

Interviewer: James Wilson

Interviewee: Goran Hyden

UF 300 AB

W: Today is March 8, 1996. It is a Friday. My name is James Wilson and I am speaking this morning with Dr. Goran Hyden. Dr. Hyden I am going to ask you to state your full name.

H: My name is Goran Hyden.

W: Okay, Dr. Hyden and you are currently at what position here at the University of Florida?

H: I am a professor of political science here at the University of Florida since 1986 and I am also for the last sixteen to seventeen months the interim Director of the Center for African Studies.

W: Before we discuss your tenure here at the University of Florida, I would like for you to begin with your career as a political scientist leading to your appointment here in 1996. Just briefly tell us how you became a political scientist? I know that is expanding some years, but if you could maybe highlight how you became interested in political structures? What were some of your first appointments? Just kind of an overview.

H: My political interests started when I interned as a journalist in Swedish newspapers during the period I was a student at the University of Lund. During that time which was from 1959 to 1963, a lot of things happened around the world, not the least the coming of African independence. While I was doing some reporting of politics back in Sweden

I also took an interest and was encouraged by my senior colleagues to try to help them to understand Africa. My original interest in Africa and in politics started when I was a journalist. That is how I eventually got into studying political science at the graduate level, because my department, political science at the University of Lund, invited me back in 1962 to actually do first a master's and then a doctorate degree at the University of Lund. That is how I continued.

W: Any part of Africa in particular?

H: I was not at that time interested in any one country because being involved on a long distance basis Africa was just one big place. I tried to follow several countries because things happen not only in one place but in many.

W: The University of Lund is in Sweden?

H: It is in Sweden, yes.

W: How involved was Sweden at that time with the affairs of Africa?

H: Very limited. Most of the people who had been in Africa, worked in Africa, and had contacts in Africa were missionaries. I was one of the first Africanists in Sweden.

In fact, I was one of the first to receive a research fellowship in 1963 to go to, as it turned out in the end, Tanzania to do my field work in 1964.

W: This was ripe, newly independence era.

H: Just the first few years after independence, correct.

W: What were some of your first impressions of Africa as a young journalist/Africanist? Did you have any Swahili background? At that time you were not a missionary, you were not a part of the government, how were you perceived when you were there?

H: First of all I had studied Swahili while I was at UCLA as a graduate student in 1962-1963, so I had limited knowledge of Swahili when I went to Tanzania in 1964. I do not know if I should say my impressions of Africa and Tanzania, east Africa with Tanzania in particular at that time. It was exciting to be out in the field and to me it was something that turned me on in a sense that I felt that Africa was the place that I could relate to both at the personal level and at the professional level. Eventually I was to find my wife in that very area where I was working. **Melania**, who was at that time just back from England where she had been trained as a registered nurse and myself began our relationship during the period I was in Bukoba on the western side of Lake Victoria where I did my field work and where Melania comes from.

W: I have heard a lot of that story because as you know Melania is my Swahili professor. I am wondering, after how many years were you in Tanzania in that position?

H: One year, my field work was essentially a one year assignment. I had a grant for that period.

W: Then you returned back to Sweden?

H: No, while I was in Bukoba I was in touch with people at Makerere University in Kampala which was about four hours drive away. When I needed academic advice I was actually often in touch with people up there. The Department of Political Science at Makerere invited me in 1965 to stay on for awhile teaching at Makerere in order to fill a gap for someone in Uganda. **In fact, Kenyan, but somebody coming back to teach.** That person was supposed to finish his Ph.D. in six months I was told when I was first hired so I should be there for only six months. As it turned out he stayed on or had to take longer time to finish his Ph.D. so my stay there became fifteen months rather than six. I stayed in Uganda and Melania and I had our first child, Michael during that time.

W: So you really have an East African experience here because your field research is in Tanzania, but it is very close across the border from Uganda.

H: That is right.

W: Then after your fifteen months teaching experience in Uganda can you tell me how that was at first? You were completing your dissertation and teaching at the same time?

H: Yes, so I was a very young lecturer and uncertain of myself partly because I had never taught really except when I had been assisting as a teacher while I was still in Sweden. I had never taught on my own. So that was a challenge, but also the language. English is not my mother tongue. Although by that time I felt I handled the English language

reasonably well. After all I had been both to Oxford in England and I had been to UCLA. I had been one year at that time in East Africa where in addition to Swahili you speak a lot of English. It was not that I was all that uncomfortable using the English language, but it was still a little bit of a challenge. I had my own doubts how well I would do but at least I know from that experience that I could do it. I had no big major problem. My students at least never complained about my language.[laughter] Even the political science I taught seem to have gone down well.

