

2006-2007

Summer Cooperative African Language Institute Moves to the U of I

The Center for African Studies in cooperation with the Department of Linguistics is pleased to host the national Summer Cooperative African Language Institute (SCALI) in 2007 and 2008. Professor Eyamba Bokamba is directing this summer program.

SCALI offers performance-based instruction in African languages taught by experienced and trained instructors who are native speakers of the languages they teach. Classes are held four hours per day over a period of seven weeks, for a total of 140 hours during which students earn credits equivalent to one academic year of language instruction. It is also a unique opportunity to meet people interested in Africa from across the U.S. SCALI exposes learners to the cultures associated with the chosen language inside and outside the classroom. Activities enhance language learning and cultural understanding, and include language tables, conversation hours, cooking classes, African film screenings, research forums, musical events, and language and culture festivals.

SCALI

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'Saint in the City' Brings Baraka to Central Illinois

If you know what *baraka* is, perhaps you know the term's use in Islam or Judaism, or perhaps you saw the exhibition *A Saint in the City: Sufi Arts of Urban Senegal* at Krannert Art Museum from October 26 to December 31, 2006. Baraka is a kind of blessing that embodies a sense of positive energy contained in images, people, and objects — transferable by physical contact, proximity, and other means. It is also a way of expressing thanks. *A Saint in the City's* imagery contains a great deal of baraka, which was a crucial element in the overwhelming success and impact of the exhibition's stay in central Illinois.

A Saint in the City, first assembled at UCLA, was brought to the U of I through the Krannert Art Museum and the Center for African Studies. The exhibition brings together visual elements from some of West Africa's Islamic culture, particularly that of the Mourides, who draw their inspiration, interpretation of Islam, and way of life from the teachings and writings of Serigne Touba, also known as Cheikh Amadou Bamba (1853-1927). The Cheikh's message is one of liberation, peace, and community through Islam, and he taught the principles of hard work, study, and resistance through non-violence. The only picture of the Cheikh was a "mug shot" taken by French colonialists, and it is from this sole image

that the majority of the works in *Saint* draw their inspiration. Baraka is tapped and made available to the people through the creation and recreation of his image. The artists also use calligraphy,

numbers, and other imagery and/or techniques inspired by Islam, the Cheikh, or the Mouride way of life. The resulting works of art contain much baraka and powerful messages that are universal.

Before the exhibition opened in October, initial outreach led to very special relationships between Chicago's Mouride community and the students of Art History 491, a class Professor Dana Rush

taught, dealing exclusively with *Saint*. These relationships shed light on the art and culture of the Mourides, and, more importantly, brought the perspective and baraka of the Cheikh's followers to the exhibition. The opening, which featured music by the Boston-based band, Lamine Toure and Group Saloum, drew in a record 1,200 people, including a 50-strong delegation, Chicago Mourides, led by Cheikh Balla Samb. The extraordinary reach of the exhibition was further evidenced by the collaboration between the *Saint* class and Krannert's Art-to-Go program that engaged 20 public schools in central Illinois. The history of colonialism and resistance, the life and teachings of Cheikh Amadou Bamba, and the

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Merle Bowen

FROM THE DIRECTOR

There are a myriad of changes to report from the past year, ranging from the departure of Center personnel to programming activities. Most notably, Jean Allman, the director, accepted a position in the Department of History at Washington University in St. Louis. Jean's contributions to the Center

for African Studies and the University of Illinois are numerous, the most recent being the successful proposal to the U.S. Department of Education for four more years of funding. We are saddened at her departure and the loss it means for African studies at U of I, but wish her the very best. We also said goodbye to Michele Crump, the Center secretary who transferred to another campus unit, and welcomed Fran Bell, who hit the ground running last semester. Fran brings energy, focus, and good cheer to the Center. We are pleased to have her on board. There were also title changes in the Center office: Jamie McGowan and Maimouna Barro were both promoted to Associate Directors. Jamie continues to be involved primarily with administrative and outreach activities and Maimouna, with students and curriculum. Congratulations to them both, and we look forward to their new and exciting initiatives in the coming year.

Having successfully secured Federal Department of Education grants for the new cycle, 2006-10, the Center provided 16 students with FLAS fellowships for AY 2006-07 as well as 15 summer fellowships, surpassing our expectations. We began the new Title VI period with a redirection of energies and funds. Our hope is to develop a more inclusive organization, which will have more lasting effects on the U of I campus as well as the people and institutions we collaborate with and serve. In place of annual events such as the Fall Colloquium and Spring Symposium, we are coordinating a thematic annual event that will include faculty and student development, curriculum, and community outreach. In fall 2006, the event was organized around the award-winning exhibition at the Krannert Art Museum, *A Saint in the City: Sufi Arts of Urban Senegal* and included musical performances, visiting scholars, open classes, and outreach to schools and teachers in Champaign county. We have already started planning next fall's main event: an African film festival followed by an African film conference, with the aim to increase public awareness of contemporary Africa's achievements in modern media and art.

Since last fall, the Center has devoted increasing energy to preparing for the Summer Cooperative African Language Institute (SCALI), which is being offered for the first time on the U of I campus in 2007. The Center and the Department of Linguistics are jointly hosting SCALI 2007, with Professor Eyamba Bokamba directing, and with the assistance of many other faculty, staff, and graduate students from both units. We are especially grateful to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, as well as to the many other offices involved with class scheduling, undergraduate, and graduate admissions, fellowships and financial services. SCALI 2007 promises to be the largest yet, with more than 120 students enrolled in nine African languages. In addition to instructional opportunities, students will be exposed to the rich, diverse cultures of the African continent, as well as extracurricular activities ranging from cooking classes, pot-lucks, and picnics to musical performances, film screenings, and research forums—some of which will be open to the local community. We are very excited at the prospect of reaching so many students from campuses across the country.

During the school year, besides planning the SCALI, we offered a wide selection of events through our regular weekly programming, including the Wednesday noon seminars. The theme for spring semester was "African Studies and the Perspectives from the Professions," with faculty from diverse vocations such as urban and regional planning, agriculture and consumer economics, pathobiology, and veterinary biosciences presenting their current path-breaking research. The Center also sponsored numerous lectures, panels, and forums on African culture, politics, and scholarship. One of the highlights was Archie Dick, George A. Miller Endowment Professor, Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria in South Africa. He delivered a CAS/MillerComm lecture on "Librarians and Readers in the South African Anti-Apartheid Struggle." As the semester came to a close, Joy James, McCoy Presidential Professor of African Studies at Williams College, gave the annual W.E.B. DuBois lecture, to a standing-room-only audience, on "Democracy and Captivity: W.E.B. DuBois, Ida B. Wells, and Neo-Slave Narratives on anti-Black Violence and Policing."

