Details:

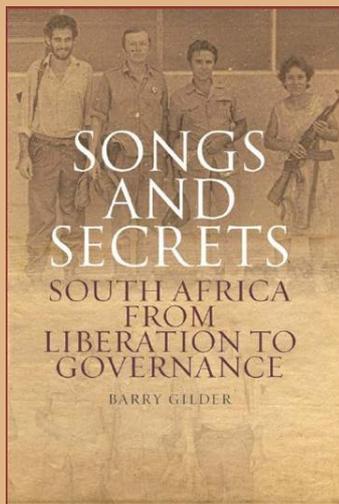
Date: Tuesday October 29, 2013

Time: 6:00PM to 8:00PM

Venue: Grace Dodge Hall, Teachers College, Room 177/179 (525 West 10th Street, New York, NY 10027) Columbia University

[For more information click here](#)

US Book Tour by Barry Gilder, former Director Operations of MISTRA



Barry Gilder, former Director Operations of MISTRA and current MISTRA Fellow is conducting a US book tour in November.

Gilder will be speaking on his book ***Songs and Secrets: South Africa from Liberation to Governance***.

His tour will include the following cities: New York, New Jersey, New Haven, Boston, Cleveland, and Washington DC.

The book tour kicks off on **29 October** at **13:00** at Africa House, 14A Washington Mews, at New York University.

[For a detailed programme please click here](#)

*** For more details, please contact Barry Gilder on BarryG@mistra.org.za or Julia Pentz at Julia.pentz@oup.com or Tel: 212 726 6288**

MISTRA Patron's Dinner with Cyril Ramaphosa

On the **17th October 2013 Cyril Ramaphosa**, Chairman of the Shanduka Group and MISTRA Patron hosted a dinner in support of the work of the Institute.

The dinner marked three years of MISTRA's existence and provided an opportunity for the Institute to report back on its work and achievements since its establishment in 2010.

Mr Ramaphosa presented the Keynote address, entitled: '***The South African Journey To A Social Compact***' to an audience of MISTRA donors, business leaders, members of MISTRA's research community, and members of the academy.

'THE SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNEY TO A SOCIAL COMPACT'

Cyril Ramaphosa, Shanduka Group Executive Chairman

For South Africa to achieve the development and growth we seek, we need to develop a social compact that commits every section of society to common objectives and an agreed set of actions.

As we approach the 20th anniversary of the attainment of democracy, we can point to significant progress in establishing stable and resilient democratic institutions, in turning around our economy and placing it on a path of growth, and in addressing many of the basic needs of the poor.



But, we are acutely aware that we still have massive challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality. If we fail to meaningfully address these challenges, not only will we be unable to right the economic and social wrongs of apartheid, but we may find that the very achievements of the last two decades are gradually eroded.

South Africa needs substantially faster growth whose benefits are shared among all our people, particularly the poor. Our priority is to create employment for the millions of South Africans who are without work.

However, we need to confront the reality that our economy does not have the skills to compete with countries with skills intensive industries, and our cost structure is too high to be competitive in labour intensive sectors.

Ideally, we would like to move up the value chain through better skills and higher capital investment. We would like all our workers to get jobs in globally competitive sectors that pay high wages and provide comprehensive benefits. The reality of course is that many of the unemployed lack the skills to get jobs in these sectors.

[To read more click here.](#)

Conference on Poverty, Inequality and Patronage

The Mapungubwe Institute (MISTRA) is pleased to announce the completion of its two-year research project titled *Poverty, Inequality and Patronage*.

The integrated report on the findings will be released at a conference on **12 November 2013**, which will provide an opportunity for researchers, respondents and other interested parties to engage with some of the findings of this study. The study draws on four case studies conducted in different provinces of South Africa and covers the relationship between poverty, inequality and patronage in different localities.

These case studies reveal instructive lessons on the articulation among these social dynamics and how they play out concretely in communities.

DETAILS OF THE CONFERENCE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

VENUE: Gallagher Convention Centre, 19 Richards Drive, Midrand

DATE: Tuesday, 12 November 2013

TIME: 09h00 – 14h30

RSVP: Sedireng Lerakong on 011 518 0281 or email: sedirengl@mistra.org.za

Conference on The Evolution Of The Post-1994 South African State

MISTRA is pleased to announce the completion of its research project on ***“The Evolution Of The Post-1994 South African State”***.

The Institute will host a public launch on **Friday, 29 November 2013** to share the findings of the research. The findings will be released as a collection of research papers that interrogate various aspects of the State and in some instances, suggest policy options for consideration by key role players in the state and society.

MISTRA hopes the public launch will stimulate and help sustain a trans-sectoral conversation on how best to understand and engage the post-1994 South African state.