W: What courses particularly did you teach? An introduction of political science, of political theory? At this time Uganda as well as, Kenya and Tanzania are going through a major political change. What type of political theory were you teaching at this time?

H: I was told or asked to teach public administration which was an area I did not really know all that much about but I at least had some sense of. It was a baptism you might say, which was slightly outside of my own area of comparative politics. I managed to do that and it is interesting in my own career since then I have always retained an interest in public administration or development administration. In some respects that first assignment and the need to really read up and be conversant with public administration literature was something that I now look back at as a plus or as a bonus.

W: You also said that this was a comparative policy and development and I know from reading your resume that you have done a lot of development work. At that time in your career did you see yourself not just as a politician, but also as a developer in terms of you were creating the next generation of leaders in Uganda and coming in contact with some of the rising stars in Tanzania? Were you involved in any development work at the same time as you were teaching at the University as well as working on your dissertation?

H: No, let me say first of all, I do not think that we had the sense, at least I did not have a sense at that time in the early years when I was in East Africa that I was teaching the next generation. For better or for worse that did not dawn on me until eventually in the 1970s. I realized that some of the people I had taught and even after that, were becoming as you indicated, important peoples in their own right in government or in business and so on, so that in politics generally. At that time I did not have the sense of it, nor did I actually engage in any develop work though I thought from the very beginning that development was an issue that I was interested in. My own dissertation focused on political development. I was interested particularly in the context of that area, which was very far from the capital of Dar es Salaam, how much people in that distant area really knew about politics and what was going on. I did a survey of people in that area which provided the data for my dissertation. I tested their knowledge to see if for

instance, people lived far away from the regional capital in this case Bukoba, whether they were educated or less educated. Whether there was commercial activity or less commercial activity in the area where they lived. Whether that made a difference in terms of their political outlook, political attitude and political knowledge. The interesting thing with my dissertation was that all of these so called modernization variables did not really make a difference. In fact, you found that even poor people, people who were not educated, people who lived far away from the regional capital, had as a good a political knowledge [and] had pretty much the same political attitudes as people who were closer to this particular city. I found as an explanation to this the fact that the political organization of the ruling party that in those days TAN or **Tandaneka** African National Union. I hope you can spell that.

W: I can.

H: That party in itself had mobilized people and raised their consciousness so that even in the distant corners of this part, even in the more distant corners of that particular region, there was not really any difference in terms of what people knew about what was going on and their attitude was pretty much the same as people who live close to Bukoba.

W: Did you use a lot of oral history in your dissertation?

H: No, I did not do much oral history, although I did a little bit of it. Not being a historian [and] perhaps not being sensitive enough at that time to historical legacy.

Although, I did have a chapter on the historical background of the area. I cannot say that I went out of my way to speak to people other than a couple of older men whom I met who were providing me with some information. I cannot say it was an oral history project, no.

W: For the next five or six years you have a combination of going back to Sweden, going to Kenya, and going to Tanzania and it goes from I think two years, one year, two year blots.

H: Yes, I went back to finish my degree in early 1967 and I remember my wife and our son, and Melania's niece was also with us at that time, we arrived I think it was the 31st of January 1967, on a day that was both cold and snowy. My wife had been to England and knew what snow was but it was still not the kind of warm reception that you had. The warmth of the reception fortunately was that not only was my family there to welcome my family, but also some of my friends were there. It was like coming home in that sense. That was good. We stayed in Sweden while I finished my doctorate. We stayed in Lund for about eighteen months. We left in late July 1968, to go to Kenya this time. I had never worked in Kenya before, before I went back to East Africa. I took up a job as lecturing government or in political science at the University of Nairobi in 1968 and was there until 1971. At that time I had been promoted to what they called senior lecturer and I moved as senior lecturer in political science to the University of Dar es

Salaam where I then taught for six years from 1971 to 1977.

Again in a period during which in 1974 I was promoted to professor of political science.

W: In the University of Dar es Salaam?

