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Teaching and Training in Anthropology in Kenya: The Past, Current Trends and Future Prospects

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Abstract

The discipline of Anthropology in Kenya has a short history with long roots. The first President of the Republic was a trained anthropologist, but Anthropology, as a discipline, gained a foothold only more recently. A review of the development of Anthropology reveals three distinct periods: the pre-independence period, the period 1963 – 1985 and post 1985 period. Beginning the mid-1980s, the first anthropology programme in a Kenya University was started at the University of Nairobi. Gradually, Anthropology was introduced in other Universities. The paper traces and documents the development of and trends in Anthropological teaching and training within the Kenyan context. Factors that influenced differential enrolment in the undergraduate and post graduate programmes are discussed. In conclusion, the utility of the discipline is discussed in the context of the wider social and developmental needs of the country.

Résumé

L'Anthropologie comme discipline au Kenya a une histoire courte avec des origines lointaines. Le premier président de la république a eu une formation d'anthropologue, mais l'anthropologie comme discipline a gagné de terrain très récemment. Une analyse du développement de l'Anthropologie laisse voir trois périodes distinctes : la période pré-indépendante, la période des années 1963 à 1985 et la période après 1985. Au début de la moitié de 1980, le premier programme de l'Anthropologie l'Université du Kenya a été commencé à

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L'Université de Nairobi. Progressivement, l'Anthropologie a été introduite dans d'autres Universités. Cet article trace et documente le développement et les tendances dans l'enseignement et la formation anthropologique dans le contexte Kenyan. Les facteurs qui ont influencés les taux différents de l'inscription au programme inférieur et supérieur y sont discutés. En conclusion, l'utilité de la discipline est discutée dans le contexte social plus large des besoins de développement du pays.

Introduction

The history of anthropology before independence in 1963: During this period, the players were mainly non-Kenyan anthropologists/historians. Missionaries and travelers similarly contributed ethnographies for areas under their see or through which they traveled. Ethnographies by 'natives' were unheard of. In one of the earliest ethnographic accounts written by a Kenyan Anthropologist who, like Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe¹ of Nigeria, would go on to become Kenya's first President, Jomo Kenyatta, wrote about his people, the Agikuyu. In this treatise, *Facing Mount Kenya*, Jomo Kenyatta wrote in defense of his people's cultural practices and used the book as a political tool to protest at the unfair demands that were being put to bear against the Agikuyu (Kenyatta, 1938). At the time, it was difficult for an African to speak in a tone used by Kenyatta, in his book.

The genesis of the problem hinged on the cultural practice of clitoridectomy among other injustices such as the alienation of large trunks of agricultural and pastoral land for exclusive use by the British. In 1929, a ban on female circumcision was imposed, labeling the practice of clitoridectomy as barbaric and unchristian. To enforce the ban, the Scottish Missionaries in Kenya demanded that those who failed to stop the "barbaric" and "unchristian" practice would be denied a chance to educate their children in schools they supported. As a result, many Agikuyu boycotted schools run by the Church of Scotland Missionaries in Kenya. They, instead, started their own independent schools, a teacher training college at Githunguri as well as the African Independent Pentecostal Church. Kenyatta was later to become the Principal of the teacher training college at Githunguri. Other problems raised against the White Settler farmers included forced labour, poll tax and forced resettlement of blacks in crowded dry reserves so as to free up land for use by the settler farmers. Kenyatta took these anthropological issues right to the doorstep of the British people. It was during his sojourn to England that Jomo Kenyatta met and studied under the famed British Anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski. This interaction led to the publication of "*Facing Mt. Kenya*."

For many years, the British colonial government had sought and obtained the services of anthropologists. The earliest administrators were given anthropological orientation in England before being sent to the outposts. That Anthropological knowledge of the “natives” (Africans and other non-European groups) had become necessary, almost unavoidable, is evident in the creation of the International African Institute (IAI) between the First and the Second World Wars. There were two specific aims to it. First, it would provide a center whose responsibility was to promote research and dissemination of information and knowledge on African cultures. The second aim was more utilitarian. It was to promote and strengthen links between scientific knowledge gained in the field and the practical activities and needs of the administrators, educators and missionaries (Schapera, 1949). No doubt this information was useful for the Colonial Office in London; it was used to find ways to effectively govern the “native” mind.

In Kenya, ethnographic accounts from Anthropologists, Missionaries (and those leaning towards Anthropology) during the colonial period abound (e.g. Rotledge, 1910; Cagnolo, 1933; Schapera, 1949; Mayer, 1949, 1950). For example, Father C. Cagnolo (1933) produced one of the earliest ethnographies on the Agikuyu. This ethnographic profile was meant to be an introduction to the Agikuyu for the student of ethnology and the colonial administrators. These intentions are aptly captured by the Archbishop of Sardis, A. Hinsley, when he wrote in the introduction, “this book contains information which will be of great interest to students of ethnology and of no little utility to missionaries” (p. vi). In the preface to the book, Father Cagnolo wrote, “we are satisfied if ... we shall have contributed and supplied material to the students of ethnology, anthropology and other social studies” (p. vii). He continued to add that in *The Akikuyu*, they hoped to have “rendered good service to Government Officers and to other Europeans” who have to deal with the Agikuyu tribe.

Father Cagnolo was not alone in this. Philip Mayer was a trained lawyer turned Anthropologist. His journey into Anthropology and Gusii is rather interesting. He obtained a doctorate in Law from the University of Heidelberg in Germany. In 1939, he arrived in England and gravitated towards Oxford University. His initial interest was in the Arab world after an initial stint in Palestine. However, in 1946 Radcliffe-Brown suggested to Mayer to apply for a social science fellowship, which the Colonial Office had just established. After a couple of months working with the Colonial Office in London, he was appointed the Kenya Government

Sociologist. This took him to Gusii, whose people he portrays as “very litigious”. Mayer describes his introduction to Africa and anthropology as “an overwhelming experience”. This early work of anthropologists/ethnographers had a profound effect on anthropological training in Kenya after independence.