This year, we welcome six new students to our growing MA program. Our courses are drawing record enrollments and our African studies faculty and affiliates—not surprisingly—appear regularly on the list of "Teachers Ranked as Excellent." We also bid farewell to three students—Jessica Horn, Esther Somé, and Bala Saho—who will have completed their degrees by August 2007 and are moving on to exciting new careers and doctoral programs. Congratulations and best wishes to you all! As Acting Director, I look forward to maintaining the Center's reputation as one of the finest African and area studies programs in the country, with the support of our exceptional faculty, dedicated staff, and dynamic graduate students.

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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

CENTER FOR AFRICAN STUDIES NEWS

LAS APPROVES PROMOTIONS FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTORS

The Center is extremely pleased to announce that the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences approved the promotions of both Jamie McGowan and Maimouna Barro to Associate Directors in spring 2007. These promotions are wonderful and well-deserved, recognizing their increasing contributions to the Center.

In her position at the Center, Jamie McGowan is responsible for programming and coordination with other international programs. Her specific duties consist of outreach activities (K-12 teachers, media, business, and community), grant writing and foundation initiatives, extra-curricular programming, the Center's newsletter, and the African studies website. McGowan has assumed a larger administrative role in supervising both Center staff and graduate assistants working on particular projects.

Dr. Maimouna Barro directs the African studies MA program as well as the graduate and undergraduate minors. She is responsible for all matters pertaining to curriculum. The change in her position reflects her expanded responsibilities with regard to curriculum development, undergraduate teaching, and graduate instruction and advising. These responsibilities have been generated both by LAS's efforts to further internationalize the curriculum and by the U.S. Department of Education's emphasis on curriculum development. She currently teaches one of our core graduate courses in African studies, AFST 522, "Development of African Studies," and plans to revise and teach regularly AFST 222, "Introduction to Modern Africa," one of our core undergraduate courses.

We extend our warmest congratulations to both Jamie and Maimouna.

Center for African Studies Awarded Title VI and FLAS Funding for 2006-2010

The Center for African Studies, along with five other area studies centers and two internationally focused centers at the U of I, successfully secured U.S. Department of Education grants for the new cycle, 2006-2010. This funding makes us one of the only universities in the U.S. with Title VI Comprehensive National Resource Centers across the board. These units, together with International Programs and Studies, are collaborating on a number of exciting projects and initiatives.

The Center for African Studies received funding to provide FLAS fellowships for 16 students. We anticipate the level of support for the next three years will remain the same. There are some changes in budget items for this cycle, including the coordination of thematic annual events that will help guide programming. The events will focus on the U of I faculty and student populations, and include outreach initiatives to K-12 as well as area college teachers and students. The 2006-07 theme was organized around the award-winning exhibition, *A Saint in the City: Sufi Arts of Urban Senegal*, at the Krannert Art Museum, and next year's event is an African Film Festival. The U of I will host, for the first time, SCALI in summers 2007 and 2008. A new Swahili instructor position is being funded to meet increasing student language demand. Other initiatives include course development, establishing study abroad programs, acquiring library materials, and teacher outreach and workshops—all pending fund availability and subject to program officer approval.

Workshop on the Politics of Digital Initiatives Concerning Africa, August 4-5, 2006

Over the last decade, numerous U.S. foundations, including those forming the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa, have provided unprecedented support for the revitalization of African universities and their libraries, especially through digitization of African materials and the development of associated information technologies. North American and European institutions, some in partnership with African institutions, have also undertaken a range of library and archival projects, many focused on digitization. This workshop was aimed at considering the practical and methodological challenges encountered in such tasks. As opposed to almost all digital workshops and conferences mainly concerned with technical issues, we were particularly interested in

the political context for these projects, and the relationships between the U.S. donors and their African partners. The Digital Imaging South Africa (DISA) project was seen as particularly important because of South Africa's role within the African continent, and WiderNet's e-Granary Project was discussed as an innovative model.

The workshop was funded by Title VI grant funds and sponsored by the Center for African Studies. Having knowledge and experience in African digital projects, 16 invited librarians, academics, project directors, and foundation representatives from the U.S. and South Africa came together to informally discuss key themes organized into five panels. The panels were on the expropriation of African resources, free and

universal access to information, partnerships between U.S. and African institutions, and the politics of digital projects concerning Africa. We also discussed the relevance of two documents in relation to these issues: the "Archives-Libraries Committee Resolution on Migrated Archives" (1977) and the "Guidelines of the African Studies Association for Members' Ethical Conduct in Research and Other Professional Undertakings in Africa" (2005). For more on the workshop, see the forthcoming June issue (edited by Al Kagan) of *Innovation: Journal of Appropriate Librarianship and Information Work in Southern Africa*.

—Professor Al Kagan
African studies bibliographer

PROFESSOR ARCHIE DICK VISITS

In October 2005, Professor Archie Dick, from the University of Pretoria, spoke at an Allerton seminar titled “Libraries in Times of War, Revolution and Social Change.” Dick turned out to be a star of the seminar. This motivated Professors Boyd Rayward (Graduate School of Library and Information Science) and Al Kagan to secure an International Program Studies grant to bring him back to the campus in spring 2007. Dick taught a course titled, “Readers at the Crossroads in Twentieth Century South Africa,” with material based on his forthcoming book. He also gave a CAS/MillerComm lecture titled, “Librarians and Readers in the South African Anti-Apartheid Struggle.” His talks are particularly gripping because of his innovative use of oral history and startling images. In another notable talk at the re-launch of the journal, *Innovation: Journal of Appropriate Librarianship and Information Work in Southern Africa*, Dick situated this progressive journal within the context of South African and international librarianship, connecting theory and practice, and emphasizing the library’s role in society.

Dick is one of the most distinguished educators in library and information science in South Africa. He was educated both in the U.S. and South Africa, and received his doctorate from the University of Cape Town. He has extensive experience in teaching at all levels in information science. He has worked on a number of National Committees in Education and in Library and Information Services and was a member of a panel that advised the South African Minister of Arts and Culture on appointments to the National Council for Library and Information Services. Dick is active in the Library and Information Association of South Africa and is organizing its first Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression. He serves on an international committee with the same name in the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. His research interests include the philosophical and historical aspects of librarianship and information science, and wider concerns with print and reading cultures. He has a distinguished publication record in national and international publications. In 2002, the University of South Africa published his monograph, *The Philosophy, Politics and Economics of Information*. His research, teaching, and service influence members of his profession both at home and internationally. We were lucky to have had him with us this year.

—Professor Al Kagan
African studies bibliographer

NOTES ON A CLASS

“Readers at the Crossroads in Twentieth Century South Africa,” a course taught in the spring semester by Visiting Professor Archie Dick, from the University of Pretoria, was extraordinarily exciting and informative. The history of reading culture and the story to regulate reading in apartheid South Africa was told through six case studies written by Dick. These studies covered a variety of themes: women’s groups organized around collecting and dispensing books for nation building, book-burning and the complicity of South African librarians, libraries as contested spaces, and the reading practices of political prisoners. Dick’s scholarship unearths an incredible story concerning the role reading and libraries played in informing and dis-informing diverging communities in apartheid South Africa.