H: Yes, at the University of Dar es Salaam. That was a very exciting period in Dar es Salaam because shall we say, Dar es Salaam was in a way both an intellectual and a political capital particularly for those people who were in there supporting the liberation movements in Southern Africa. Dar es Salaam was the sight of the **OAU Liberation** Committee headquarters. There were a lot of people but at the University itself there were a lot of interesting people like **Walter Rodney** for instance who was teaching at the University of Dar es Salaam at that time. Several other prominent historians and social scientists and others who have moved on in some cases to other countries in Africa or moved on to other places in the world depending on where they came from. It was really an exciting environment. Some people may have complained that it was _____ ideological if you were comparing with you your average American campus. Certainly what was going on in Dar es Salaam was much more embedded in an ideological sort of context for not only Socialists, but generally you might say principles of justice and equity or equality were very important. It was in that kind of a climate that I taught. I must say being not convinced myself about Marxism, I was not a part of the inner core of some of the people who made

up much of the left at that time. I did have not only good relations at the personal level with many of these people but I did also have a chance to understand and better appreciate the importance of that particular ideological perspective. I had as _____ to learn if I may say so, the conceptual structure of Marxism, as well as the language of Marxism without necessarily digesting in the sense of saying that I am a believer. I never became a believer and when I wrote my book on Tanzania which actually I did in 1977-1978 when I had sabbatical leave in Berkeley. Much of my concern at that time was to show not only the inadequacy of modernization, but also the inadequacy of Marxism as a general theory and the problems of applying that which is both intuitively but more specifically on the basis of the work I did during those years in Tanzania, the inadequacy of this broad, general explanations of what was going on in Africa. I felt that for instance, class analysis, among other things was really taken too far or used in a way that suggested that the people were not interested in really doing what you might call the field work to get the support for what they were trying to argue.

W: If I understand this, your career as a political scientist has been both theoretical but grounded in the reality of the experience. **You use the time that it was an exciting time during the time that you were actually seeing the political structure form with political actors that were coming better now in various parts of the world.** The way political

scientists learn what you know now is very different. They learn it mainly from people like you. Is there an open period now in the world where political scientists would be able to see the practicality of political structures right before them as you did in Africa?

H: I think that anyone who wants to become a serious scholar in the comparative field, in my case comparative politics, I think has to have his or her feet on the ground in one or two places so that they know what they are talking about. In other words they need to be able to have a relatively detailed area knowledge in order to be effective either as researchers or as teachers. You might say I was fortunate enough to have not only my field year in Bukoba, but I also had on top of that another, whatever it became, eleven or twelve years of teaching. That allowed me to get a much better sense of what Africa is all about and what Africans are all about both as colleagues and as human beings. I would say that the extended stay of mine in Africa which eventually was extended further by my work with the Ford Foundation, but all those years certainly have shaped my own outlook on both Africa and on political science. Do political scientists today get that experience? Well in some respects the answer is most people today do not get those teaching experiences because even if you get the fulbright to go out you may be able to go out to an African country for at best a year. The exchange programs that exist at the faculty level provide some similar kind of

experiences, but by and large the long and extended period that people could get in 1960s and early 1970s because there were _____, there were gaps to fill. Those are much more difficult these days. Although I think it is possible that one of the things that Africanist on this side of the Atlantic could possibly do if there only were funds, would be to go out and help or in other words assist in the teaching and in that process also learn something more about Africa. I would see that as a benefit, but I realize that funding for that kind of a program in the 1990s is almost out of the question.

W: I think I take your point because as a former Peace Corps volunteer, studying African history is very different because I lived with people, I speak the language, but I understood the culture and it is very different from doing field research where you are the main person gathering information and not necessarily receiving all the things that helped shape your perspectives. When you live among people and speak the language, eat the food, understand the customs, you become a little different in the outlet. Let me get an update, from Tanzania you have a sabbatical at the University of California-Berkeley, and at that sabbatical you are writing primarily a book on Tanzania...

H: No, called Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania. I do not know if you need that to be spelled, who are you to remember.

W: How was the book received during that time?

