Translating Freedom Workshop Summary

Chez Lando, Main Conference Hall – August 30th 2012

The Rwanda “Translating Freedom” workshop took place at Chez Lando – a hotel in Kigali – on August 30th. Founded before the genocide by Lando Ndasingwa, brother to the current Foreign Minister, Hon. Louise Mushikiwabo, the venue carries a special resonance for the discussion of freedom and translation. Lando came from literary family and was passionate about theatre and Rwandan culture long before he entered politics in the 1990s. He, his Canadian wife and two children were amongst the first to be killed at the start of the genocide. Still run by the family, today Chez Lando continues to form a meeting place for scholars, politicians and visitors.

The workshop organisers Dr Zoe Norridge (York & King’s College London) and Ernest Mutwarasibo (National University of Rwanda & CNLG) gathered together 40 speakers and participants from the fields of transitional justice, film, memorialisation and performance. Presentations were given in Kinyarwanda, English and French with simultaneous translation across all three languages facilitating discussion.
After the organisers’ welcome and introduction to the themes, we began by discussing the role of translation in post-genocide justice. Phil Clark, Nikki Palmer and Janvier Bayingama all stressed the importance of culturally rich translations for international legal settings, discussing some of the shortfalls and challenges of the ICTR. The Rwandan system of Gacaca was seen to offer multiple possibilities for the exploration of freedom (from guilt, shame, fear, the past) and questions were posed as to how insights from the Rwandan context could be translated for the international legal community. Alice Karekezi concluded the session with brilliant summaries of key arguments and a discussion of the issue of ‘silence’ and the difficulties inherent in translating accounts of sexual violence.

The following session examined how Rwandan and visiting film-makers have communicated concepts of Freedom in their work. We first heard from the young director, actor and producer Edouard Bamporiki, who explained how his films explore the challenges faced by new generations of Rwandans, grappling with the legacies of their parents. Assumpta Mugiraneza then described her work translating the films of Anne Aghion, and showed extracts from *My Neighbor My Killer*. Speaking in French, Mugiraneza stressed the complex nuances of Kinyarwanda, insisting that language is essential to Rwandan identity and exploring the idea of the “unspeakable that cannot be silenced”. Finally, Eric Kabera, founder and director of the Rwanda Cinema Center, Rwanda Film Festival and Kwetu Film Institute, talked about *Keepers of Memory* (which he directed) and *Iseta: Behind the Roadblock* (which he produced). There was animated discussion about the freedom of Rwandans to choose to participate in these films.
After a Rwandan buffet lunch we reconvened to discuss memorialisation. Professor Laurent Nkusi opened the session with reflections on linguistic aspects of genocide, words with multiple meanings and cultures of fear. In this he drew both on his prestigious career as a linguist and on his experience translating exhibition narratives for the Murambi memorial. Professor Nkusi was followed by Freddy Mutanguha, Director of the Kigali Memorial Centre, who spoke openly about the role of testimony and the central importance of survivors for translating any ideas of freedom after genocide. The third speaker, Yolande Mukagasana, then discussed her own experiences as a survivor and writer and her views on the current situation in DRC. Again this session prompted some challenging questions, specifically about ways of communicating the past and the selectiveness of memory.

The afternoon concluded with a performance of Frontières, a production involving musicians, dancers and verbal storytelling created by Elizabeth Spackman and Wesley Ruzibiza, - exploring our theme of translating freedom through gesture and sound. Elizabeth responded to questions and joined a panel of other theatre artists including Carole Karemera, Aimable Twahirwa and Odile Gakire Katese (Kiki) to discuss the role of the arts in translating freedom. Significant moments here included the sharing of extracts from Kiki’s project The Book of Life in which Rwandans write to the dead, and Carole Karemera’s discussion of her mother’s work as a translator and her own sadness that she didn’t learn Kinyarwanda as a child growing up in exile.

That evening all delegates were invited to join us at Ishyo (Kigali’s cultural hub) for a performance of Mboka – a multi-lingual musical exploring the legacies of (in)dependence in Africa, directed by Carole Karemera.

