



The Power of Water: Landscape, Water and the State in Southern Africa

28-29 March 2007

An interdisciplinary conference
in Edinburgh,
sponsored by:
Centre of African Studies
University of Edinburgh

Reminder: Call for Papers

**Deadline for submission of abstracts
– 1 November 2006**

Deadline for submission of papers – 1 March 2007

Please submit a 500 word abstract accompanied by
a short CV to Cas.Conference07@ed.ac.uk.
We will notify speakers of the acceptance
of their abstracts in December 2006.

For more information please visit
<http://www.cas.ed.ac.uk> or contact Grace Owens at CAS.
Tel. +44(0)131 6503878 or email: Cas.Conference07@ed.ac.uk

Keynote Speakers:

Professor James Ferguson

Dr David Mosse

Dr Joann McGregor

The conference will focus on the following three themes in order to explore the interrelationship between practices and discourses of water, landscape and the state in southern Africa.

- a) Water, landscape and the past
- b) The urbanisation of water
- c) Water, governance and development intervention

Although it has become commonplace to hear about pending threats to the world's most critical natural resource – water, in recent years there has been a growing interest in the social, cultural and political roles of water. This broadening of interest beyond the limitations of hydrology, public engineering and irrigation planning has been reflected in a proliferation of works dealing with the complex relationships of water with society, culture, history and political organisation. David Mosse's book *The Rule of Water* broke new ground by exploring the complexity of historically and culturally situated inter-relationships between irrigation, 'the elementary facts of ecology' and social and political organisation in India. Taking forward this carefully picked path between the pitfalls of environmental determinism and the extremes of social constructivism, the aim of this conference is to use water as a 'conceptual lubricant' to explore the inter-linkages between practices and discourses of the postcolonial state, and the cultural, environmental and experiential aspects of landscape. We seek to explore how practices and discourses of water and landscape are inevitably tied up with, and invoke, different ideas, imaginations and perceptions of what the postcolonial state is, should and could be in southern Africa.