H: There were two kinds of reactions, mainly critical although I think that maybe I had two critical reactions and one positive. I am not sure, I think on the whole the positives probably in the long run were more than the negatives. There were two negative critiques not surprisingly at all one was from the Marxist side who complained about the fact that I was doing away or not realizing the importance of class. The other one was from the emerging or the re-emerging neoclassical economists who believed that I was not acknowledging enough the rationality of the farming peasant in Tanzania and suggesting that he was not responsive to market forces which is what everyone wanted to believe in the early 1980s. I think some people who criticized me for either of those things probably today would say something different. In those days that is what was said. The positive reaction which I had was largely that this was something that provided a new perspective on what was going on in Africa in Tanzania in particular. It was, if I may use a word which I think was used by some of my reviewers, a refreshing analysis or refreshingly original analysis of what was going on. That is why people who were positive in their reviews tended to write about this as an important contribution. I think on the whole that book probably stands out as the most important one I have written. Although I did write one called No Shortcuts to Progress in 1983 that has also been fairly often cited but in a way more often by people in the development of communities rather

than in academia. Although I know people in certain areas, of certain schools where they teach public administration or development administration, or development have often used that book.

W: After that you returned back to Sweden to do your free lance advance brief. Were you a free lance consultant?

H: Yes, we stopped there because my father had died while we were in Berkeley and my mother had come over to visit us in the Bay Area where we lived. It was just at that the loss of her husband at that time was still quite deep so we decided that on our way to Kenya where I had taken up a job with the Ford Foundation in 1977, actually taken it up for 1978 in August. I asked for permission to postpone my arrival in Kenya until the end of the year so that I had a chance to stay with my mother for awhile which the foundation was graciously agreeing to. We stayed on for about five or six months, I think from June to December of 1978, before we went to Kenya. I did not do anything as I have indicated in my **CV**. I did a little bit of teaching at my old department and I did a little bit of independent _____ consulting for SIDA the Swedish International Development Authority as it was called in those days.

W: You have two children at this time?

H: Three.

W: Three children at this time and they have to be trilingual. They must be divergent in English, _____ Swahili and Swedish?

H: Yes, the two elder children went to school in Sweden that fall semester and learned Swedish and had acquired enough Swedish at that time to be conversant. We never spoke Swedish in the family otherwise. When we were in Africa it was English and Swahili. The youngest one who was only two or three when we went to Sweden never picked up Swedish. He never learned Swedish and to this day although he is a Swedish citizen, at least formally speaking, he has a Swedish passport, he still does not speak Swedish very well. He understands it but he feels hesitant to speak it because it does not come naturally to him. My wife and the two other children learned a bit of Swedish during that period too.

W: I have had the pleasure of seeing the _____ in yourself mix Swahili and English in one sentence. [laughter] Did Swedish ever get mixed in it as well?

H: To tell you the truth we speak Swedish occasionally. The time when we use it between ourselves, Melania and I for instance, is when we need to say something that we do not want other people to understand. [laughter] If we are in Africa or in the US, but especially in Africa, we use Swedish to say something that might not be understood by others. When we are in Sweden we use Swahili so we can get away. [laughter] We do not do that to embarrass people. The occasion to be able to say something assuming that people could listen in those cases call for a language that

is not necessarily understood by everyone in the immediate environment.

W: That is a good switch. I do not know too many Swedes that will be speaking _____ Swahili and vice versa not too many Tanzanians speaking Swedish.

H: That is true.

W: 1979 to 1980 were you working as a Ford...

H: Become the social science research advisor. I replaced an anthropologist from the University of Washington called Edgar "Bud" Winans, who in turn had succeeded two years before that in African American political scientist called Clem Cottingham. Clem I believe was and may still be at Rutgers, or at least he was teaching at Rutgers after he returned from Kenya. I was essentially there responsible for running a research competition, providing support for fellowship in the field of population studies and doing a few other things including eventually getting involved with some limited support to NGO's that did community development work in Kenya.

W: What was Kenya like during that time?

H: This was just after _____ had taken over from the **Kenyata**. If I may call that a honeymoon period. Politically things were both stable and relatively exciting and people were relieved for sure that the transition from Kenyata to _____ had gone that smoothly. I think politically these were not difficult years. I experienced more political turbulence in 1969 when I was in Kenya the

first time because that is when they assassinated **Thoman Boyle** and it was also the time when Kenyatta went to **Quesumu** and they had a major confrontation with Kenya People Union supporters. The KPU was banned and people were killed at the political rally in Quesumu. That was a much more turbulent year. Those first two years in Kenya, 1978-1980 when I was a social science research advisor, were very pleasant years and good years on the whole for both Kenya and for anyone staying there.

W: Where did you live in Nairobi?