At independence, there were hardly any trained African Anthropologists in Kenya. Kenyan Anthropologists started coming to the scene in the late 70s and early 80s. The Late Prof. A.B.C. Ocholla-Ayayo obtained his PhD from Upsala, Sweden; the Late Prof. Osaga Odak from Friendship University, Moscow; Prof. Joshua Akong’a and Prof. Enos Njeru (1984) obtained their PhDs in Cultural Anthropology from University of California (San Diego) and University of California (Santa Barbara) respectively; Prof. Joyce Olenja (1985) and Dr. David Nyamwaya (1982) from University of Cambridge; Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi (Social Anthropology) from Norway at the University of Bergen. Coming into the scene in the late 70s and early 80s, these are some of the ‘early’ post independence Anthropologists.

During this early post-colonial period, many trained Anthropologists in Africa, made the Department of Sociology their first home. Within these Departments, they remained incognito until the “reawakening”. In 1988 at the 12th International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (ICAES) in Zagreb, a group of 14 odd African Anthropologists at the meeting met and laid the seed of what was to become the Pan-African Anthropological Association (PAAA) a year later. The journey back from the periphery into the jet stream had begun. Funding for the first meeting at which the PAAA was founded aptly came from the Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. In 1989, the Wenner Gren Foundation President Sydel Silverman attended the inaugural meeting in Yaounde, Cameroon. The Foundation was to play a crucial role over the next couple of years during the formative period of the PAAA. This included the funding of many regional meetings as well as workshops, particularly for young upcoming Anthropologists.

In 1990, during the 2nd PAAA conference in Nairobi, many of the budding Anthropologists took part. It was a meeting well-timed, coming soon after the first crop of Anthropologists had graduated from the University of Nairobi. For Kenya, one of the outcomes of the Nairobi meeting was the creation of the Kenyan Chapter of the PAAA. The University of Nairobi took the lead in organizing this meeting under the direction of the late Prof. A. B. C. Ocholla-Ayayo, one of the founding members of the

PAAA. As expected Prof. Ocholla-Ayayo became its first Chairman. The Kenya Chapter has since hosted a second PAAA meeting in 2002 in Nairobi.

In this paper, I focus on the development of Anthropology as a teaching subject in Kenyan Universities. I discuss in general terms the teaching and training of Anthropology in the Kenyan Universities, but then reserve most of my focus on the growth of Anthropology at the University of Nairobi. The University of Nairobi Anthropology is the oldest in the country. With close to 1440 students obtaining a first degree in Anthropology, a further 89 obtaining a Masters' degree in Anthropology and six with a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Anthropology the University of Nairobi has played a leading role in training graduates in Anthropology. No other University in Kenya can boast this record.

The Period Between 1963 and 1985

It is quite clear that the period between 1963 and 1985 is one of relative absence of Kenyan anthropologists from the public light. Probably this has to do more with Kenyatta than any other person. Kenyatta viewed Anthropology as a tool of the oppressors and one that had no room in independent Kenya. In his writings he makes clear his distaste of Anthropology, viewing it as a tool for governing the "native" mind (see Kenyatta 1938). With this already stated it was quite easy to predict which direction anthropology would take on gaining political independence. Consequently, anthropology as a discipline and anthropologists as a people did not have a definite place in the first government of independent Kenya.

The closest Kenya got into anthropology was in the establishment of the Institute of African Studies² at the University of Nairobi. The Institute was established as a cultural division of the Institute for Development Studies in 1967 under the directorship of the history Professor Bethuel Ogot. It became a full-fledged Institute in its own right in 1970 the then University College, Nairobi³ gained full status to become the University of Nairobi, with its own Charter. The Institute was then moved to where it "belonged" at the National Museums of Kenya to help in the study of Kenyan cultures. The new location would allow it to forge closer ties with the National Museums of Kenya. Apart from accessing curatorial services from specialists at the National Museums of Kenya, on its part the Institute gave National Museums of Kenya a dash of academic flavor. The primary emphasis for the Institute was on areas that had been neglected during the Colonial period; on things African. Its mandate was spelt out as "promoting and conducting original research in

the fields of African prehistory and history; ethnography and social anthropology; musicology and dance; traditional and modern arts and crafts; religion and other belief systems" (Institute of African Studies Handbook 1986/87, p. 6; University of Nairobi Calendar 2001-2003, p. 393). Its mandate included one component of the four fields in Anthropology, namely, social anthropology. Archeology was already rooted within the Department of History at the University of Nairobi or in the Archeology Division in the National Museums of Kenya.

This is the environment in which anthropology was practised in Kenya prior to 1985. Except for foreign anthropologists conducting research in Kenya, there is little else that was happening by local Anthropologists and often it was linked to Masters and Doctoral research. In the University of Nairobi, archeology, one of the four branches of Anthropology, found a home within the Department of History.

The Anthropology Environment in Kenya

Anthropology at the University of Nairobi: In 1985 Kenya's second President, Daniel T. Arap Moi, observed that Anthropology should be taught at the University of Nairobi. Following these observations, preparations were initiated for the first intake of students. However, it was Prof. A. B. C. Ocholla-Ayayo who first mooted the idea of having a Center for Cultural Studies at University of Nairobi. Anthropologists, then at the University, mainly in the Department of Sociology, formed a committee that worked on the first syllabus and regulations. Profs. Ocholla-Ayayo, Joshua Akong'a, Enos Njeru and Osaga Odak were members of this committee. The first group of students was admitted into the Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi in September of 1986 to follow a three-year program leading to a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology. The first locally trained anthropologists joined the job market in 1990 upon successful completion of their anthropology training.