Details:

Date: Friday, 29 November 2013

Time: 09:00am – 13:00pm

VENUE: TBC

RSVP: Ms Hope Prince on 011-518-0276 via email: hopep@mistra.org.za. Kindly RSVP by 22 November 2013

Postponement of the Launch of the African Transformation Report

MISTRA regrets to announce the postponement of the launch of the ***African Transformation Report*** compiled by the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), which was scheduled for Monday 11 November 2013.

The 2013 African Transformation Report is built on studies of 15 African countries (Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia), which together add up to 85% of Sub-Saharan Africa's GDP. The African Transformation Index ranks countries on their progress on the five measures of transformation.

The ***African Transformation Report*** will be launched in early 2014.

MISTRA IN THE NEWS

Progress is the essence of tradition

Our past should help us make effective, forward-thinking choices. We must resist stereotypes telling us that African history is devoid of innovation, writes **Mcebisi Ndletyana**

HERITAGE Day catapulted Mdantsane to national headlines yet again. This East London township, the second biggest after Joburg's Soweto, was the centre of this year's celebration. East London hadn't really been pampered with such national attention since 2008. Even then, the attraction was heritage. And just like in 2008, unseemly scenes marked this year's heritage activity.

Progress is the essence of tradition

HERITAGE Day celebrated Mdantsane in central Johannesburg again. This East London township, the central biggest after Joburg's Soweto, was the centre of this year's celebration. Most Londoners had not really been prepared with such national attention since 2008. Even then, the attraction was heritage. And just like in 2008, unassuming scenes marked this year's heritage activities. The township seems determined to live up to its reputation. In Mdantsane, the saying goes: "Inkawu ityiw' ilila, imfene isinda ngo-goloza" – shit happens, only the toughest survive.

Though both events were marred by controversy they differed in meaning.

The 2008 controversy stemmed from disagreement over representation, while this year's suggests contestation over ownership.

Residents rejected a memorial that was erected in honour of the victims of the 1985 massacre. They were killed on their return from Victoria Mxenge's funeral; a human rights lawyer who had died at the merciless hands of the Bantustan police.

Throwing stones at the statue, residents protested that the memorial did not resemble anything they remember from the 1980s massacre. It was modelled as a Statue-like figure, wearing skirts and carrying a spear and a shield. Officials in charge said that was an apt depiction of heroism.

Residents didn't contest the intended message, but disputed the symbolism. Why did the sculptor have to go back into pre-colonial symbolism of heroism? What's the significance of the imagery of heroism in modern history they asked? Because the Struggle was fought on urban streets, they suggested that the memorial should have depicted a professor throwing a stone, a militant or a carry bag agitator – A.K.A. the guerrilla's way of choice.

Disruption is the mechanism derived from the spirit of A.S.47 graffiti, which had become a liability in township in the 1980s, as they turned into warzones at night. In other words, residents looked

Our past should help us make effective, forward-thinking choices. We must resist stereotypes telling us that African history is devoid of innovation, writes **Mcebisi Ndletyana**



GRILLED: Lindeni Phora braais with her family at Zoo Lake, Johannesburg on Heritage Day. The writer says unlike the gone-by-years when heritage was in dispute among South Africans, time is now for the nation to honour and cherish the collective heritage of the rainbow nation. PICTURE: BOCKER NGWENYA

numerous admissions including heritage and medicine.

My argument, an intrinsic part of African history was sophisticated and technologically advanced. The society was innovative and open to learning. This enabled their mastery of technology to progress from one level to another leading to improvements on the quality and range of products they produced for themselves and their own use.

The images peddled around as African heritage do not allow for the possibility that a Mapungubwe even existed in African history. Paradoxically, this was exactly the message of colonialism, as it sought to justify itself. Colonialists maintained that civilisation was in the interests of civilising Africa. They maintained that without a colonial agency Africa would not develop, the Africans lacked ingenuity.

This is obviously not progressive, especially for people who are supposedly free. It doesn't make sense to continue peddling stereotypes about ourselves. This would require a paradigm shift in tradition. Because tradition comes from the past, this doesn't mean that it has remained unchanged. Tradition is not hostile to change. What is considered tradition today was not the same years ago. Tradition includes change. Innovation is part of our tradition.

We should recall our heritage not to take us back into the past, but to determine how we harness that past to live in the present and into the future. Living is about progress. It is to progressive use of heritage – to help us move forward, not to stretch our capacity in our past. Forward-looking use of heritage

The township seems determined to live up to its reputation. In Mdantsane, the saying goes: "Inkawu ityiw' ilila, imfene isinda ngo-goloza" – shit happens, only the toughest survive. Though both events were marred by controversy, they differed in meaning.