H: We lived on something called **Cambera Road** which was called the lower hill which was between Kenyatta National Hospital and the railway, or highway I should say. We overlooked the railway was going right by the bottom of our yard. Maybe another 200 yards beyond that was the _____ Highway going out to the airport. So we faced in a way I think a southerly direction. It was on something called lower hill.

W: After that you stayed on for five years?

H: Yes, I was asked to become the director or the representative as it is called of the foundations office for Eastern and Southern Africa in 1980. I took that up and I was in that job for five years.

W: Kenya is changing during this time.

H: That was a more difficult time politically. I tell you particularly because during those years in 1982, our office hosted the Ford Foundation Board in Nairobi, meeting there late August to early September. That was bringing in a

number of big shots like **Robert MacNamara** and **Don McHenry** and others who had been visible particularly during the Carter Administration in the case of **McHenry**. There were a number of big people coming out. The problem was that I had to write political reports to the Foundation headquarters in New York, keeping them posted about what was going on because this was a time when in June of 1982, **Moy** detained a number of prominent politicians and constitutionalized in an arbitrary fashion the one partisan state. The same day as Melania and I went on leave to Sweden which was the thirty-first of July, there was an attempted coup which took place only three hours after we left the airport. We were in Greece on our way to Sweden and suddenly the next day, in fact it was Monday, we left on a Saturday evening, I bought the International Herald Tribune and the main headline was Attempted Coup In Kenya Fails. Fortunately I did not have to cut my vacation short but that added to my worries. The board meeting went very well, but what I did not realize was that my political reporting to the New York headquarters had actually been picked up by special branch people and had been given to them, we suspect by one of my local employees.

By 1983 out of the blue came a letter from immigration saying we give you one week to leave the country. No explanation.

W: Did you say anything in the reports that were...

H: Yes, I had said a number of things that were maybe you could say to some extent speculative, but they were clearly either

indicating that I knew too much or that I had offended somebody in power. I was in a situation as you can understand it was not very easy to just accept that. The foundation was on my side through out this and so was some of my friends in the Kenyan government including the late **Robert Woco** who was eventually killed. At that time [he] was the person who helped me to finally get out of this by telling Moy that the Ford Foundation and I are important people, we need to do something. Eventually the message was conveyed to the Foundation and to myself, but that was almost a year later. During that time my stay had been extended and there was no problem that I never had any difficulty working with either the government people our others. It took sometime before this was resolved, but once it was resolved it was resolved in a way that the president himself expressed as forgive and forget, were the two words he used.

W: You met him personally?

H: Yes, I met Moy myself but I was not somebody who was close to him nor did I have any particular desire to [be].

[laughter]

W: Did you like working for the Ford Foundation?

H: Yes, it was exciting for the first few years but what I realized when I got closer to the end of my term was that it is very difficult to renew yourself in that kind of job. You become the manager and you loose track of much of what you want to do, especially since I still felt that I was not

academic. In 1985 when my term came to an end I was at that time able to spend a sabbatical year at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. During that period I was looking for a job and although there were a couple of offers including from the World Bank to work for them in the UNICEF. I decided in the end to go back to academia and I had two offers at that time. One was from Brown and one was from the University of Florida. Florida in the end prevailed for two strong reasons. One was they could offer tenure, and that became not automatic but it was a formality because I had enough credibility that I could be hired at the professorial level.

The other one was the growing African Studies interest on campus at that time. It had always been there but it was crystallizing in new ways which was making it more interesting for me to come here. Brown did not have much of a Africanist orientation. Although you might say that Brown would have been a very nice place to be at for the purposes of teaching.

W: You were there for a number of years from 1986 to 1993

H: Where?

W: As a part time...

H: Well you see what happened was Brown could not come up with a package for me but there were some people on campus who still wanted me. What we agreed was that during the summer when I am not employed by the University of Florida I would be employed by Brown. I was serving as associate director of what they call there the **Allen Schoem Feinstein World**

Hunger Program which focused on not only Africa. I became the linkman to Africa. I used to work either in Providence during part of the summer or doing my work in Africa for the World Hunger Program. That is why I had that relation for seven years until 1993.

W: That is nice.

H: Yes, that was a nice way of keeping myself busy during the summer and it fell in line with what I was interested in.

W: Tell me about your first years here at the University of Florida. You came in 1996. Just give me an overview of what political science department was like? What the growing African Studies department was like? What the University on a whole was like ten years ago?