Alongside the formulation of an undergraduate degree program in Anthropology, the Institute also developed two other programs: the Postgraduate Diploma in Cultural Studies and the Certificate in Cultural Studies. These two programs, together with the Undergraduate degree program, were launched in September 1986. With these three programs underway, the Institute embarked on developing a Master of Arts program in Anthropology (Institute of African Studies Handbook, 1986/87, pp. 7). It is the first Postgraduate Diploma in Cultural Studies class that, in fact, joined the first Master of Arts (Anthropology) program. Thus, the academic programs gradually expanded into Masters and PhD programs.

The first batch of graduate students was released in 1992 while the first PhD was conferred in 1995.

The curriculum in anthropology has undergone qualitative and structural changes since inception. When the program was first offered, students were required to take only two compulsory course units in the first year – Introduction to Anthropology and Ethnology of African Societies. During the second year, the range of course units available for the students to choose from was expanded to seven (two of which were compulsory). The seven course units were: Anthropological Theory, Field Methods in Anthropology, Linguistic Anthropology, Theory and Practice in Archeology, Family and Kinship, Belief Systems and Economic Anthropology. During the third year, the courses were expanded to a total of thirteen, with Leadership and Ethics and The Dissertation being offered as compulsory courses for those majoring in Anthropology.

In 1992 the program underwent its first review. There are two main reasons leading to this review. First, it came at a time when university education in Kenya was undergoing structural changes. Earlier, the government had adopted a new educational system (following recommendations of the McKay Report of 1981) in which students spent eight years in primary, four years in secondary and a further at least four years at university depending on the program being pursued. Following the McKay recommendations, students were required to spend an extra one year in the university. Thus, with the introduction of a new education system, the program at university was changed from a three-year to a four-year curricula.

Second, by the time of the first review, the Institute had taken on board more anthropologists. With this expanded faculty, it was now possible to mount a wider range of anthropology courses. The aim was to make Anthropology a truly four field discipline following the classical tradition of Physical (Biological) Anthropology, Social (Cultural) Anthropology, Linguistic Anthropology and Archeology.

With this revision, the total number of courses was expanded from 23 to 49 plus three common undergraduate courses. The program's third review in 2002 increased the total number of units to 61. With these changes, students are currently offered a wide range of courses. These changes reflect the current market demands. The preamble to the current syllabus notes the increasing recognition in developmental circles that anthropology is a crucial subject in the development of any nation. Thus, the course is designed to prepare the student to face current and future challenges of development in Kenya following anthropology's holistic approach to issues.

The program retains its four-field character of anthropology with introductory courses in Physical (or Biological) Anthropology, Social (or Cultural) Anthropology, Linguistic Anthropology and Archeology. These courses serve to provide a broad base within which anthropology is taught.

Anthropology at Moi University: At Moi University, Anthropology is taught within the School of Arts and Social Sciences. The focus here is mainly cultural anthropology. At the undergraduate level, students are allowed to take courses from other disciplines, but those majoring in Anthropology must take a majority of courses from Anthropology. One major difference between the program at Moi with that at Nairobi is that the Nairobi students are admitted into the Anthropology program. As a result, they have a limited choice of courses outside the Institute. On the other hand, at Moi University, initially, students were admitted for a degree program in cultural studies. The cultural studies program incorporated Anthropology, History and Religion. Following reorganization into discipline-based departments, Anthropology and Ecology joined to form a department.

Those who return for graduate studies are admitted into the Master of Philosophy program. The aim of the Master of Philosophy in Anthropology is to train high level manpower – academics, policy-makers, planners and managers – to acquire skills to participate conscientiously in development activities and contexts; skills to enable them understand the workings of society and methodological perspectives for conducting research and seeking their application in a variety of contexts. This reflects the primary focus of Anthropology as a largely applied discipline.

The Master of Philosophy program has identified four basic objectives, namely:

1. To equip persons with competence to participate in teaching anthropology/ cultural studies ;
2. To train students in research and analytical skills ;
3. To produce high-level manpower for the civil and private sectors of the economy capable of participating in policy formulation, and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development projects and extension work ;
4. To prepare students for further studies.

(Source: <http://www.mu.ac.ke/academic/schools/sass/mphilanthropology.html>, accessed 10th July, 2007).

Like Nairobi University, Moi University offers a PhD program in Anthropology. Unlike the University of Nairobi where the PhD is by Thesis alone, at Moi University, the PhD consists of coursework, examination

and thesis. The coursework is done during the first year of study. In this respect, the PhD program at Moi University is a variant of the American PhD program. The PhD program aims to develop and consolidate “the highest level of scholarship, creative thinking and writing, research capability and leadership” in respective areas of specialization. The objectives of the program are:

1. To equip students with the highest levels of knowledge, skills and personality to teach anthropology.
2. To train students to acquire analytical skills to carry out scientific research and consultancy.
3. To produce high level manpower for institutional management and leadership.
4. To assist students to acquire the highest levels of expertise in their area of specialization within the discipline.

(Source: <http://www.mu.ac.ke/academic/schools/sass/dphilanthropology.html>, accessed on 10th July, 2007).

Anthropology at Maseno University: In Maseno University the anthropology and sociology programs are combined to create the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Students thus take units from anthropology as well as from Sociology. The summary of courses taught in the department is given in Table 1 below. Clearly there is a balance in the distribution of courses within the years as well as in the total number of courses offered to students. The ‘other courses’ in this case refer to courses, mainly from computer science. Maseno University offers most of its courses in combination with IT. This twist is in itself important as it recognizes the crucial role IT now plays in development. No other anthropology program in Kenya offers IT as part of the training. The Institute offers only one unit to first year students.

Table 1: Number of Anthropology/Sociology units taught in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Year	Anthropology	Sociology	Anthropology/ Sociology	Other Courses
1	5	5	1	6
2	6	7	1	4
3	7	4	4	2
4	6	9	0	3
Total	24	25	6	15

Following the British tradition in Kenyan Universities, archeology at Maseno University is offered within the History department.