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** Originally published in The Sunday Independent on 29 September 2013*

[To download full article, please click here.](#)

Why SA still loves ballot papers

Countries all over the world are turning to e-voting - and some are turning away from it. But South Africa doesn't need it and stands nothing to gain by a conversion, writes **Mcebisi Ndletyana**

NEXT year's election will see a new generation of voters casting their ballots. These are voters born into freedom. Not only were they born free, they came into consciousness in an increasingly hi-tech society. They were introduced to technology much earlier than their older counterparts. Because the "born-frees" are accustomed to the convenience of technology, they might find long queues and the use of ballot papers rather primitive. These folk only know a computerised world. This begs the question: is South Africa ready for electronic voting?

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) probed this question in March. The investigation was not out of character. For an organisation that has mostly been led by old-timers such as Johann Kriegler and Brigalia Bam, the IEC has been technologically savvy. It has won numerous awards as a result.

The idea of exploring the possibility of e-voting, however, did not emanate from within. It was suggested by Kgalema Motlanthe during his acceptance of the 2009 election results when he was president. The proceedings at the IEC colloquium were quite enlightening.

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E-voting is in vogue in the free-world. And it is not only happening in the West. Even in our own neighbourhood here on the continent, folks are dabbling in electronic voting. Ballot papers are old-school, they say.

Not quite, actually. E-voting does include a bit of paper.

It's not just a paper, though, but the kind that is machine-readable. After marking their choice, voters insert the ballot into the machine, which reads the choice of the voter, tallies the results and issues them instantly.

There's no manual counting of ballot papers, but they're available for verification should the results be in dispute.

Another form of e-voting does not use paper at all. Voting machines are more like touch-screens. In Brazil, they've even adopted features of pinpas and ATMs. This gives voting machines a touch of familiarity, especially for illiterate voters.

Voters make their choice on the touch-screens.

But because the process does not involve a ballot paper, there is no

Countries all over the world are turning to e-voting – and some are turning away from it. But South Africa doesn't need it and stands nothing to gain by a conversion, writes **Mcebisi Ndletyana**



ELECTION TIME: Pansy Tlakula, chairwoman of the Independent Electoral Commission, at the media launch of national and provincial elections at Gallagher Convention Centre. South African election results are credible and e-voting is not necessary, argues the writer.

PICTURE: BOXER NGWENYA

MISTRA PEOPLE

Dr Tanya Abrahamse, MISTRA Board Member appointed to the United Nation's Scientific Advisory Board

Dr Tanya Abrahamse, MISTRA Board Member and Chief Executive Officer of the South African National Biodiversity Institute, is one of twenty-six eminent scientists, representing natural, social and human sciences and engineering who have been appointed to a Scientific Advisory Board, announced by the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon.

The new Board will provide advice on science, technology and innovation (STI) for sustainable development to the UN Secretary-General and to Executive Heads of UN organizations. UNESCO will host the Secretariat for the Board.



The fields covered by the Board range from the basic sciences, through engineering and technology, social sciences and humanities, ethics, health, economic, behavioral, and agricultural sciences, in addition to the environmental sciences. The board will aim to ensure that up-to-date and rigorous science is appropriately reflected in high-level policy discussions within the UN system, offering recommendations on priorities related to science for sustainable development that should be supported or encouraged; providing advice on up-to-date scientific issues relevant to sustainable development; identifying knowledge gaps that could be addressed outside the UN system by either national or international research programs; identifying specific needs that could be addressed by on-going assessments; and advising on issues related to the public visibility and understanding of science.

“The creation of the Scientific Advisory Board follows on a wide-ranging consultation work entrusted to UNESCO by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon,” said UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova. “It brings together scientists of international stature, and will serve as a global reference point to improve links between science and public policies.”

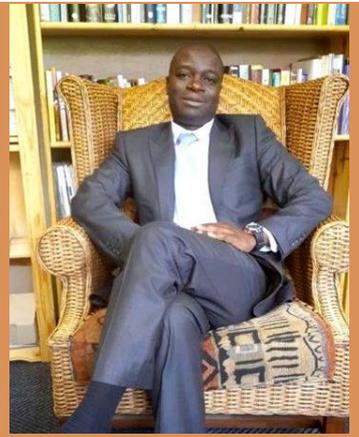
[For more information click here.](#)

Dr Betchani Tchereni joins MISTRA as a Senior Researcher in the Faculty of Political Economy

Dr Betchani Henry Mbuyampungatete Tchereni holds a Ph.D from the North-West University and Bachelor of Social Science (Economics) and a Master of Arts (Economics), received in in 2004 and 2008 respectively, from the University of Malawi.

Dr Tchereni has worked as a trade and business promotion officer in the Ministry of Trade and Industry in Malawi before embarking on his academic and research career at the University of Malawi, where he was the Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Commerce. During his tenure at the university of Malawi, Dr Tchereni managed several research projects commissioned by the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community.

He was also a Research Fellow in Development Economics at the North-West University and has published widely in research areas of development economics, the



political economy of energy, energy poverty and economic growth.

Before joining MISTRA in October 2013, he was a senior lecturer and researcher at Regenesys Business School in Sandton, Johannesburg.

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