H: First of all, when I was hired I was surprised by the extent to which there was not only money but genuine interest in African Studies here. I think the then Dean, **Sittman**, was really very anxious to build up African Studies and earn the University of Florida more visibility with what it already had as a good African Studies Center. At that time the now late **Gwendolyn Carter** had retired, the second retirement in her case to Florida and although she did not live in Gainesville she was still up here quite often in the early years of 1986-1987. She was often part of the group that I met with here and certainly she was an attraction for me to come here at that time. What else can I say? **Hunt Davis** was the director of the center at that time and I thought he did an excellent job here in terms of both administrating

the center and being an advocate for more positions. We were able to do that and when I came here I became part of the group of people who wanted to strengthen African Studies particularly in history. We were able to do that although it was more by chance perhaps because when Hunt Davis stepped down in 1988 and we were looking for a successor I chaired the search committee. We got some very good candidates, **Randall Packard**, from at that time Tufts University, historian on Zaire and Southern Africa. We got **Steven Firemen** from Wisconsin. We had **Peter Schmidt** from Brown and I have forgotten, there were two more candidates whose names now escape me. The relevant thing here was not only did we hire Peter eventually as the director, but we also hired Steve Firemen because there were enough interests in hiring him for the history department. **David Coalburn** served on the search committee, he was chair of history and really was interested in having a star like Steve Firemen come here. So again with **Charles Sidman's**, I think that is his first name, approval we were able to get two people out of one search which was very gratifying especially for African Studies.

W: It is too bad we cannot do that today.

H: Hopefully that could be done, but it is true the chances of doing it this time are very, very slim I agree. Political science in those days was a very strange place to get into because it was very factionalized at that time.

W: What does that mean?

H: There was a group of people who really ran the department and then there was the rest. It was interesting that the rest referred to the group in charge as the central committee. Although it was not formally constituted as the central committee everyone talked about the leadership in political science under the then chair **Al Cluebach** as the central committee. It was a legacy of that old regime that prevailed because I came in at the same time as the new chair of political science which was professor **Wayne Francis**. Wayne Francis was like myself in a position to really try to get the department to move beyond those divisions of polarization that had existed. I think Wayne paved the way and laid the foundation for a more collegial and hospitable environment in the department. I believe that one of the things that helped was that perhaps the most contentious person in the department at that time actually decided to move partly because he claimed that he was not appreciated enough by the new chair. He moved on to Louisiana State. As a result of him leaving and then eventually another person retiring, and one moving on to the honors program, there was essentially sort of almost a totally new field of people and a new generation began to emerge. It was that new generation that took over in 1989 when **Ken Wald** became the chair of political science and served in that capacity for five years. Maybe it was 1990. He was the new chair and I think that was to me a new generation because before that Wayne and Cluebach and most

of the other people had been older than me, but Ken Wald and subsequently **Steve Sanderson** who is now the chair of the department are younger than me. I look at them as a new generation and a younger generation.

W: How many African political scientists were a part of the department at this time?

H: There was only **Renella Mashon** and myself. Renee had been alone in the department as an Africanist for a long time so he was please to see me come. Although he and I had a couple of intellectual scuffles, but most of them fun, we remain on good terms throughout. Nevertheless, the main point was that we were able to attract a much bigger number of better graduate students to come to work in the department on Africa or on development which was the dimension that I brought to the department in a way that had not been there before. I share now with several others including Steven Sanderson and I do not know, I have a lot of friends. At that time it was not as pronounced. Steve was at the time I came here on leave working for the Ford Foundation in Brazil. Even though he had already established himself as a development scholar, he was not here. He was out of the country.

W: You are housed here in Grinter in the African Center. How did the construction with Steve Firemen and Peter Schmidt coming here [and] how did the formulation of Grinter, the African Center start? Were you always housed here or were you housed with the political scientists?

H: No, I was one of those who were given the office on this floor and my former colleague Renella Mashon also had his office here so the idea was to keep the senior Africanists in Grinter Hall. I think that was a deliberate policy to make sure that there was not a distinct presence of Africanists in the building on the floor. Steve Firemen had his office up here and Hunt Davis. Eventually others who had been working here like **John Mason** who came in I think a couple of years after that also had an office on this floor. **Art Hanson** has an office here. **Bernadete Kiere** who is french and _____ literature is also here. There have been a number of people. I think the policy will continue to keep a few senior Africanists, if not all of us, on this floor.