As a small class from diverse backgrounds, we had the opportunity to engage the professor with questions about South African history and his personal experiences of apartheid. He was very forthcoming. We were in awe of his narratives, especially the capacity of human beings, on the one hand, to perform the absurdity involved in the apartheid state and, on the other, to heroically disrupt its authority and reconstruct the society.

Dick was always available to discuss our projects and research concerns, and we tremendously enjoyed his company. Although it was a privilege to be in such a small class and have had him all to ourselves, our only regret is that more students did not benefit from such a great experience.

—Inka Alasadé, Esther Somé; Elina Harju
MA students, African studies; graduate student, library and information science

U OF I

REFLECTIONS ON MY VISIT

On a rainy evening on January 11, I arrived with my wife, Bridgette, at Urbana-Champaign. Our baggage arrived two days later, after making a wrong turn at Kansas and a few places that I think the airline company was too embarrassed to tell about. We felt quite proud as South Africans that we had braved the cold until then. Little did we know that it would become so bad that U of I would shut down for the first time in many years—just our luck! But we really had no complaints about the weather especially when we saw how the city and its people simply got on with their lives.

My stay was enjoyable, if only for the contact with students and colleagues. I was kept busy with public talks and radio interviews, as well as a graduate seminar and a doctoral class on South Africa's reading culture in the 20th century. I was even interviewed by the *Ninth Letter*, an arts and literary journal produced by the Department of English and the School of Art and Design.

During my stay I was struck, particularly as an outsider, by the student and wider community response to the Chief issue. First was the grudging concession to something that seemed quite simply a long overdue apology. Second was the "save the Chief" campaign, that seemed to me really a "shame the Chief" perpetuation. And third was the near-absence of the Native American voice in all of this.

I was glad that the University was bold in eventually taking the stand on this issue that it did, and it affirmed my faith in the American people and what America still symbolizes to the rest of the world. When we left on 16 March, Bridgette and I took fond memories of U of I, Orchard Downs, American hospitality, the well-endowed University and public libraries, the Amish town we visited, Chicago, and the vitality of campus life. Travel is always broadening.

—**Professor Archie Dick**
University of Pretoria

A LETTER FROM PORTUGAL:

Professor Gottlieb Explores Interbraided Identities

This past year, I've been living in Lisbon, where I've inaugurated a new research project concerning Cape Verde, a crossroads archipelago of nine inhabited islands that, since its discovery by Portuguese sailors in the 15th century, has forged extensive maritime ties to Africa, Europe, and the Americas. To conduct this research, I've been studying Portuguese and, more recently, Cape Verdean Crioulo.

In Lisbon, I've been reading extensively in Cape Verdean history and have inaugurated contacts and begun interviews with members of several Cape Verdean immigrant communities. The research has been supported by a fellowship from the National Endowment Humanities and several campus grants.

This year, I've been focusing on Cape Verdeans who have Jewish ancestry. I've learned of two groups of such Cape Verdeans whose ancestors date from two historical epochs: some arrived in Cape Verde in the late 15th/early 16th century—fleeing the Iberian peninsula, they were escaping the Inquisition; a second group arrived in Cape Verde in the late 19th/early 20th century—migrating from Morocco and Gibraltar, they were escaping deteriorating economic conditions and taking advantage of improved legal conditions for Jews in Portugal and its African colonies. Although some Jewish women arrived as immigrants, most Jewish immigrants to Cape Verde were probably men. In Cape Verde, most of these Jewish men married African women, contributing importantly to the "Creolized" population that has characterized the archipelago from its earliest peopling.

In Lisbon, I've begun interviewing Cape Verdean immigrants from both these groups to learn of the interbraided ways in which their West African and Jewish identities intersect, converge, conflict, or in other ways speak to each other. The implications—both scholarly and political—of this unexpected intersection of two ethnic/religious groups for the history of the Afro-Atlantic world, as well as for contemporary interethnic/interracial relations, are enormous.

As a specialist in both religion and West Africa, I expect to bring my prior theoretical expertise to bear in thinking about this new, largely unexplored topic.

I took a short first trip to Cape Verde in March 2007, where I made contacts with Cape Verdeans of Jewish descent on their home islands and saw the homeland of some of my current informants. I expect to return to Cape Verde for longer periods in the future. In addition, I am forging ties to Cape Verdean-Americans living in New England who are related to my Lisbon-based informants, and I intend to pursue research in the U.S. in the years to come.

In short, I envisage an active new research project developing from this inaugural research. I'm excited about the many new directions in which this project is taking me—historical, linguistic, religious, and geographical, as well as theoretical—and I look forward to teaching new courses on the U of I campus that will develop from my research.

—**Professor Alma Gottlieb**
Department of Anthropology



AFRICA OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT NEWS

I want to welcome a few people and say thank you to all involved in outreach programs on behalf of the Center for African Studies. Outreach programming is busy with a number of initiatives, and this year we were fortunate to have several graduate assistants working in outreach programming in various capacities.

Eeshani Kandpal began working on business outreach during spring 2007 with the assistance of **Alex Winter-Nelson** and other key resource people on campus; she's off to a great start.

Tagé Biswalo continues to focus much of his efforts on youth engagement and expanding educational opportunities for incarcerated individuals. Each week he meets with young people at the Champaign County Youth Detention Center—bringing in visitors, showing films, holding discussions, staging dramatic readings, and teaching Swahili are all a part of his repertoire. He also began working with **Rebecca Ginsburg** (landscape architecture) on a project called "Education Beyond Bars." This summer, he started a youth program with the Urbana Free Library entitled "Uhuru Summer Arts Program."

Christobel Asiedu's work focuses largely on the African studies website. She revamped the site's research links and the calendar system, and updated numerous pages within the site. She also maintained the SCALI page for this year's program. This semester is Christobel's last term with African studies, as she has been offered a tenure-track position at Louisiana Tech University. Best wishes in your future work, Christobel!

Suzana Palaska-Nicholson assists with the Center's communications, including editing this year's *Habari*. You will note new design elements are amongst her contributions. She also has taken on some data administration for reporting and evaluation purposes.

Many other people have been and are involved in various outreach initiatives over the past year—organizing their own projects via the Center for African Studies. Below are photos and listings of some other events and happenings that African studies faculty, staff, and students have been involved with during the past year.

Ebertfest 2007 featured *Moolaadé* and brought in Fatoumata Coulibaly, lead actress from the film, and Samba Gadji, biographer of the film's creator, Ousame Sembene. Both visitors met Urbana High School students and participated in Ebertfest's post-screening discussion. Coulibaly acts, directs, and broadcasts programs in Bamana on women and women's health issues at a Malian radio and television station. Gadji is a professor of French at Mount Holyoke College. He completed his PhD in Expanded French Studies at the U of I in 1986.



Coulibaly and Gadji.



Filmmaker Moussa Sene Absa screened his docu-drama, *Jef Jel*, on campus and met with students.



Lamine Toure and Group Saloum at the opening of the *Saint in the City: Sufi Arts in Urban Senegal* exhibit.



