

CURRICULUM VITAE – VANYA GASTROW

Qualifications

- (2017) PhD in Migration and Displacement, University of the Witwatersrand. Title: *Shop Gevaar: A Socio-Legal Critique of the Governance of Foreign National Spaza Shopkeepers in South Africa*
- (2011) Mphil in Private Law (*with distinction*), University of Cape Town (UCT)
- (2010) Admitted as an attorney, Western Cape High Court
- (2007) Bachelor of Laws (LLB), UCT
- (2001) BA, Cultural and Literary Studies, UCT

Professional Experience

- *February 2024 to present*: Senior Researcher, Institute for Security Studies

I am currently appointed as a Senior Researcher in the Justice and Violence Prevention Programme of the Institute for Security Studies. I am involved in the programme's Evidence-Based Policing Project. It aims to enhance policing and law enforcement in the Western Cape Province through encouraging the use of evidence-based violence prevention strategies.

- *January 2013 to February 2024*: Independent Research Consultant in Law, Migration and Society

I worked as a freelance researcher in the field of migration on projects led by organisations ranging from the African Centre for Cities (UCT), the African Centre for Migration & Society (Wits University), the Southern African Migration Programme (SAMP), Queen's University (Canada), the Balsillie School of International Affairs (Canada), the Institute for Social Development (UWC), the Scalabrini Institute for Human Mobility in Africa, and the African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum (APCOF). The projects were funded by donors including the European Union, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Raith Foundation, and the Hans Seidel Foundation.

- *January 2018 to June 2020*: Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Department of Public Law, UCT.

My work entailed drafting a book manuscript on immigrant retailers' encounters of formal and informal regulatory systems in South Africa. The manuscript was published as a book titled *Citizen and Pariah: Somali Traders and the Regulation of Difference in South Africa* (Wits University Press, 2022).

- *September 2010 to October 2012*: Visiting Researcher, African Centre for Migration & Society, University of the Witwatersrand.

I undertook qualitative field research on the ability of immigrant shopkeepers to access formal and informal justice mechanisms in three township field sites in Cape Town (Philippi, Khayelitsha, and Kraaifontein). I worked closely with immigrant community structures, civil society and the South African Police Service and carried out approximately 200 interviews with diverse stakeholders including immigrant retailers, police officers, prosecutors, community leaders, civil society members, local councillors, and South African residents.

- *May 2010 to September 2010*: Research Assistant, African Network of Constitutional Lawyers, housed at the University of Cape Town's Department of Public Law.

I assisted the African Network of Constitutional Lawyers organise an international workshop on socio-economic rights and provided editing assistance to the journal *ESR Review: Economic and Social Rights in South Africa*.

- *January 2008 to February 2010:* Candidate Attorney, Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr Inc.

While based at Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr's litigation, property, labour, and competition departments I engaged in legal research, correspondence with clients, and drafting and reviewing legal documents.

Professional Affiliations

- *July 2022 to present:* Adjunct Senior Lecturer at the Department of Public Law, UCT
- *July 2020 to present:* Research Associate, Centre for Law and Society, UCT

Grants and Awards

- UCT Research Committee Postdoctoral Research Fellowship 2018 and 2019.
- NRF Chair in Security and Justice Postdoctoral Funding Grant 2018 and 2019.
- University of the Witwatersrand Doctoral Completion Grant 2016.
- NRF Innovation Doctoral Scholarship 2014 and 2015.
- Oppenheimer Memorial Trust Doctoral Scholarship 2014 and 2015.
- University of the Witwatersrand Postgraduate Merit Award 2013, 2014 and 2015.
- NRF Freestanding Masters Scholarship 2011.
- UCT Dean's Merit List (Law Faculty) 2005 and 2006.
- UCT Dean's Merit List (Humanities Faculty) 1999 and 2001.
- UCT Entrance Merit Scholarship 1999, 2000, and 2001.