W: That was a policy stated by the University?

H: I think so, even from the beginning when this building first came into existence.

W: How has the African Center changed in the ten years that you have been here? Right now you are acting as the Acting Director until we have a replacement which you have in my opinion done an excellent job. How have you seen the Center grow and change? In 1985-1986 when you first came here there was a growing spurt and now ten years later there is still a growing spurt.

H: What I would say is that there was more growth in the 1980s than there has been in the 1990s. What I am pleased about

is that the University of Florida has not cut down on Africanist lines as many other schools have. I think the University of Florida and our college in particular and I credit the deans and the heads of departments for having been respectful of the significance of area studies in African studies included. What we are faced with now is a more generally difficult climate for hiring which means that it is not so much the fact that people do not want to hire Africanists but there simply is not the money. That is the big difference between the mid-1980's and mid-1990s, the ten years that I have been here. The Center is still holding out as the Africanist community here is still holding out. Compared to other places we are fairly strong. The only other places I can think of that might compete with us would be UCLA and possibly Wisconsin. Maybe Michigan State and possibly Boston University also have something to show for themselves. I doubt whether they could really compete with us. I would say we are competitive with them without any question but that is in terms of both numbers and quality and students. Talking about students, that is a big difference, James. When I came here I remember first of all there was no political science graduate students. There was not a single one in African studies. The students I met were essentially in anthropology. That was the department that had graduate students working on Africa, but no other. Anthropology was the only one. History as I recall maybe there was one and political science none. What has happened

since is as you have probably seen yourself a little bit is the growth in the number of graduate students studying Africa here. They come to not only anthropology any longer but they come also to political science and they come to history. We have one or two in geography as well and some of the other departments. Wildlife ecology and zoology and forestry where we have also done well in recruiting good students who are committed in their own way to Africa and not just treating Africa as a piece of international real estate.

W: The exchange programs with Universities in Tanzania, have they been in existence for a long time?

H: Most of these exchange programs, all of them I think, came about after Peter Schmidt came here. Peter has been very instrumental in building up those programs including the one in Dar es Salaam which I think he has particularly nurtured. It is true that we have not been able to get as many undergraduate students from the University of Florida campus to go there but we have had some and we have had others from other schools. On the whole the whole program has allowed the University of Florida to send students to Dar es Salaam. Because of the agreement that was originally signed between the two universities the money that our students pay to the Dar es Salaam University is actually set aside in a separate fund for what are essentially professional development grants to faculty from Dar es Salaam to visit the University of Florida. That is one way of trying to

combine both students from here going out to learn about Tanzania and faculty from there getting a chance to upgrade themselves at the University of Florida for a semester.

W: How long has that been working?

H: This has been going on now for five years maybe six. It started off soon after Peter came whether it was 1989 or 1990 we first had some people coming I do not recall but it was sometime around that time.

W: I am going to ask you just briefly to tell me how do you see the department in the next ten years? I presume and I hope for the Universities sake that you will not be keeping with your tradition of going from Kenya to Sweden, that you may be here for the next ten years.

H: Yes, I have grown older now. I do not see myself actually moving unless something very unexpected or very attractive comes up. That would be attractive not just for me but for the family, Melania especially. Melania and I have been quite happy in Gainesville and [at] the University of Florida. Both of us are small town people rather than big city people so we had no problem fitting into Gainesville. For Melania who is coming from a tropical country, having at least the opportunity to live in a sub-tropical as I call north central Florida is something that she has found attractive. I have had offers from places in the north since I came here both in Northern Europe and in Northern America. I have not taken them up because I have enjoyed Florida. I consider Florida to be a good base to work from

if you are an Africanist. Melania has enjoyed it here too.

We have found that if we are going to live outside of Sweden or if we are going to live outside of Tanzania, we have decided in a way to organize our life around the three places we have a connection to. In the sense that we enjoy being in Florida for the period of time when we work here but because we have connections, family and professional, in Africa and in Sweden we spend our summer break in Africa, Tanzania in particular. We stop over in Sweden for usually three to four weeks on our way back from Tanzania to Florida. We get a chance to meet the family on both sides, friends and others who we interacted with during those periods.

W: Can you say you have become a Gator since you have been here? Have you been to the football games and partaken in the whole festivity of being a Florida Gator here?