Please see appendix on the next page for a full programme of events. Hon. Martin Ngoga and Hon. Louise Mushikiwabo were unable to attend because of unforeseen political events.
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8.00 – 8.30 Registration

8.30 – 8.40 Introduction – Dr Zoe Norridge and Ernest Mutwarasibo

8.40 – 10.20 Transitional justice and translation – panel and discussion
• Alice Karekezi (Chair)
• Hon. Martin Ngoga
• Dr Phil Clark
• Dr Nikki Palmer
• Janvier Bayingama

10.20 – 10.40 Refreshments

10.40 – 12.10 Translating freedom through film – screenings, panel and discussion
• Dr Zoe Norridge (Chair)
• Eric Kabera
• Assumpta Mugiraneza
• Edouard Bamporiki

12.10 – 13.10 LUNCH

13.10 – 15.00 Memorialisation as freedom from fear – panel and discussion
• Ernest Mutwarasibo (Chair)
• Prof Laurent Nkusi
• Freddy Mutanguha
• Yolande Mukagasana
• Hon. Louise Mushikiwabo

15.00 – 15.20 Refreshments

15.40 – 18.00 Performing freedom – performance, discussion and panel
• Performance of extracts from Frontières
• Discussion with Elizabeth Spackman and cast

• Carole Karemera (Chair)
• Aimable Twahirwa
• Diogène Ntarindwa
• Odile Gakire Katese
Speaker Biographies (in order of appearance)

Dr Zoe Norridge
Dr Zoe Norridge is currently a lecturer at the University of York but will be moving to King’s College, University of London from September 2012. She has written numerous articles about cultural responses to conflict and her book *Perceiving Pain in African Literature* will be published this autumn. Her current research examines how film-makers and writers draw on a sense of place when representing the genocide in Rwanda.

Ernest Mutwarasibo
Ernest Mutwarasibo is a Research and Lecturer at the National University of Rwanda’s Centre for Conflict Management (NUR-CCM). He teaches Genocide Studies and Prevention, Socio-political Institutions of Post-colonial Rwanda, Memory and International Relations. He has several publications relating to post-genocide Rwanda, the latest being ‘18 Years of Writing the Genocide Perpetrated against Tutsi: Reflections and Positions on the Literature’ in *Revue Dialogue*, No 197, Kigali.

Alice Karekezi
Alice Urusaro Karekezi is a Lecturer and Researcher at the National University of Rwanda’s Center for Conflict Management and a doctoral candidate at the School of Global Studies, Goterborg University, Sweden. She is a trustee of the King’s College African Leadership Center and part of African Security Dialogue network.

Hon. Martin Ngoga
Hon. Martin Ngoga is the Prosecutor General for Rwanda. He graduated with a degree in Law from the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. He previously served as Rwanda’s Representative at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and as a Deputy Prosecutor General.

Dr Phil Clark

Dr Nikki Palmer
Dr Nikki Palmer is currently the Junior Research Fellow in Global Justice at St Anne's College and convenor of Oxford Transitional Justice Research (OTJR). Her current research focuses on criminal justice in post-genocide Rwanda, examining the interactions among international, national and localised criminal courts. Dr Palmer was previously a South African Rhodes Scholar and will be taking up a lectureship at King’s College, University of London in 2013.

Janvier Bayingana
Janvier Bayingana is a lawyer specialised in both Human Rights and Criminal Investigations. He is currently a Senior Researcher for the National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide (CNLG) and has previously worked at the International
Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), the Faculty of Law at Kigali Independent University (ULK) and the Kigali Institute of Lay Adventists of Kigali (INLAK).

Janvier Bayingana’s research focuses on Human Rights issues and he has published widely in the field.

**Eric Kabera**

Eric Kabera is the President of the Rwanda Cinema Centre, which he founded in 2001. Since 2005 he has organised the annual Rwanda Film Festival – ‘Hillywood’ – which not only draws international figures to Kigali but also shows films on inflatable screens in rural areas of Rwanda. He is the founder of the KWETU Film Institute, a center for cinematic education and training in Kigali. Kabera’s film credits include *100 Days* (2001, Producer), *Keepers of Memory* (2004, Director), *Iseta: Behind the Roadblock* (2008, Co-Producer) and *Africa United* (2010, Producer).

**Assumpta Mugiraneza**

Assumpta Mugiraneza is the Director of the IRIBA Centre for Multimedia Heritage. She has taught at l’Université Paris VIII, where her research examined hate speech, comparing Hutu Power and Nazi discourse. She has ongoing interests in the history of genocide and co-edited a special issue of the Revue d’Histoire de la Shoah in Paris, on “Rwanda, 15 ans après, Penser et écrire l’histoire du Génocide des Tutsi”. For the last ten years she has collaborated with Anne Aghion, translating and adapting her films on the reconciliation and justice process in Rwanda.