A *Saint in the City* Colloquium.



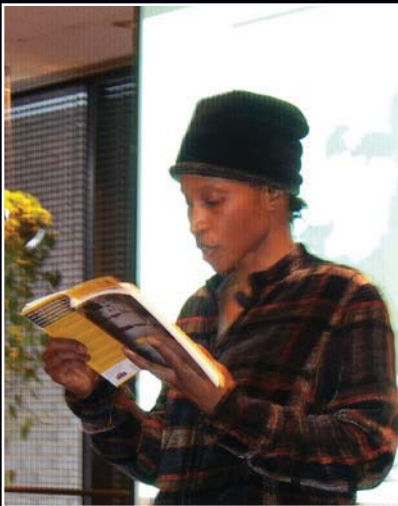
Celebrating African culture at Westview Elementary School's International Fair.



The International Non-Governmental Careers Workshop featured Mattito Watson, an African studies alumnus; Michael Foster, Peace Corps; and Joy Ready with International Programs and Studies.



African Students' Organization fall picnic and annual forum.



Professor Joy James, McCoy Presidential Professor of African Studies, Williams College, delivers the 2007 W.E.B. DuBois Lecture.



When Animals Dance exhibit opening at Spurlock Museum with Heather Schaad (African studies), Nicole List (geography), and Bala Saho (African studies).

Educational Outreach Programming from the Center for African Studies

I believe engagement with K-12 educators is one of the most exciting dimensions of African studies programming. In the 2006-2010 grant cycle of Title VI, we proposed several new projects. The initiatives emerge out of focus groups, evaluations, collaboration with others units, and committees representing people with whom we have worked. Below are some of the activities aimed at educators that have happened and are planned for the coming years.

This year, we worked with the Krannert Art Museum to offer a K-12 workshop on *Saint in the City: Sufi Arts of Urban Senegal*, involving Dr. Allen Roberts from UCLA; Dr. Valerie Hoffman, Awa Sarr, Anne Sautman, and Jamie McGowan from U of I; and Ibrahima Ndoye from Parkland College.



Teacher's Workshop on *A Saint in the City: Sufi Arts of Urban Senegal*.

The ASA Outreach Council and local arrangements committee of the ASA offer teachers' workshops at the annual African Studies Association meetings. In recent years, the ASA Outreach Council has honored recipients of the Children's Africana Book Awards at the workshop.



Meja Mwangi (center), winner of the CABA 2006 Best Book—Older Readers, with Agnes Leslie, University of Florida, on his left and Jamie McGowan on his right.

The U of I International Outreach Council offered a workshop at South Side Elementary School on internationalizing the curriculum, and we have since followed up with several visits to classrooms and meetings with teachers.



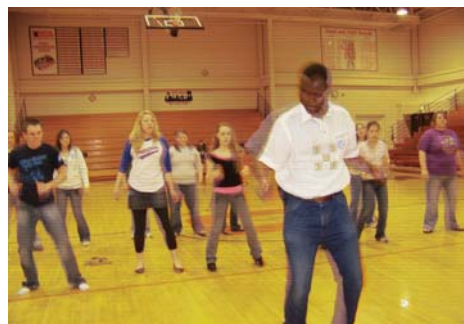
Tholani Hlongwa sings a Zulu song to third graders at South Side Elementary School.

Every summer, the U of I's International Outreach Council organizes the International Summer Institute for Pre-Collegiate Teachers. The 2006 program centered on world geography and cultures, and we had 23 teachers attend the program. The 2007 program focused on world literature and film, and had 20 attendees.

School programs and visits include events like GlobalFest, a long-standing initiative at Urbana High School with over 120 Illinois schools, 1,200 students, and 100 teachers participating annually. We greatly expanded the African presence in GlobalFest in recent years. This year, we offered seven languages:

- Lingala taught by Wembo Lombela;
- Akan/Twi taught by Rose Korang-Okras;
- Swahili taught by Josephine Yambi;
- Zulu taught by Tholani Hlongwa;
- Amharic taught by Bezza Ayalew;
- Bamana taught by Batamaka Somé;
- Wolof taught by Bala Saho.

We also offered two dance classes. Batamaka taught Burkinabé dances, and Bezza taught dances from Ethiopia.



African studies' outreach program is creating and updating appropriate curricular materials. In summer 2007, Marcia Richard and Harbert Jones, teachers at Wiley Elementary, jointly worked on three curricular units with KAM and African studies support. We are making our own curricula more widely available to teachers, as well. We are also working on multiple methods of delivery of the curricula—both electronic and print—via newsletters, workshops, teachers' conferences, and through key websites.

The African studies' outreach program is actively linked up to several clearing-house websites aimed at educators. The newest sites launched by the U of I's

International Outreach Council are: *Seeing Eye to Eye* around the world www.i2i.uiuc.edu, and *Outreach World*, www.outreachworld.org.

org, which give hope for collaboration amongst National Resource Centers across the country.

—Jamie McGowan
Center for African Studies



SCALI: continued from page 1

Yale University hosted the first SCALI in 1993. While only 16 students participated in that first program, enrollment steadily increased each year with 87 students participating in last summer's program at Indiana University. This year, more than 190 students submitted applications of which 126 applicants enrolled to attend classes. SCALI '07 promises to be the largest ever, thanks to the successful programs offered at previous host institutions, especially Indiana University, which paved the way for U of I.

This summer's SCALI program offered Akan/Twi, Amharic, Arabic, Bamana, Pulaar, Swa-

hili, Wolof, Yoruba, and Zulu. SCALI has been able to recruit outstanding instructors from a wide range of institutions. The SCALI committee has collaborated with previous host institutions to make SCALI '07 a lively and memorable program. Extracurricular activities and social events enhanced the language training and create togetherness among the participants and the larger University of Illinois community.

—**Bezza Ayalew**

PhD student, Department of Linguistics

African Studies Business Outreach via the Web: Introduction and Motivation

Much of our knowledge of Africa is based on poorly informed stereotypes, high-budget movies, and media focus on negative news like famine, drought, civil war, and extreme poverty. All of this suggests more of a role for emergency relief than mutually beneficial business partnerships. While some parts of Africa are plagued by crises, there are also regions and countries with political stability and economic growth. Indeed, there exist many opportunities for productive collaboration with businesses in much of Africa. Nonetheless, most people know very little about the African continent, particularly about business and investment opportunities there.

Africa's integration into the global economy has been rocky and slow. A century ago, Western colonialism assigned Africa the role of exporter of cheap raw material, and importer of processed goods from the West. After colonial powers left Africa little changed in this pattern of trade. The continent continued to export raw materials and import very little due to its poverty. However, changing global forces are creating new opportunities for the supply of value-added goods, particularly agricultural commodities, from developing regions like sub-Saharan Africa. Meanwhile, the atmosphere for private foreign investment in Africa has warmed, and the options for exports to the African continent have also widened.