Anthropology at Egerton University: At Egerton University anthropology is offered within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS). FASS is an integrated whole of several Departments, namely Sociology, Anthropology and Economics; Literature, Languages and Linguistics; History, Philosophy and Religious Studies. It is not clear whether students at the end of their program obtain a Bachelor's degree in Anthropology. According to information available, FASS currently offers the following degree programs: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Arts (History), Bachelor of Arts (Communications and Media), Bachelor of Arts (Economics and History), Bachelor of Arts (Economics and Sociology), Bachelor of Arts (Sociology and Religion), Bachelor of Business and Management, Bachelor of Science (Economics and Statistics), and Bachelor of Science (Library and Information Sciences) (source: http://www.egerton.ac.ke/academics/fass/the_dean.php#vision, accessed 9 July, 2007). In fact, in the careers section, there is no mention of what students with anthropology are likely to become. Information for other departments is, however, provided.

The Bachelor of Economics and Sociology and Bachelor of Arts with Sociology offers only one unit in Anthropology – Introduction to Anthropology. On the other hand, the Bachelor of Sociology and Religion degree offers two Anthropology course units – Introduction to Anthropology and Religion, Culture and Communication. Clearly, the discipline of Anthropology is underrepresented at Egerton University.

Anthropology at Kenyatta University: There is no anthropology program at Kenyatta University. Apart from Archeology which is offered as a specialized area within History no other units provide training for a qualification in Anthropology. Individual departments, however, do teach units to service special areas. For example Medical Anthropology is taught to students studying for a Bachelor in Environmental Studies while Biological Anthropology is taught to students studying for the BA Archeology option.

Anthropology at Catholic University of Eastern Africa: The Catholic University of Eastern Africa is perhaps the only private university in Kenya to provide training leading to a degree in Anthropology. The Anthropology courses at Catholic University are offered as part of the courses taught within the Department of Social Sciences. Specialization is offered in Economics, Anthropology, Social Work and Political Science. The core courses in Anthropology lead one to a Bachelor of Social Sciences in Anthropology.

The stated objective of the program is to provide “the necessary knowledge for personnel training in cross-cultural studies” (The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Programme of Studies 2001-2004, p. 230–239). The program is divided into two parts. There are those who enroll for a four-year degree program who, in total, have 39 units from which to select. On the other hand, there are those who take a three-year course with a total of 24 units from which to choose units. The Anthropology program is currently serviced mostly by graduates of Anthropology from the University of Nairobi. Initially faculty at IAS had a crucial input in the curriculum.

The Institute of African Studies and Anthropology in Kenya

Training manpower for Kenya: In many respects, Anthropology as a discipline in Kenya has been influenced by Nairobi University. At Moi, the program was started by the same professor who was part of the team that was instrumental in setting up the program at Nairobi, University. Together with his former students at Nairobi, a core team was established. Initial support was provided by some members of faculty at Nairobi. Overtime, the Moi University program has trained its own faculty to PhD level.

The same case applies to Maseno University, where the only faculty member with a PhD in Anthropology is a graduate of Nairobi University. After completing his undergraduate and postgraduate training from the Institute of African Studies, he went on to obtain a PhD in Denmark. The same case applies to the Catholic University in Eastern Africa, where a number of Anthropology lecturers are graduates of the Institute.

The District Socio-Cultural Profiles Project: One of the most widely recognized contributions of the Institute of African Studies is the production of the district socio-cultural profiles. The program to produce profiles, which ran between 1985 and 1989, was funded mainly by (or development partners through) the Ministry of Planning and National Development with the aim of providing readily available reference information for government administrators. By the time the program stopped, most of the ethnic communities in Kenya had been covered.

The information found in each monograph covered topics in the following areas: archeology and history; religion; land tenure and property ownership systems; livestock production; shelter and material culture; medicine and health; education and training; demographic profile; social strata and categories; political system; traditional legal system; language; literature; music and dance; and recreation. Data for the monographs

was collected from the ethnic groups resident in the district. A group of experienced researchers spent usually a month in each district to collect data. In addition to this information, various material culture items were collected for preservation at the Institute of African Studies, Grogan Building, Chiromo Campus. These material collections are used for educational purposes with students coming from Moi University and as far as Japan.

The design of the monographs was quite simple and it followed most ethnographic profiles. The monographs provided reference material for students of ethnography, missionaries, researchers and government officers. The idea of the monographs was conceived at a seminar on oral traditions organized by the Institute in Kisumu. Participants at the meeting noted the dearth of information on various Kenyan communities. It was noted that development projects were influenced by a people's culture and that without those information it was problematic designing development programs. This challenge came at an opportune time when the government was shifting its rural development planning to the district – The District Focus Strategy for Rural Development. In response, the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development started allocating funds in its budget for the District Socio-cultural Profile (Institute of African Studies Handbook, 1986/87, p. 53).

The Institute's Affiliates: The Institute offers affiliation to many anthropologists and students of African Studies who come into the country to conduct anthropological research. Students come into the Institute from North America, Europe and Asia, mostly Japan. In the recent past, the Institute has received inquiries from USA, Canada, Britain, Germany, Italy, Denmark, The Netherlands, Norway, Australia and Japan. The Institute has long and active collaboration with researchers from Japan and Denmark. In Japan, the Institute currently works closely with Kyoto University while in Denmark Danish Bilharziasis Laboratories (DBL⁴) remains the most active partner. The Institute functions as a clearinghouse for anthropological research for the Kenya Government. Regularly the government sends proposals submitted by researchers for review and advice before the necessary research permits are granted.