**Edouard Bamporiki**

Edouard Bamporiki is a filmmaker, actor, poet and peacemaker. As a young Rwandan artist, he has received international attention for his stories of hope, unity and reconciliation. His films include *Munyurangabo* (2007, Actor, Best Actor Award at Cannes), *Long Coat* (2008, Writer, Director Actor, first prize in African Film at the Focus Future Film Festival New York) and *Kinyarwanda* (2011, Actor). Edouard also recently published his first book of poetry about his childhood experiences during the genocide, *Icyaha Kuri Bo, Ikimwaro Kuri Jye*.

**Prof Laurent Nkusi**

Professor Laurent Nkusi is a linguist by training and has a PhD from l’Université Paris V. For many years he taught at the National University of Rwanda (1976-2000), where he also held numerous administrative positions of responsibility. From 2009-2011 he was Academic Vice-Rector of l’Institut d’Agriculture, de Technologie et d’Education de Kibungo (INATEK). Since October 2011, he has served as Senator in the Rwandan Parliament, where he represents private higher education institutes and universities.

**Freddy Mutanguha**

Director of the Kigali Genocide Memorial, Freddy Mutanguha survived the genocide as a teenager to become an orphan head of household. He worked his way through school to graduate from the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology. During his studies Freddy helped found AERG, Rwanda’s student survivors association before becoming Secretary General of IBUKA, the national umbrella association for Rwandan genocide survivors. He has worked with the Aegis Trust and the Kigali Genocide Memorial since 2004.
Yolande Mukagasana
Yolande Mukagasana is an internationally recognised writer with a masters degree in social sciences. Amongst other prizes, she was awarded an Honorable Mention for Peace Education by UNESCO in 2003. Her books include La mort ne veut pas de moi (1997), N’aie pas peur de savoir (1999), De bouche à Oreille (2003) and Un jour je vivrai (Italian, 2011). She appeared in Rwanda 94, a play she co-authored that toured internationally, and has spoken at multiple conferences across the world. She is currently working with the Commission for the Fight Against Genocide (CNLG).

Hon. Louise Mushikiwabo
Hon. Louise Mushikiwabo is the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and previously served as the Minister of Information in the Government of Rwanda. She is also an author and public relations executive and co-authored Rwanda Means the Universe (2008) – a work that examines both the social history of Rwanda and her own family memories. She often contributes to newspapers and online magazines and has collaborated on award-winning documentary films. In 2004 she received an Outstanding Humanitarian Award from the American University’s School of International Studies.

Elizabeth Senja Spackman
Elizabeth Spackman is a poet and theatre artist currently teaching at the Kigali Institute of Education. After receiving a Masters in Fine Arts (poetry) from the University of Iowa, she worked with Rhodessa Jones’s the Medea Project Theatre for Incarcerated Women in San Francisco, South Africa and France. In 2009 the SLS poetry prize brought her to Lamu and Nairobi and then in 2010 she travelled to Rwanda with a Fullbright grant. She has collaborated on numerous theatre projects in Rwanda. We will be seeing extracts from one of them – Frontières. For full details about Frontières please see the end of the biographies.

Carole Karemera
Carole Karemera is a Rwandese artist who holds a Master in Music (Jazz) and Drama from The Conservatoire Royal de Musique de Mons (Belgium). She has worked with internationally acclaimed theatre, dance and film productions including Sometimes in April, Jaz, Rwanda 94, Bogus woman, Sound of sand, Scratching the inner fields and Black. Carole directed the Pan African Dance Festival and is the founder and director of Ishyo Arts Centre. She is also an arts manager, cultural activist, member of ISPA (International Society of Performing Arts), ASSITEJ/ARTEJ and is currently the Deputy Secretary General of ARTerial Network. She is a member of the Rwandan Academy of Culture and Languages and a board member of the National Institute of Museums.

Aimable Twahirwa
Aimable Twahirwa is currently Head of Mission in Rwanda for La Benevolencia, an international organisation, specialising in communication campaigns, particularly radio soap operas and special TV programs. These, combined with grassroots activities, form tools for reconciliation, promotion of positive values and freedom of expression, justice, trauma healing and treatment as well as conflict prevention in the Great Lakes region. Aimable is a graduate of the Ecole Internationale de Théâtre et de Mouvement Jacques Le coq de Paris. In previous roles, he has managed the
University Center of Arts and Drama at National University of Rwanda and the Kimisagara Youth and Culture Center.