Through the African business outreach website, we aim to disaggregate the continent in to various regions with indications of business hospitality, political stability, and cultural and linguistic guides. This website is run by the University of Illinois, therefore, our focus is on Illinois business, but our attempt is to make the information as relevant as possible to businesses everywhere. We present a list of African countries that may be of interest to potential business partners in the West as well as a list of products that may be traded with ease. We also provide the information needed for such collaboration and the resources to facilitate the process, including likely points of entry, government offices in the U.S. and in Africa, information on government regulations and restrictions, licensing requirements, certification procedures, and brand creation.

—**Eeshani Kandpal**

MS student, agricultural economics

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inspiring art of different Senegalese artists touched the imagination of more than 900 children in their own classrooms, and more than 500 who toured the exhibit.

On site programming for *A Saint in the City* included "open classes" which made the exhibition available to six U of I courses and a faculty member from Parkland College. A K-12 teacher's workshop also drew in local public school teachers. Additionally, there were gallery discussions with curators Dr. Allen F. Roberts and Dr. Mary Nooter Roberts and a symposium. Throughout the exhibition we were blessed with the presence of Cheikh Bassir Mbake, Cheikh Amadou Bamba's grandson; exhibiting artist Yelimane Fall, renown Senegalese director Moussa Sene Absa; His Excellency Amadou Lamine Ba, Senegal's ambassador to the U.S.; and Dr. Cheikh Babou, history professor from University of Pennsylvania (Jërëjef!). A highlight was Fall's visits to two Urbana elementary schools, where he created art with students, as he does with street children in Pikine, Senegal.

The Cheikh's message and the art's energy will have a powerful effect wherever *A Saint in the City* travels, but in Champaign-Urbana this exhibition made a home. A community formed between Champaign, Chicago, and Senegal, and in the hearts and imaginations of thousands of children, college students, adults, and elders. Just as the depth of Cheikh Amadou Bamba's teachings can never be fully known, neither can the true and total effect *A Saint in the City* had on the people of central Illinois. While we have gone back to the normality of everyday life, many of us now carry with us the baraka of Cheikh Amadou Bamba and of having worked on such a large project with so many amazing people. We also carry a message that speaks to prayer, peace, work and liberation. By reading this article this message and baraka are passed on to you too. AL-HUMDULILAH. SANT SERIGNE TOUBA!

—**Nick Pelafas**

MA student, African studies

GHANA

Ghana at 50: Golden Jubilee Celebration

"Ghana is 50! Ghana! Congratulations, Ghana! Ghana is 50, let's all celebrate!" These lyrics resonated on many radio and television stations all over Ghana during its independence festivities, evoking the country's achievements and calling Ghanaians to rally behind the national flag to participate in the historical commemoration. Why is Ghana's celebration so significant? Ghana was the first nation in West Africa to end colonial

Ghanaians condemned the ruling party for planning most of the activities within Accra, the capital. Other public outbursts were caused by the government's decision to award a contract to a Chinese firm to provide millions of Ghanaian flags, instead of a local Ghanaian company.

My participation in the celebration was not only driven by vested academic interest but by a yearning to participate in this historical moment for posterity's sake. I took the opportunity to interview older Ghanaians, who reflected on their experiences under British colonialism and after independence. The consensus among the

elders from different ethnic, religious, gender, and political backgrounds was that "the overthrow of Kwame Nkrumah was Ghana's greatest mistake." They made two broad claims: that since the military coup in 1966, no Ghanaian leader has been able to move the

country forward and that Nkrumah's Pan-African dreams have been hijacked by selfish Ghanaian and African leaders who cannot see beyond colonial-imposed boundaries or local problems.

The independence parade started with dancing by chiefs dressed in their royal clothes, gymnastic performances by schoolchildren, and marching by the security service personnel and military. Patriotic and religious songs echoed throughout the celebration thanking God and waving Ghana's flag to express our liberation from the yoke of imperialism. I must admit, the occasion was the most nationalistic and emotional moment in my life, as I joined my fellow Ghanaians to celebrate the demise of the Union Jack at Independence Square. Those who

could not afford expensive fabrics bought cheap ones and draped themselves in the national colors and gigantic flags.

I arrived in Accra at 4:30 a.m., and already most of the seats had been taken. The president's convoy arrived at 9:30 a.m. I was proud to witness the celebration. In fact, the excitement for participating in Ghana at 50 was beyond description. What is Nkrumah saying in his grave? Perhaps, Ghana at 75 will enable us to see how far we have come since the end of colonialism. Long live Ghana! Long live Africa! Long live humanity! Long live the global village!

—Kwame Essien

Alumnus, African studies, 2006

Pre-Dissertation Field Research in Ghana

Last summer, I was fortunate to be awarded the West African Research Association's Pre-Doc-toral Fellowship and the history department's Catherine C. and Bruce A. Bastian Grant for Global and Transnational Studies, allowing me to travel to Ghana. My research sought to explore the influence of the Algerian Revolution—one of Africa's most devastating wars of decolonization—in shaping the Pan-African politics of Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana. By understanding Ghana's support for the Algerian Revolution, only one of the many African countries north

and south of the Sahara that supported the Algerian struggle for self-determination, I believe we can better understand Africans—both on the elite and popular levels—engaged in Pan-African debates over what it meant to be "African" in the postcolonial world.

With this research agenda in mind, I arrived in Accra in late May. I quickly headed to

the George Padmore Research Library. Named after the famed Trinidadian Pan-Africanist George Padmore, the library holds nearly all of the surviving records of the Ghanaian Bureau



rule, on March 6, 1957, and the country occupies an influential position in African and African diaspora history because of its contributions to Pan-Africanism. Two significant international events occurred prior to the Golden Jubilee celebration: Ghana's splendid performance in the 2006 World Cup soccer tournament and the return of Kofi Annan (Secretary General of the United Nations) to his motherland—all of which set a premise for national celebrations.

During the 50th anniversary celebration, many billboards in cities and towns were filled with the national colors—red, yellow (with a black star), and green—as well as with portraits of Ghana's founding fathers, including Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. Although the celebration was a success, tensions surfaced from the first day President John K. Kuffor announced his expensive budget that included the purchase of new luxury cars for the invited guests. Many Ghanaians protested, arguing that the amount could have been used to improve health services and help alleviate poverty. In addition, some



Jeffrey Ahlman and Issah Iddrisu in Tamale.

of African Affairs (BAA), the organization at the forefront of Ghana's Pan-African politics in the 1950s and 1960s. While reading through the archives, I could not help but be taken aback as I read countless letters from such preeminent figures as Amilcar Cabral, Julius Nyerere, George Padmore, and Frantz Fanon.

Later, I moved on to the National Archives of Ghana. Moving from the vibrancy of the Padmore collection to the government documents found in the National Archives, I could not help but experience a letdown. The truth of the matter is that the daily running of a government bureaucracy does not cater to "good reading." Yet, good fortune struck: just as I was about to leave the National Archives and head back to the Padmore Library, I was brought what I call the "mystery folder," containing a list of miscellaneous documents ranging from Nkrumah's personal letters to other heads of state, to letters from university and secondary school students articulating their own Pan-African visions. I had trouble containing my joy and ended up spending an extra two weeks working at the National Archives. I made only one short trip back to the Padmore Library to say "goodbye" to the archivists and librarians who helped me with the BAA documents.