Training of foreign students: In collaboration with a group of Colleges in the US (Bryn Mawr College, Haverford College, Swarthmore College and The University of Pennsylvania), the Institute provides training facilities for American students who would like to spend a semester abroad. The unique thing about this program is that in-coming students take their classes with Kenyan students. This provides them with an oppor-

tunity to experience the Kenyan university classroom environment. Similarly, Kenyan students have an opportunity to visit the US for a Semester to take classes with American students in the American University setting. The program also offers opportunities for faculty exchanges.

Trends in Anthropology Training at Nairobi University

(i) Undergraduate Level

The first lot of students admitted during the 1986 university admissions graduated in 1989. In the first ever intake of Anthropology students 44 (32 male, 12 female) graduated with a BA in Anthropology. The number of students enrolling in Anthropology (measured on the basis of those graduating) gradually increased up to the mid-1990s before the numbers started to fall (Figure 1). Between 1986 and 1996 the program witnessed a gradual rise in student enrolments, the rise was much higher among male than among female students. By 1996, male students outnumbered the female students by a factor of 2.5.

The years of increase in student enrolment witnessed a crash between 1998 and 1997 graduating class, a trend which continued over the next five years. Obviously, the turning point must have been in 1994/1995 academic year when the 1998 graduating group was admitted into University. Gradually the number of students graduating is on the rise again.

Figure 1: Student Graduation with BA Anthropology (raw figures)

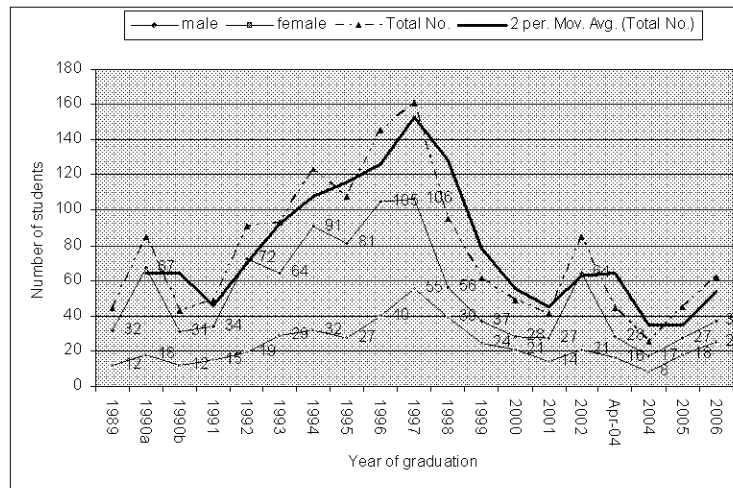
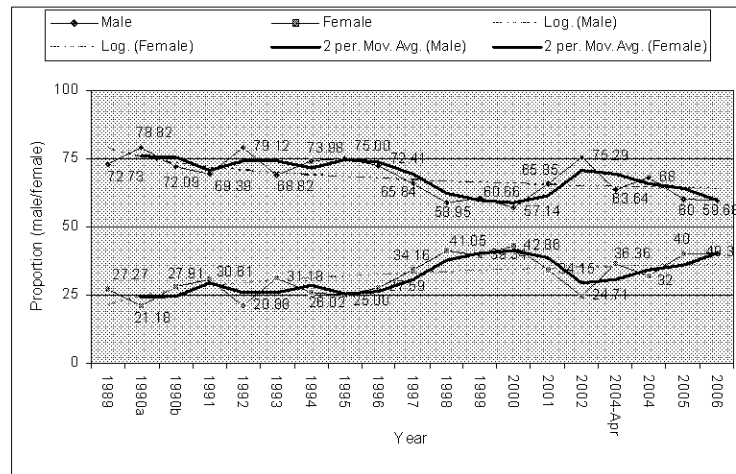


Figure 2: BA Anthropology Student Graduation (male: female ratio)

Despite the fact that more male than female students are enrolled, and this is a trend in all Kenyan Universities and for a majority of programs, there has been a gradual move towards the center. Over the years the gap between male and female students, particularly in the case of Anthropology, has narrowed. The number of students graduating with a degree in Anthropology is tending towards a 50/50 share, an indication of tendency towards equity in admission into the program. These trends are captured in Figure 2. The number of male students graduating expressed as a proportion of the total number of students is slowly but steadily decreasing while the number of female students is showing a concomitant rise. It started with male students outnumbering female students almost 3 to 1 in the 1989 graduating class, currently this stands at about 60/40 male to female students. If one were to keep the male student population constant, this represents an almost 100 per cent increase in the female student population. Clearly, the gap between the number of male and female graduating students narrows after 1997 (Figure 1) except for 2002.

(ii) Graduate Level

Unlike the undergraduate student enrolment, enrolment at the graduate level is more eclectic, with wide variations between the different years (Figure 3). Over the years, the total number of students graduating with an MA in Anthropology (Figure 4) has remained relatively steady.

In the earlier years of the Anthropology graduate program, there were more male than female students enrolling in the program. The widest gap in student enrollment was in 1992/93 academic year (Figure 3). Nevertheless, the male-female gap in enrollment has continued to narrow, despite the smaller classes now being recorded.

The fall in student registration is most probably a reflection of the falling number of scholarships available to the University of Nairobi in general coupled with the rising cost of University education. The students who register for their graduate program privately are required to pay tuition and other attendant expenses from their own private sources. This requirement in the face of reduced funding for graduate education shuts out many otherwise qualified students. The situation became worse in the late 1990s and later when Kenya's economy dipped.