Teaching

- 'Legal consciousness and dissent: The formal and informal regulation of foreign shopkeepers in South Africa'. Guest lecture given as part of the UCT's Public Law Department's Masters in Law and Society degree, Cape Town, 25 March 2025.
- 'Policing of Crime Against Foreign Nationals'. Guest lecture given as part of the UCT's Public Law Department's elective course on 'Selected Issues in Criminology', Cape Town, 9 May 2025.
- 'Policing of Crime Against Foreign Nationals'. Guest lecture given as part of the UCT's Public Law Department's elective course on 'Selected Issues in Criminology', Cape Town, 22 March 2024.
- 'Migration, Law and Society'. Guest lecture given as part of University of Turin's Department of Cultures, Politics and Society's MA Programme on Culture, Politics and Society, 24 November 2021.
- 'Migration and Policing'. Guest lecture given as part of the Centre for Human Rights (University of Pretoria), the African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum (APCOF) and the Global Law Enforcement and Public Health Association's Advanced Human Rights Course on Policing and Vulnerability in Africa, 15 September 2021.
- 'Migration, Law and Society in Africa'. Guest lecture given as part of UCT's Public Law Department's *Law and Society in Africa* LLM/Mphil course in Criminology, Law & Society, Cape Town, 14 March 2019.
- 'Ethnic Enclaves: Somali Informal Traders in Cape Town'. Guest lecture given at London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), and University of Cape Town (UCT) Summer School course titled 'Refugees in Africa', Cape Town, 4 July 2014.

Publications

Books

- Vanya Gastrow, *Citizen and Pariah: Somali Traders and the Regulation of Difference in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2022.

Book Chapters

- 'The Migrant as Pariah: Theorising Pariahdom, Migration and Solidarity in Africa'. In *Handbook on African Migration*, edited by Daniel Tevera, Mulugeta Dinbabo and Jonathan Crush. London: Edward Elgar Publishing (in press).
- Vanya Gastrow. 'Curtailling Immigrant-Owned Small Businesses in Contemporary Africa: Indigenisation, Regulation and Enforcement'. In *New Directions in South-South Migration*, edited by Jonathan Crush, Abel Chikanda and Sujata Ramachandran. Switzerland: Springer Series on South-South Migration, 2025.
- Vanya Gastrow with Roni Amit. 'The role of migrant traders in local economies: A case study of Somali spaza traders in Cape Town'. In *Mean Streets: Migration, Xenophobia and Informality in South Africa*, edited by Jonathan Crush, Abel Chikanda and Caroline Skinner, 162–177. Canada and South Africa: Southern African Migration Programme (SAMP), the African Centre for Cities (ACC) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada and South Africa, 2015.

Journal Articles

- Vanya Gastrow. 'Legal Consciousness and Dissent: The Formal and Informal Regulation of Foreign Shopkeepers in South Africa', *Oñati Socio-Legal Series*, 14:1 (2024), pp. 33–55. doi: 10.35295/osls.iisl.1678.
- Vanya Gastrow. 'Business Robbery, the Foreign Trader and the Small Shop: How Business Robberies affect Somali Traders in the Western Cape'. *South African Crime Quarterly* no. 43 (March 2013): 5–15.

Reports

- Anine Kriegler, Vanya Gastrow, and Asive Xali. *What Works for Hotspot Patrols in Cape Town: Promoting High Performance Policing*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2025.
- Sergio Carciotto, Vanya Gastrow and Corey Johnson. *Manufacturing Illegality: The Impact of Curtailing Asylum Seekers' Right to Work in South Africa*. Cape Town: Scalabrini Institute for Human Mobility in Africa, 2019.
- Vanya Gastrow. *Problematizing the Foreign Shop: Justifications for Restricting the Migrant Spaza Sector in South Africa*. SAMP Migration Policy Series No. 80, 2018.
- Mulugeta F. Dinbabo, Yanga Zembe, Sharon Penderis, Sergio Carciotto, Chris Nshimbi, Vanya Gastrow, Michael Nguattem Belebema, Jonas Nzabamwita, Kenny Chiwarawara, Maryan A. Ahmed, Murus Gidey Alemu and Leon Tshimpaka Mwamba. *Refugee and Asylum-Seeking Representative Structures and their Communities in South Africa*. Cape Town: Institute for Social Development and the Scalabrini Institute for Human Mobility in Africa, 2017.
- Vanya Gastrow with Roni Amit. *Lawless Regulation: Government and Civil Society Attempts at Regulating Somali Informal Trade in Cape Town*. Johannesburg: African Centre for Migration & Society, 2015.