H: Yes, Melania and I did not have any particular sports interest together before we came here but we developed a sports interest in basketball. Melania and I have been following it and have had season tickets every year we have been here since 1988. Both of us go to as many of those games as we can. I have never been able to convince Melania that American football is something that she would enjoy. The person that actually introduced football to me and to the family, although for Melania it is still a nuisance, but not to me, is **Eric** our youngest son who has a football interest and who has grown up here and is a Gator. Although

he was originally a Seminole when he was in high school, he became a Gator eventually. I have been taking a much more serious interest in football as well in the last two, three years in particular. Since Spurrier came here it has been hard not to do it. I have not bought season tickets. I prefer to go occasionally and I have enjoyed watching the games on television. In a way because of the size of the stadium unless you sit at a reasonable distance from the actual field you are much better off watching the game on television. You see much better what is going on.

W: Are there any things about the University of Florida, the African Center or the political science program that you would like to say as a closing about the University?

H: First of all a couple of points on each of those things. The political science department I did not necessarily tell you the full story. I thought that the new leadership provided by both **Wayne Francis** and **Ken Wald** pushed the department in a very different direction. I want to say that I consider the political science department at the University of Florida to be one of the most collegial work places that I can think of. There are few political science departments that can compete with the University of Florida as a pleasant work place. I think today most people in the department share this. Visitors and people who come here for recruitment purposes have always commented on the collegiality and the good climate or atmosphere that exists in the department.

W: Why is that?

H: Because people respect each other. We respect the diversity of each other. We respect that political science is not just one theory and one approach and one methodology but we respect that we have to consider the study of politics as something that requires diversity both in theory and in methods.

W: Is that reflected with the faculty that you have?

H: Yes, we have people working, hard core quantitative political scientists and we have those who are both theoretical and **[END OF TAPE A]**

: We were presently talking about the political science department.

H: I almost forgot what I said before that but I think I did mention about the respect of diversity, the tolerance of different approaches and it is reflected in the context of the department. We do have people with different backgrounds and I think we take pride in being diverse rather than being uniform.

W: You have been the director of the African Studies Association just recently and we are now in the process of hiring a new director. With that you have seen five excellent candidates and you have some sense of the direction of where the African Studies program is going. Can you just briefly tell me in a statement where you see this center going?

H: The new director, whoever that person is going to be, will eventually set the tone for that. Although I expect, judging from what I have heard from at least most of the candidates that they would also want to work with the rest of us so that it is not as if that person is necessarily going to be all by himself or herself in terms of deciding where we are going. It is important that the Center continues to reach out to faculty, not only in the college but also in the other colleges. I see that as a priority. I also want myself to see a closer interaction with Afro-American studies as it is called here in the Institute of Black Culture. There is something likely to happen although I do not know what, but I believe that the whole question of what should be the institutional relation of the intellectual interaction between these units is going to come up. There should be an attempt to overcome the imbalance between African Studies and Afro-American Studies that has existed on campus which I think has been unfortunate in terms of there being less contact between the two of them that should have been there. The time certainly has come for doing something about that. Beyond that we should continue to first of all, be sure that we do not lose the faculty lines. I do not see any immediate risk of that, but nevertheless we need to push for a few more lines. People have mentioned the need to have at least one or two more people in history. People have talked about the need for someone perhaps in literature. People have talked about

the need for maybe some other people. I would, as a political scientist, want to have at least one, perhaps two more Africanists working in my department.

W: Again thank-you Dr. Hyden for allowing me to interview you.

I have gotten a very rich account of your professional developments as a political scientist in Africa, Sweden and here in the United States, as well as an overview of the ten years that you have been here at the University of Florida.

I think your actual anniversary is this coming Fall. It will be ten years complete. Hopefully there will be an acknowledgement of those long ten years because you certainly have done a lot. I hope that in the next ten years you will continue to be here.

H: As I said the risk of my leaving is relatively small, but whether I deserve anything beyond retirement at one time, that is still to be decided. I enjoyed being here and I do not work to feel that I need to be rewarded at some point in time in terms of either money or anything else. In fact, partly because I have done recently well in my professional career, that has never been an issue. I have usually been rewarded for various reasons. It has not been a big thing for me. I never had to fight for it, nor do I feel that I want to fight for it because I think I am not a good professional unless I can speak for myself and let myself, my words and my wisdom, if there is any, speak for itself rather than having to fight for that and fight for recognition.

W: Thank you sir.

H: Thank you.