Figure 3: MA Anthropology Student Enrolment

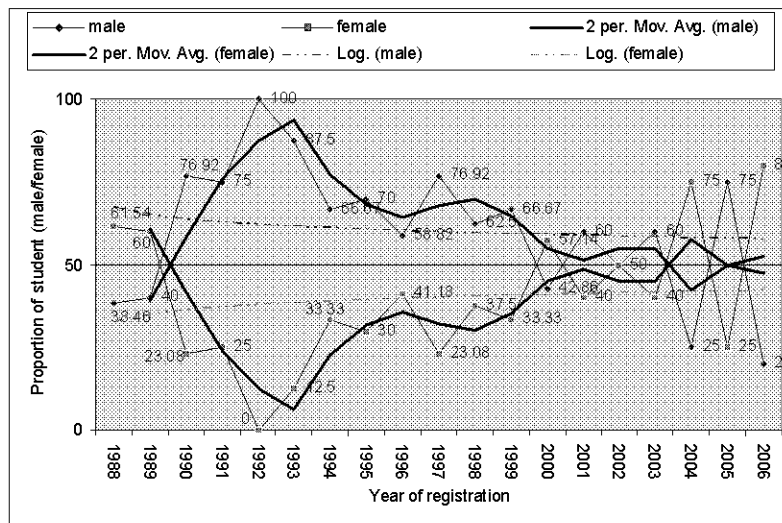
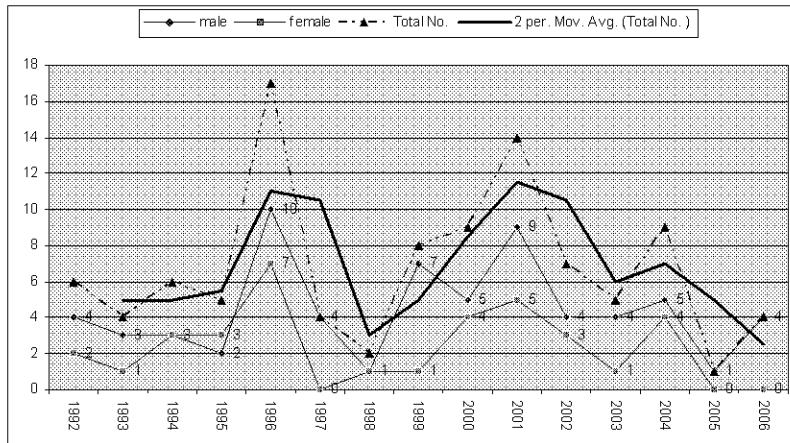


Figure 4: MA Anthropology Student Graduation (raw figures)



Though, like the undergraduate program, the number of students enrolling for the MA program is tending towards a 50/50 share (Figure 3), there is greater variation when figures for those graduating are compared (Figure 5). The general trend is that more male than female students are graduating with an MA degree in Anthropology (Figure 6). The threshold was attained somewhere during 1995 and 1996 when the number of students enrolling equaled the number of students graduating.

Figure 5: MA Anthropology Student Graduation

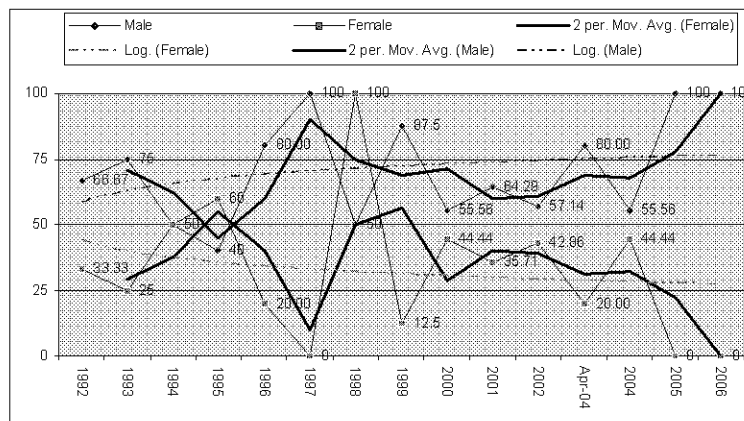
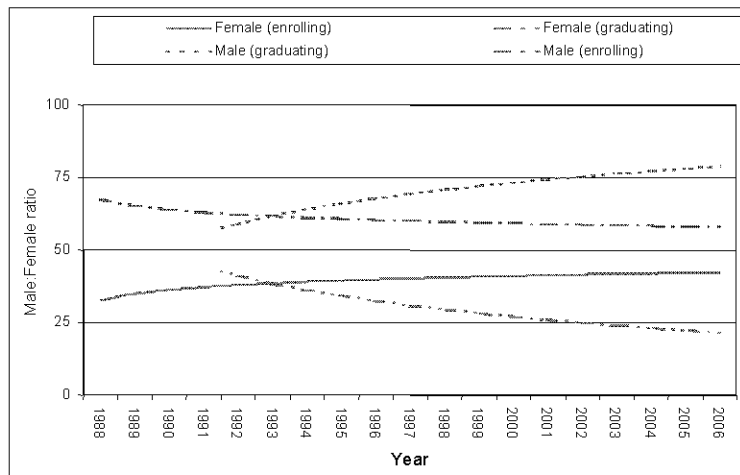


Figure 6: Comparison of MA Anthropology Enrolment and Graduation Trends



The available statistics indicate a dropout rate of about 37.32%. Since the program started, a total of 142 students have successfully completed their first year of study. However, of these only 89 have gone ahead to complete their theses and graduated. The reason as to why this scenario exists is a matter of conjecture. Clearly, this area needs to be investigated further.

What accounts for these differences in enrolment rates? What accounts for the differences in the graduation rates? There are a number of reasons that might be advanced, but two stand out. First, it is quite possible that resources allocated for supporting female students at the family level get diverted to other activities. This diversion of resources removes the available support structures. With no other support, the female students are forced to drop out of graduate school.

The second reason is perhaps related to family pressures. As female students graduate with undergraduate qualification, many find spouses during the intervening period before they enroll for a Masters degree or soon after enrolling. Suddenly, the female student finds herself under pressure to pay greater attention to family. In a mostly patriarchal set-up, there are no incentives for the female to proceed to complete a Master's degree. With a family to take care of, many sacrifice their academic careers in favor of providing the family with a base.