It would be remiss for me not to mention how I spent my leisure time in Accra and the country at large. As any good "football fan" knows, last summer Ghana made its first trip to the World Cup and the team made an impressive run beating the Czech Republic as well as the U.S., only to lose to the favorite, Brazil, in the elimination round. To revert to a cliché: the excitement in the country was palpable. In addition, I traveled throughout the southern, central, and northern regions of the country. In the northern city of Tamale, I had the distinct privilege of staying with the family of my fellow historian Abdulai Iddrisu whose brother, Issah, introduced me to the culture and politics of this vibrant city. I would like to thank Abdulai and his family for their hospitality, and especially Abdulai, for making sure my time in Ghana was enjoyable and went smoothly.

—Jeffrey Ahlman
PhD student, history

African Film Conference and Film Festival— Coming to the U of I in Fall 2007

The African Studies Film Conference aims to foster a dialogue among scholars who approach African film from different perspectives: some interested primarily in its thematic content, others who see it as popular culture, and still others who focus on cinematography. These different strands have much to teach each other, and together they can help convey a richer image of modern African creativity. The conference will start with a keynote address by the noted anthropologist and popular culture scholar Birgit Meyer on November 8 and will continue with panels on November 9 and 10. It will include African, European, American, and Canadian participants, including faculty from our campus.

The scholarly study of African cinema emerged in the 1980s and reveals a bifurcation mirroring that of African filmmaking. The initial impetus came from literature departments, generally as an adjunct to French literature programs. Social science professors participated in the growing literature on African film, bringing the concerns of their disciplines into the field. Another literature on African film, focusing mostly on Nigeria, became part of the emerging "popular culture" studies, displaying remarkable variety and exploratory reach. Our African film conference will create a forum for these various tendencies to meet and speak to each other.

African cinemas have diverse origins. Filmmaking started in the post-independence period with pioneering directors who came to their art through personal trajectories. Senegal has a special place in these beginnings. Starting in the late 1960s grants and technical assistance from France and North African countries stimulated production in West and Central Africa. Eventually, foreign support broadened to include other European Community countries. The growth of the industry was consecrated with the regularization of the Ouagadougou African Film Festival, which is organized every other year by the government of Burkina Faso. Most films featured dialogues in national languages—in contrast to written literatures, which were mostly created in European languages that remained the language of schooling in the postcolonial period. These factors lent a special character to the classic corpus of West African filmmaking. Some of

these films won international prizes and other recognitions. The current U.S. success of the recently released Malian film *Bamako* bears witness to this potential.

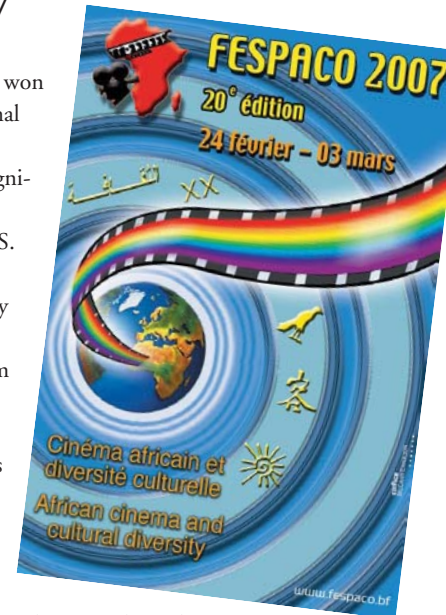
The new wave of inde-

pendences in the 1970s brought new participants. Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe became film producers. Finally, post-apartheid South Africa started contributing award-winning films such as *U-Karmen eKyalelitsha*, a new interpretation of Bizet's opera that won the Golden Bear for best film in Berlin and was shown at Roger Ebert's Overlooked Film Festival last spring in Champaign.

Parallel and unconnected to these, an endogenous film industry emerged in Nigeria, which is the most populous country in Africa and one of the richest. Funded by local businessmen, it targets a national audience. The industry's roots lie in the traveling Yoruba theater and emulates the commercial cinemas of Hollywood and Bollywood. It recently made a transition from film to home video production and now boasts to be the third largest commercial film industry in the world, dubbed "Nollywood," with growing sales abroad in the Nigerian diaspora. Even our town, Champaign, has a Nigerian DVD outlet.

During the same weeks as the African film conference, the Center for African Studies will organize an African Film Festival in downtown Champaign to increase public awareness of contemporary Africa's achievements in modern media and art.

—Professor Mahir Saul
Department of Anthropology



SCULPTING ACROSS OCEANS OR SCULPTING AGAINST STEREOTYPES

At the end of the colonial period, many African authors grappled with the dichotomy of “modernity” versus “tradition,” such as Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* and Charles Mungoshi’s *Waiting for the Rain*. Even now, stereotypes of the “backwards continent” pervade mainstream media, and contemporary artists in Africa must contend with these issues. The sculptors of Zimbabwe often grapple with the stereotypes of the Western art consumer, and these issues are projected into the gallery.

The Zimbabwean stone sculpture movement started during the 1960s and gained international recognition in the 1970s, following exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Rodin Museum in Paris. Now there are museums in New York that regularly feature Zimbabwean sculptors. Sankaranka, a gallery featuring contemporary art from Africa, recently held an exhibition highlighting Nicholas Mukomberanwa and his African American apprentice Scott Johnson. In Manhattan, Reece Galleries is currently exhibiting a group of Zimbabwean sculptors.

I visited both of these exhibitions and was delighted that the sculpture was being regularly shown in the U.S. center of contemporary art. Sankaranka has made an important intervention by demonstrating that avant-garde art is produced in Africa while Reece Galleries show that Zimbabwean sculpture can hold its own with the finest art in Manhattan. More importantly, artists like Scott Johnson are strengthening the Pan-African connection with a sharing of artistic ideas, highlighting Africa’s contribution to the “modern” world through sculpture.

—Lance Larkin

PhD student, anthropology



Together with Mum & Family Spirits.

WRFU 104.5 FM New Radio Program Launched in 2007: ‘Lolaka ya Afrika!’

This year, in conjunction with the Center for African Studies, I started a weekly radio show on WRFU 104.5 FM (Radio Free Urbana) called “Lolaka ya Afrika—Voice of Africa” in Lingala. From the outset, the intention of this show has been multifarious. In addition to serving as an additional outreach arm for the Center, the radio show has been aimed at informing the larger community about various issues and topics related to the continent, as well as creating stronger relationships between those people whose interests are in Africa. While the format of the program has been evolving over the course of this year, the goal of the program remains the same: to contribute to a greater African and global consciousness. Topics covered on the show have ranged from immigration and migration issues, AIDS awareness, and political prisoners, to special programs about Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the mis-education of African

history. “Lolaka” has also been privileged to host many guests including Professor Archie Dick (University of Pretoria); Guy Wembo Lombela (U of I); artist Yelimane Fall, from Senegal; as well as students in the African studies program and the University High School group, United for Uganda.