- Vanya Gastrow with Roni Amit. *Somalinomics: A Case Study on the Economic Dimensions of Somali Informal Trade in the Western Cape*. Johannesburg: African Centre for Migration & Society, 2013.
- Vanya Gastrow with Roni Amit. *Elusive Justice: Somali Traders Access to Formal and Informal Justice Mechanisms in the Western Cape*. Johannesburg: African Centre for Migration & Society, 2012.

Submissions:

- Vanya Gastrow. Submission on the Draft Employment Service Amendment Bill of 2021, 20 May 2022.
- Vanya Gastrow. Submission to the Gauteng Department of Economic Development on the Draft Gauteng Township Economic Development Bill, 26 November 2020.
- Vanya Gastrow. Submission to the Competition Commission on the Grocery Retail Sector Inquiry Statement of Issues, 14 August 2016.
- Vanya Gastrow, Roni Amit, and Aurelia Segatti. Submission to the Department of Trade and Industry on the Licensing of Businesses Bill 2013, 17 April 2013.

Opinion Pieces

- Vanya Gastrow and Kwakhanya Max 'Trust between police and foreign nationals can improve safety for all' *ISS Today*, 1 December 2025, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/trust-between-police-and-foreign-nationals-can-improve-safety-for-all>.
- Vanya Gastrow 'Can evidence-based policing become routine across South Africa?' *ISS Today*, 2 October 2025, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/can-evidence-based-policing-become-routine-across-south-africa>.
- Vanya Gastrow and Camaren Peter 'Xenophobia overshadows Terbufos crisis' *News24*, 24 November 2024, <https://www.news24.com/opinions/fridaybriefing/vanya-gastrow-and-camaren-peter-xenophobia-overshadows-terbufos-crisis-20241128>
- David Bruce and Vanya Gastrow 'Extortion is the new face of firearm crime in many townships', *News24*, 29 August 2024, <https://www.news24.com/news24/opinions/fridaybriefing/david-bruce-and-vanya-gastrow-extortion-is-the-new-face-of-firearm-crime-in-many-townships-20240829>.
- Vanya Gastrow 'Is Cape Town's drop in business robbery a cause for concern?' *ISS Today*, 9 July 2024, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/is-cape-town-s-drop-in-business-robbery-a-cause-for-concern>.
- Vanya Gastrow 'Template for Trauma: Today's looting has its roots in xenophobic violence of the past', *Daily Maverick*, 14 July 2021, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2021-07-14-template-for-trauma-todays-looting-has-its-roots-in-xenophobic-violence-of-the-past/>.
- Vanya Gastrow 'Foreign Traders are Vital to Township Economies: Removing them will be Bad for Economic Growth', *Daily Maverick*, 14 October 2020. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2020-10-14-foreign-traders-are-vital-to-township-economies-removing-them-will-be-bad-for-economic-growth/>
- Vanya Gastrow 'Spaza Shops and their Owners, Foreign and Domestic, Revisited' *Business Day*, 5 March 2020, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/opinion/2020-03-05-spaza-shops-and-their-owners-foreign-and-domestic-revisited/>.

- Vanya Gastrow 'Vavi's Foreign Trader Tweets: An Attack on the Poor and Marginalised' *Daily Maverick*, 21 January 2019, available at <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2019-01-21-vavis-foreign-trader-tweets-an-attack-on-the-poor-and-marginalised/>
- Vanya Gastrow 'Seizing Spaza Shops Makes a Mockery of Promise that SA Belongs to All who Live in it' *Business Day Live*, 5 April 2016, available at <http://www.bdlive.co.za/opinion/2016/04/05/seizing-spaza-shops-makes-mockery-of-promise-that-sa-belongs-to-all-who-live-in-it>.
- Vanya Gastrow 'Soweto Xenophobia and the Foreign Cowboy' *Daily Maverick*, 2 February 2015, available at <http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2015-02-02-soweto-xenophobia-and-the-foreign-cowboy/#.VO2Z9Eurhg0>.
- Vanya Gastrow 'Immigrants are Valuable Assets in Post-Apartheid South Africa', *Cape Times*, 13 October 2011, page 11.
- Vanya Gastrow and Petra Krusche. 'When Courts can't See the Wood for the Trees'. *Without Prejudice* vol 10, no. 3 (April 2010): 18-19.
- Petra Krusche, Vanya Gastrow and Susan Barron 'Township Trading Must Offer Choice', *Business Day – Law and Tax Review*, 14 September 2009, page 4.
- Petra Krusche and Vanya Gastrow 'Somali Traders Pay the Price for Authorities' Failure to Uphold Basic Rights', *Cape Times*, 31 August 2009, page 9.