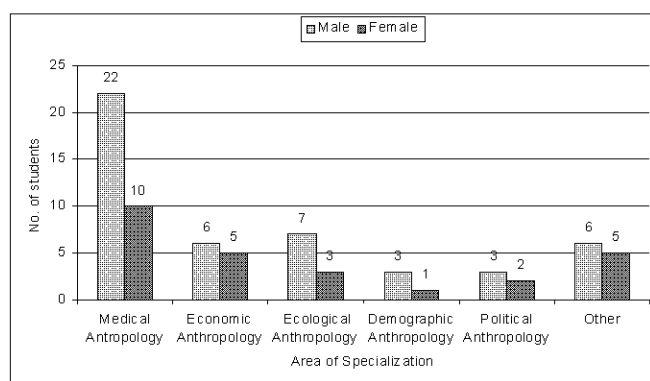
Areas of Focus for Graduate Anthropology Students

An analysis of MA Anthropology theses is quite revealing. Over the years, the students moved academic-based theses into writing problem-oriented theses. The greatest shift in the last decade is into medical anthropology. This shift is not accidental. In 1994, the Institute of African Studies in collaboration with the then Danish Bilharziasis Laboratories started a decade long health research project in Bondo, western Kenya. The Kenyan and Danish Health Research (KEDAHR) Project was funded by Danida. A key component of the project was capacity enhancement. As a result of this focus, a large number of students were funded to conduct research within the project size.

By 2004 when the project was concluded, several Masters degree students and a couple of PhD students had gone through the KEDAHR project. At the last count in 2006, there were 27 completed Masters and four PhD⁵ degrees with most of the degrees being in Anthropology (Nyamongo and Aagaard-Hansen, 2006). In addition there were several associated projects that further helped to train students. Many more have continued to do research in Nyang'oma under associated projects. Support for this training has continued to come from DBL. The main focus for most of the students who went through the program was in Medical Anthropology. A detailed discussion of this project can be found elsewhere (see Suda and Aagaard-Hansen, 2003 and Nyamongo and Aagaard-Hansen, 2006).

By 2006, the Institute of African Studies has produced 89 Masters. The students have focused on a wide range of areas from medical anthropology, demographic anthropology, economic anthropology, political anthropology and veterinary anthropology among other areas of interest. The areas covered by students in their theses are presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Areas covered by Anthropology Graduate Student theses



Nyang'oma Research Training Site (NRTS): The research training site is most closely associated with the KEDAHR project. After the closure of the health research project the Institute of African Studies with DBL felt that the long association with Nyang'oma and the infrastructure already in place could find other use instead of closing down the facility. The Nyang'oma site had over the years developed good rapport with the local population and the catholic mission in Nyang'oma. The infrastructure was already established including a library, basic computer facilities and bicycles for fieldwork. In order to continue providing services to students who needed ready access to a field site for training purposes, the base was converted into a Research Training Site to continue providing this service. Most recently the Institute has used NRTS to give first year MA students practical field training.

The problem of researching among one's own people is an ever-present one for graduate students in Kenya. One of the compelling reasons why this situation prevails is the paucity of research funds. Due to limited funding for research, the majority of the students end up conducting research among their own people where they can cut on time and costs for doing fieldwork. The problems associated with conducting ethnographic studies among your own people are of course well documented (see for example Sörbö 1982 and Nyamongo 1998, pp. 159), not least among them the issue of objectivity. For a detailed discussion in the Kenyan context see Onyango-Ouma (2005).

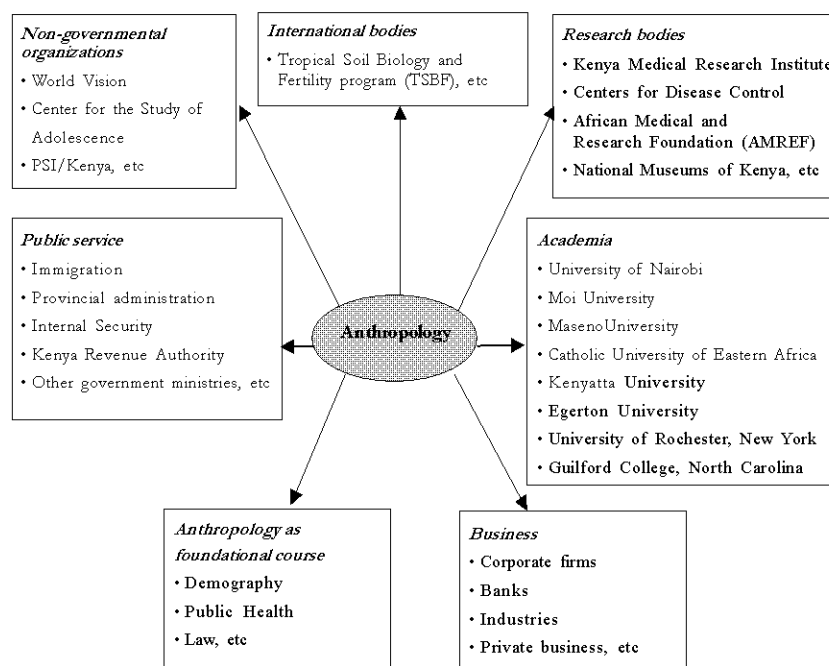
The Job Market for Anthropology Students

Anthropology is still a little known discipline in the Kenya, even with a high profile anthropologist like Jomo Kenyatta. Unfortunately by the time the students join University to start their University education, they have heard little or nothing about Anthropology⁶. Indeed most get to hear of Anthropology when they receive letters of admission to university. In an environment of misinformation and perception that anthropology studies past cultures, many students end up transferring to other courses within the same university or they may seek inter-university transfers (Onyango-Ouma 2006).