Much has already been accomplished, but this project is still in its initial phases. If it is to achieve the goal of strengthening the relationships within the Center and student community, much more involvement is required by other students in the African studies program and there needs to be greater support from the Center itself. As the “Lolaka” project continues to grow, we will promote it as a platform for dialogue and discussion between Africans, students, and the community to create a greater organic intellectual space to promote positive interaction and exchanges between all peoples. “Lolaka ya Afrika” continues this summer with

a very exciting program drawing on guests from all over the country and world as the U of I hosts the Summer Cooperative African Languages Institute. Additionally, AY 2007-08 projects-in-progress include the development of a website with past shows and other news, a more developed schedule of topics and guests, collaborations with independent media radio stations in Africa, and fundraising events. *Yoka bandeko na Lolaka ya Afrika!*

“Lolaka ya Afrika” airs every Wednesday from 4-6 p.m. on WRFU 104.5 FM, and is broadcast out of the Independent Media Center in downtown Urbana. Tune in live or listen to archived shows at www.wrfu.net. If you have any questions, comments, or would like to be involved with the show, email pelafas@uiuc.edu.

—Nick Pelafas

MA student, African studies

Learning about Africa, One Experience at a Time

A group of 14 U of I students joined Professor Richard Akresh on a 20-day trip to Burkina Faso last winter. Students returned from this journey enriched by a one-of-a-kind experience and with stories they wanted to share. This is one of those stories.

Living in Africa is an invaluable experience for students who study the continent. Last summer and fall I was lucky to have that experience of living and traveling in South Africa and Burkina Faso.

I spent summer 2006 in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, in an intensive Zulu language and culture training program through the Fulbright-Hays GPA. The homestay with a Zulu family was one of my favorite experiences as we were included in *braais* (South African version of a barbecue), school trips, graduations, and other events.

This program allowed our group, consisting of 13 American students, access to Zulu events like services at the Shembe church (the fastest growing Christian/indigenous religion in South Africa), a virginity testing, and trips around KwaZulu-Natal, learning about the political and cultural history of the Zulu people.

During the fall semester, I moved to Durban and worked as a loan portfolio manager at the Ithala Development Finance Corporation, a

state development bank. In this role, I counseled low-income entrepreneurs on their business plans and provided small loans to expand their businesses and create more jobs in their communities.

As Ithala is 85 percent Zulu, I continued using my Zulu language skills, and was given the name Thokozile, which means "one who is happy." While working at Ithala, I conducted my master's thesis research, examining the impact of savings programs on poverty reduction for low-income clients at four rural Ithala branches.

During the U of I's winter break,

I attended Professor Richard Akresh's course "The Face of Economic Development" in Burkina Faso. While in Ouagadougou, we visited non-governmental organizations to learn

about the development programs they ran in the rural areas. We then traveled to the countryside and visited dry season farms with irrigation systems and microcredit groups. Whereas in South Africa, individuals borrowed large sums from the bank,

we visited new savings and loan cooperatives in Burkinabé villages, where women saved approximately 20 cents a week and then pooled their weekly savings together to be loaned out in the future. Even when earning a small amount from sale of boiled peanuts to tourists

and in the market, these women were able to save a little every week.

By participating in these trips, I came to appreciate the large variations among African people and their cultures. It was also an important experience for me to learn more about microfinance and development programming, especially to understand that the amount of a loan is not everything. It put into perspective that making smart investments is as important as the size of an investment. The diversity of experiences in Africa requires that development policies be as varied as the people it serves.

—Jessica Horn

MA alumna, African studies, 2007



Jessica with her host Zulu family.



Going to work at Ithala.

NEW STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

IN AFRICA

The Center for African Studies continues

expanding its campaign to further the interest and knowledge on campus about the continent through its sponsorship of study abroad classes taking place in Africa. Two groups of undergraduate and graduate students traveled to Benin and Burkina Faso during winter 2006-07 to explore the rich cultures, history, and life in these two countries.

Dry-Season Agriculture in Burkina Faso



University of Illinois students in Burkina Faso.

Riding in the 90-plus-degree weather in Burkina Faso, breathing in sand from the not-so-developed road ending in a cotton field, was a drastic change of pace from my Christmas memories of driving in the unplowed, snowy roads of rural Southern Illinois, ending in a deserted cornfield. But perhaps spending the remainder of the winter break in Burkina would help our group understand the plight of agriculture in Africa—and around the world. We spent much of the trip to Burkina Faso visiting agricultural projects that actively engaged African farmers. Burkinabé farmers and individuals working for the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Plan, tried to grow crops in the dry season. Burkina's two seasons—rainy and dry—prevented farmers from growing certain crops year-round, such as cotton and maize, without the assistance of irrigation.

Yet, dry-season agriculture has the potential to be productive. If the Burkinabé farmers can grow crops well during the rainy season, assuredly with the right tools, they can grow during the dry season as well. In addition, these crops

however, quickly put my American naivety in check. On a visit to a mosque, the group saw a tragic government dam project. The dam broke when the rainy season came. Just as poor management and bad weather happen in developed countries, these factors definitely occur in Africa. One can only imagine the amount of CFAs (West-African currency) spent on this tragic project. In another village, only one farmer remained working on the dry-season agriculture project, and it was a mere garden. The NGO had done a poor job training the villagers on project maintenance, and, overtime, farmers deserted the project and the NGO had fled.

In general, NGOs and the government confront huge challenges in training the villagers to maintain the agricultural projects' profitability. At a government project that the group visited, the villagers begged for more money. Professor Akresh asked the villagers why the community was not charging farmers to use the pump and other tools that could make the project successful and be a source of financial capital when

could improve the nutrition intake of the farmers' children, keeping them more alert in school and in other activities that may lead to better lives. Many NGOs brought our group to their ideal, best-looking projects that made huge differences in the communities that they served. Based on our observations of these NGO-funded projects, it seemed that the dream of dry-season agriculture did work, and people of these communities could enjoy the additional benefits.

Other experiences,

the tools broke down. The villagers responded that they had not considered this option or they did not think it was a good choice. In NGO project-funded villages, officials reminded the villagers that they would not be around after the project ended, and recommended what the village should do after they left. Based on my visits to the different villages, the huge task was not developing projects (that was easy) but training residents to make the most of the project, which was exhausting.

To be honest, these projects have a lot of potential to do good on a small scale, but something else is needed on a large scale to give Africans the ability to raise themselves out of poverty. Development economists have struggled to figure out what this "something else" is. The group asked the same question throughout the trip. This question still lingers in my mind. It provoked some research on my part in a project I did in the spring semester on cotton farmers in West Africa. But, again, there is not one solid



Visiting an NGO project.

answer. Maybe growth miracles are just that—miracles. Don't mention that to the millions of hard-working African farmers though, because they are the ones trying to make the miracles happen.