**Diogène Ntarindwa (Atome)**
Diogène Ntarindwa is a distinguished actor, writer and author of the play *Carte d’identité*, staged in six countries across the world. He grew up in Burundi and joined the RPF in 1994. Two years later he returned to study and gained a Bachelor of Law Degree from NUR. Atome, as he is known, then went on to study at the Conservatoire Royal de Liège in Belgium. He continues to write and perform internationally.

**Odile Gakire Katese (Kiki)**
Odile Gakire Katese is, in her own words, a professional dreamer and a woman of firsts. She is a Rwandan playwright, director and cultural entrepreneur. Among her many accomplishments in Rwanda are the first women’s drumming company (Ingoma Nshya, Women Initiatives), the first professional contemporary dance company (Amizero Dance Kompagnie), the first international festival (Festival Arts Azimuts), the first national festival in Rwanda (Rwanda Drum Festival), the first coop ice cream store (Inzozi Nziza – Sweet Dreams) and the first recipient of the League of Professional Theatre Women’s Rosamond Gilder/Martha Coigney International Award. Kiki is the founding director of Rwanda Professional Dreamers and is working on “Mumataha, Remember Me”, a three-year project on the 20th commemoration of the 1994 genocide.

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**Frontières**
Seven artists — dancers, actors, storytellers, a musician and a singer — use movement, words, and music to explore the existential barriers that we face, whether imposed by society or ourselves. Five different scenes depict the borders of nations, of obligations, of those burdens we inherit from birth and those created by our communities. *Frontières* explores our human limits and the invisible lines that separate us from each other.

On the stage, four individuals emerge from the dark, three storytellers taking their muse from history and one griot who accompanies them on their journey with the sounds of his guitar. Three dancers join the ballet of words to create the first scene of the real borders between us: our need to be distinct from each other, a country, a nationality, an entrance, and an exit.

*Frontières* gently describes the struggle of the human who engages in this perpetual research of the self, of the other and of our place in the world, a world which calls itself global but still remains individualist, separatist and closed off by beliefs and obligations.

“If I see you will you see me too? Am I you? Are we… we?” — *Frontières* text

Music and Sound: **Samuel KAMANZI and Nirere Shanel**
The Artists:

Ruth Nirere Shanel is an award-winning Rwandan singer, who began her singing career while still in high school with a song dedicated to survivors and victims of the 1994 genocide. She is also a veteran of the stage and screen whose work includes lead roles in *Grey Matter* and *Le Jour Où Dieu est Parti en Voyage*.

Elizabeth Senja Spackman is a poet and theatre artist. She came to Rwanda in 2010 on a Fulbright artist’s grant and currently teaches as a lecturer at Kigali Institute of Education.

Samuel Kamanzi, trained as a guitarist, has worked with international and local musicians, as well as composing music for films and dance performances. He is a founding member of the musical group Ikobe.

Ruzibiza Wesley has trained and performed internationally as a dancer and award-winning choreographer. He directs Amizero Kompagnie, Rwanda’s first contemporary dance company.

Ariane Zaytzeff is a theater artist and Ph.D. student in Performance Studies at the Tisch School of the Arts, NYU. She currently lives in Rwanda where she is conducting her research.

The Dancers:

Saidi Mohamed Ali lives, dances and performs with K'Dance in Goma, DRC. He has been a dancer with Amizero Dance Kompagnie since 2012.

Samuel Kwizera is an acclaimed Rwandan traditional dancer with Komeza Mihigo. He has been a dancer with Amizero Dance Kompagnie since 2009.

Abdul Mujyambere can currently be seen performing in Mboka at Ishyo Art Center. A graduate of National University of Rwanda, he has been a dancer with Amizero Dance Kompagnie since 2011.

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This workshop was funded by a grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council of the UK (AHRC).
Mboka
Free transport and tickets for “Translating Freedom” participants!

Please join us this evening for a performance of Mboka, 7.30pm, Ishyo Arts Centre.

Mboka is a musical that was created in response to 50th Anniversary Independence Celebrations across Africa. It examines questions of memory, history and struggle, exploring what remains important in Africa today.

The production is directed by Carole Karemera, one of our speakers today, and includes performances by some of the actors you will have seen in the Frontières extract.

6.30pm Bus from Chez Lando to Ishyo

Please do not be late – we will leave on time. Food is available to purchase at Ishyo.

Please tear off the token below and give to the ticket office at Ishyo to receive free entrance.

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Free entrance to Ishyo Mboka for ONE PERSON on August 30th.

The University of York