First year students always ask during orientation week, "What are the prospects of getting a job after completing four years of studying anthropology at the University of Nairobi?" This, of course, is a question whose answer one cannot determine upfront. Furthermore, it is a question coming four years before its time; it requires one to take the present and extrapolate into the future. So we must start by asking what are the Kenyan graduates of anthropology currently engaged in?

The 21st Century economy is fast becoming a global economy, the workforce and markets are increasingly diverse, and the demand for communication skills in a multi-cultural context is on the increase as a result. Anthropology provides the student with multiple skills grounded on historical, contemporary, biological and cultural perspectives. The intellectual base built by anthropology assures that students are well-grounded to tackle diverse contemporary issues. Its flexibility as a tool for dealing with human problems ensure its relevance through the generations.

Figure 6: Where to find Anthropology Graduates



A quick survey will find anthropology students in the following though not exhaustive areas: provincial administration, government ministries, non-governmental organizations, research bodies, international bodies, academia and in business. Figure 6 presents some of the areas where Anthropology graduates can be found at present. By far, the majority of the anthropology students continue to be absorbed by the public sector in government ministries and parastatals. Many Anthropology graduates have made their way into provincial administration mostly as dis-

trict officers and gradually making their way up in the administrative hierarchy. Also Anthropologists can now be found working for the Department of Immigration and Internal Security. Even sectors such as KRA, which would ordinarily attract economists and students of Business Studies, now employ Anthropology graduates.

The academia as continued to attract Anthropology MA graduates to serve as Lecturers. From here, they go on to obtain their doctorates in Anthropology. Currently these graduates are employed by Nairobi University, Moi University, Maseno University, Kenyatta University, Egerton University and Catholic University in Eastern Africa. In the diaspora, Nairobi University graduates are engaged as faculty in American Universities e.g. University of Rochester, New York and Guilford College, North Carolina. While most PhDs in Kenya have taken up jobs in academia, the situation in other places is different. For example, in the US, since 1985 over half of all new PhDs in Anthropology have taken non-academic positions in research bodies, not-for-profit associations, government agencies, international organizations among others. As more Kenyan PhDs in Anthropology come into the market, we should expect to see the trend witnessed in the US closer home. This growing demand for Anthropologists in other areas is stimulated by the need for analysts and researchers with critical skills who can manage, evaluate and interpret data on human behavior.

Other bodies that have absorbed Anthropology graduates include research organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), National Museums of Kenya as well international bodies like the Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility (TSBF) which is part of the international consortium CIAT. Here, the anthropologists apply their diverse knowledge of human behavior and skills to plan, research and manage programs and the human resource.

Anthropology is often used as a foundation course by students who would want a broad base before later proceeding into other disciplines. The anthropology program at the University of Nairobi has continued to provide this service. For example, in Kenya anthropology graduate students have found their way into programs like law, development studies and population studies.⁷

Going back to the question, "what after getting a degree in Anthropology?" Clearly, the present environment is not unfavorable to anthropologists. The market for trained anthropologists is versatile, from the banking sector to legal, academic, public service, research and health

Anthropologists can be found working as professionals. One of the contributing factors to this wide array of opportunities is the anthropological holistic approach. The anthropologist's research and analytical skills lead to a wide range of career paths. With training in anthropology one has greater leeway to determine what they become.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have given an account of the state of Anthropological teaching and training in Kenya in general and at the Institute of African Studies in particular. There is no doubt the Institute continues to play a leading role in this endeavor. A critical review of student enrolments at the undergraduate and graduate levels is revealing. The picture that emerges is that of a discipline that desires nurturing to ensure greater student enrolment.

The problem of low enrolment, particularly at the first point of entry, is more of a problem whose location is upstream. By the time students join university, only a small proportion has heard of a subject known as anthropology. This may be said of Sociology, but anthropologists are more of a behind the scenes people. There is well documented misconception that anthropology's main focus is on 'unearthing bones', hence regarded as a discipline dealing with things gone by and which we would rather forget (see Onyango-Ouma, 2006) or that it is the study of "arthropods" (see Amuyunzu-Nyamongo, 2006), which sounds similar to the prefix "*Anthropos*." In other words, Anthropology deals with things past, which have no relevance to contemporary Kenyan problems. These misconceptions need debunking.

In the preceding section on the job market, I have tried to show that the calling for Anthropologists goes beyond this narrow conception of anthropology as a discipline. I have endeavored to demonstrate that Anthropology graduates are as competitive as any other and, in fact, are more adaptable owing to the holistic approach in anthropological training. While I do not claim this to be an exhaustive handling of the debate, it should contribute to the growing need to document the contribution of anthropologists to Kenya's cultural, social, and political economic development. Exactly, how many anthropologists are enough, I leave it to the relevant experts. In my view, we should match the number of students with the job market so that it is not flooded or undersupplied.

Notes

1. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe studied for a Masters in Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, USA. In 1960, he became the first African Governor-General of independent Nigeria and went on to become its first ceremonial President three years later in 1963. In 1960, when the University of Nigeria, Nsukka was started, Anthropology was included in the curriculum as one of the subjects.
2. The Institute of African Studies has since been renamed The Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies. This name reflects its new and expanded academic programs. However, throughout this paper, I retain the original name of Institute of African Studies.
3. The University College, Nairobi was a constituent College of The University of East Africa. Dar es Salaam and Makerere were the other two colleges that made up The University of East Africa.
4. DBL is now renamed the Danish Bilharziasis Laboratories – Institute for Health Research and Development.
5. Since then three more Kenya PhDs associated with KEDAHR have been awarded.
6. This may be said of Sociology as well. Like Anthropology, Sociology is not taught anywhere at lower levels. In other countries, notably in the US, anthropology is introduced much earlier before students join university.
7. Within the urban studies field, Anthropology is poised to take a greater role in documenting issues in urban settlements. The urban environment in many developing countries consists of settlements often extended into the peri-urban areas.

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