Other Contributions

- Vanya Gastrow. 'Spaza Shop' entry in the *Global Encyclopaedia of Informality, Volume II: Understanding Social and Cultural Complexity*, edited by Alena Ledeneva, 98–100. London: UCL Press, 2018.
- Vanya Gastrow. 'Enhancing Scholarship Through Mentorship and Appraisal: The CLS'S Inaugural Sociolegal Studies Early Career Workshop'. *Law & Society Review blog*, 10 October 2017, available at <http://lawandsocietyreview.blogspot.co.za/2017/10/enhancing-scholarship-through.html>.
- Co-external editor of Volume 11 No 3 (2010) of ESR Review: Economic and Social Rights in South Africa, a publication of the Community Law Centre at the University of the Western Cape.

Conferences and Seminars

- 'The Value of Evidence-Based Policing Approaches to Campus Security'. Presentation given at CAMPROSA Western Cape Regional conference, Stellenbosch, 14 May 2025.
- 'Evidence-based Policing and Collaborations'. Keynote address at Stellenbosch University SRC Safety Mbizo, Stellenbosch Town Hall, Stellenbosch, 10 April 2025.
- 'Evidence-Based Policing as Policing and Leadership Tool'. Online presentation at the South African Police Service Conference, 20 September 2024
- 'Extortion in Cape Town's Informal Economies'. Panel discussion hosted by Investec Insight on Security and Policing, 28 August 2024.

- 'Migration, Food and Politics in South Africa: Contestations Over Immigrant-owned Grocery Shops in South Africa and Their Implications for Food Security'. Webinar hosted by the Balsillie School of International Affairs, 29 May 2024.
- 'Legal Consciousness and Dissent: Formal and Informal Regulation of Foreign Shopkeepers in South Africa'. Talk hosted by UCT's Department of Public Law, 31 October 2023.
- 'Migrant Experiences and Food Security: Lessons from African States'. Presentation given at International Symposium on Migration and Mobilities, organised by Migration and Mobilities Interdisciplinary Collective in Africa (MMICA), University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, 12 October 2023.
- 'Somali Informal Retailers' Experiences of Regulation, Crime, Xenophobia and in South Africa'. Brown bag presentation hosted by the Centre for Analytics and Behavioural Change (CABC), Cape Town, 10 November 2022.
- 'Police Perceptions of Foreign Entrepreneurs'. Presentation given at Migration, Policing and Migrant Entrepreneurship in SA Conference, organised by the Migration Project, the African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum, the European Union, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and the Democracy Development Programme, Durban, 29 September 2022.
- 'Social Justice, Economic Inclusion and Immigration'. Talk given at Law Trust Chair in Social Justice's Social Justice Café, Stellenbosch University, 18 May 2022.
- 'The Legal and Economic Dimensions of Foreign Workers in South Africa: Lessons from Zimbabwe'. Talk given at Expert Roundtable on Social Justice, Economic Inclusion and Immigration. Organised by the Law Trust Chair in Social Justice, Faculty of Law, Stellenbosch University, 12 May 2022.
- 'Refugee Activism and Inclusive Urban Refugee Policies: Recipes for Democracy'. Talk given at the National Refugee-Led Conference, hosted by United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees, Pretoria, 23 February 2022.
- 'Template for Trauma: Today's Looting has its Roots in Xenophobic Violence of the Past'. Talk given at the Stats SA Virtual Conference on Migration and Urbanisation in South Africa, 27 July 2021.
- 'The Role Foreign Traders Play in Township Economies'. Invited talk given at the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office, Cape Town, 3 November 2020.
- 'Implications of the Act: Curtailment of the right to work'. Presentation given at roundtable on report titled *Manufacturing Illegality?: The impact of curtailing asylum seekers right to work in South Africa*. Organised by Scalabrini Institute for Human Mobility in Africa, the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office and the Hanns Seidel Foundation, Cape Town, 5 March 2019.
- 'Migration and Local Economies: Leveraging the Economic Opportunity Posed by Foreign National Small Businesses in South Africa'. Lecture given at the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS), University of the Western Cape, 22 August 2017, Cape Town.
- 'Law as Practice, Law as Discourse: What the Governance of Foreign National Spaza Shopkeepers in South Africa Reveals about Contemporary Law and Society'. Presentation given at the Sociolegal Studies Early Career Workshop, Centre for Law & Society, UCT Faculty of Law, 19 August 2017, Cape Town.
- 'Migration, Conflict and Urban Informality in Cape Town'. Presentation given at 'The Language of the Becoming City' workshop, University of Cape Town's School of Architecture, Cape Town, 30 May 2016.

- 'Migrant Traders in Local Economies: Somali Shops in Cape Town'. Presented at the Hungry Cities Partnership and AFSUN conference on 'Informality and the Urban Food System: Policy, Practice and Inclusive Growth through a Food Lens', Cape Town, 15 February 2016.
- 'The Governance of Somali 'spaza' shopkeepers in Cape Town'. Presented at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity 'Academy of Urban Super-Diversity', Berlin, 8 to 10 April 2015.
- 'Racial profiling of foreign National Traders in South Africa'. Presented at the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights expert meeting on racial profiling, Los Angeles, 2 November 2014.
- 'Foreign Migrants and Informal Sector Employment - Legal and Policy Issues'. Presentation given at the REDI3X3 Informal Sector Employment Project (ISEP) workshop, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 19 June 2014.
- 'Somalinomics: Somali Migrant Trade Practices and their Impact on Local Economies in the Western Cape'. Presentation given at the African Centre for Cities (UCT) and Southern African Migration Programme (Queen's University) workshop on 'Urban informality and migrant entrepreneurship in Southern African cities', Cape Town, 10 February 2014.
- 'Trading Rights: The Formal and Informal Regulation of Somali Migrant Traders in Cape Town'. Presentation given at the African Centre for Cities and Southern African Migration Programme (Queen's University) workshop on 'Urban informality and migrant entrepreneurship in Southern African cities', Cape Town, 11 February 2014.
- 'Addressing business robberies affecting Somali traders in Cape Town's Townships'. Talk given at the Institute for Security Studies Third International Conference on National and International Perspectives on Crime and Criminal Justice, Johannesburg, 25 to 26 October 2012.
- 'Xenophobia and Integration'. Talk given at the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) conference on 'The Somali Diaspora in South Africa: Supporting Peace and Reconstruction in Somalia', Cape Town, 19 to 20 September 2012.
- 'Attempted Forced Removals of Foreign Shopkeepers in Cape Town'. Talk given at the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) seminar on 'The country we want to live in: Policy, practice, legislation with respect to hate crimes', 30 August 2011, Cape Town.
- 'Balancing the Political and the Social in the Aftermath of Grootboom'. Presentation given at the University of South Africa (UNISA) seminar on 'Government of South Africa v Grootboom: a ten-year retrospective', Pretoria, 7 to 8 October 2010.

Selected Media Appearances and References

- International:

The Economist

Aljazeera

Forbes Africa

Quartz Africa

The World

Irin

The Punch (Nigeria)

Vanguard (Nigeria)

De Volkskrant (The Netherlands)

- South Africa:

News24
The Daily Maverick
Times Live
Business Day
Polity
Rapport
Mail & Guardian
Wits Vuvuzela
GroundUp
Eyewitness News
IOL News
SABC News
Cape Talk
SAfm
Smile FM
Radio Islam
Classic FM
Radio 786

External Reviews

- Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies
- African Studies
- Social Dynamics
- African Human Mobility Review
- Wits University Press
- Theoria