—**Christopher Paul Steiner**

Undergraduate student, Department of Economics

Beninese Histories and Cultural Productions: **Ganvié and National Vodun Day**

Over this past winter break, we accompanied other U of I students spending three weeks immersed in the vibrant energy of Ouidah, Bénin, a coastal town rich in history and culture. This study abroad course, led by art history Professor Dana Rush and doctoral candidate in anthropology Tim Landry, provided us with the opportunity to learn about many aspects of Beninese daily life and artistic expression. Partaking in this amazing experience were 15 students from a variety of academic disciplines, including studio arts, art history, dance, and African studies. During our stay, we traveled to cities such as Porto Novo, Cotonou, Abomey, and a few small villages. One of the most memorable places we visited was Ganvié, a community located in Lake Nokoué, several kilometers away from shore. Other villages are built on the lake, but Ganvié is the largest, with approximately 30,000 inhabitants. The people living in Ganvié are primarily descendents of the Tofinu people who, in the 18th century, relocated to the lake to escape the ongoing slave trade. They were fleeing from the domination of the expanding Dahomey Kingdom and found refuge in the middle of the lake.

Ganvié, affectionately coined “the Venice of Africa,” is now a popular tourist attraction. To get to the center of town, students crowded into narrow boats that floated low in the water.



Photo by Joyce Kuechler

Houses line the main canals and are built on wooden stilts that have to be replaced every three years. We passed a bustling floating market where women piled baskets, produce, and other products into their wooden boats to sell.



Gelede Masquerade at National Vodun Day, Ouidah, Benin.
Photo by Bess Mueller

Churches, schools, artists' studios, and shops are scattered throughout town, all of which are built on stilts. The façades of such structures are often painted brightly and chickens run freely on the occasional earthen plots. Visiting Ganvié was an incredible experience for everyone who went on this study abroad trip.

While in Ouidah, the conceptual and literal heart of the Vodun religion, we met the Daagbo Hounon, a man designated the Supreme Chief of the Great Council of the Vodun. Vodun

transformed to “Vodou” in Haiti and became designated as “Voodoo” in North American contexts. Our group was fortunate to be residing in Ouidah on January 10, the nationally distinguished date marking the annual celebration of Vodun. Since 1993, National Vodun Day has been celebrated in Ouidah. This holiday is commemorated by a walk along the three-mile slave

route to the Atlantic Ocean, where Vodun veneration is expressed through masquerades, drumming, dancing, and religious offerings. National Vodun Day serves as a means to honor African ancestors who were seized during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and to recognize global manifestations of Vodun. This day of elaborate festivities attracts Vodun devotees from surrounding countries and

throughout the world, in addition to numerous international reporters and news crews capturing photographs and footage of the events.

National Vodun Day is preceded by several days of offerings and celebrations, over which the Daagbo Hounan presides. His contributions are immeasurable, as he arranges festivities, chooses a commemorative textile pattern, and leads the walk along the slave route. This procession involves stopping at sites along the route to memorialize ancestors' strife and to present sacred offerings. We had the privilege of visiting the Daagbo Hounon's compound on numerous occasions in order to speak with him about our impressions. The hospitality of people in Ouidah and in surrounding cities and villages was paramount in facilitating our understanding and appreciation of Beninese modern culture.

—Joyce Kuechler and Bess Mueller
Graduate students, art history

Tanzania: Nchi ya Amani

(Country of Peace)

From the start, I would like to thank the Center for African Studies for enabling me to visit Africa twice in two years: initially to West Africa (Ghana, Togo, and Benin) in 2005 and then to Tanzania in 2007. Although my West African trip is still vivid in my mind, this brief passage concerns my first month in Tanzania, the country of peace.

If the Bible is true in its assertion that the meek shall inherit the earth, Tanzania will be first in line. Never have I been in such a peaceful country where people treat each other with such care and love. It is amazing, especially coming from and living in the U.S. and Jamaica where crime and violence are ubiquitous. For example, people do not just give you directions when asked, they actually walk you as close to your destination as possible. And there is no expectation in return; they truly give credence to the idea that it is in giving that one truly receives. We have a saying among Rastafarians when we greet people, “peace and love,” and I just had to learn the Kiswahili translation, “amani na upendo,” as soon as I became aware of the sincerity of the Tanzanians. The only aggression that I have experienced thus far is at the bus depot where conductors ferociously compete for passengers and that, clearly, is a consequence of the poverty that ravages the country.

As Tanzania is poor, there are myriad problems that plague the country. Can you imagine living in a country where the minimum wage is less than \$3 a day? Even more, can you imagine taking care of multiple family members on such wages? It is inconceivable, even for “poor” university students. Given that many parents cannot

take care of their children, combined with a lack of social services, a growing number of children have been forced onto the streets. Children roam the streets, having neither education, food, homes, nor clothing. Some have not bathed in months, making them reek with a stench that

human spirit. I came to Tanzania to experience the residue of Mwalimu Nyerere’s Ujamaa, or African Socialism, and to learn Kiswahili. I have not been disappointed thus far.

Schools, libraries, and other knowledge-producing entities are much needed here. Access

to books and technology is so paltry that Africans guard their limited resources with fury. I had to see five different personnel at Ruaha University (Iringa), starting with the dean of the school, to use their library. The process took almost half my day. Unlike the US, in Tanzania you have to pay to use the public libraries, and you have to be a student to use the few university libraries. Accessing information is a major issue here. For example, at Ruaha University, where I have written this piece, the library is no bigger than the passageway (tunnel) leading from the graduate to the undergraduate library at U of I,

with very few shelves occupied by books—mostly outdated ones. You can always find students complaining about their lack of access to reading materials.

I would like to conclude by saying that it is very important to visit Africa, especially for the Center’s MA students. It would be good to visit in the second semester and spend a significant time to find a research project that can affect the continent qualitatively. We can do much with the resources that we take for granted in the States. On a lighter note, besides the peace of the country, Tanzanians take great pride in their dress. Often I feel like “a poor” around them in my cargo pants and white tee. Amani na upendo.

—Michael Stewart
MA student, African studies



Michael Stewart with street children in Dar es Salaam.

induces headaches, and their tattered clothes often match their skin complexion. Though they are not loathed, most people are very much indifferent to them because they are poor themselves. Many of these children’s parents have died and there is no one to take care of them, but there are as many whose parents are still alive, but still cannot take care of them. The children have no choice but to make a life of begging for food. It is hard to sleep at night knowing that these children are sleeping in abandoned buildings and buses, sometimes six of them wrapped up in croakers bags, under trees, and exposed to the elements. Getting to know them, one is both disheartened and amused, simultaneously, by their networking skills. But, while the country may be poor materially they make up for it in the

FACULTY NEWS

Evelyn Accad (French) received the Prix International de Poésie Emmanuel Roblès award in 2006. Her recent publications are: "Lebanon, summer 2006," in *Of War, Siege, and Lebanon: Women's Voices from the Middle East and South Asia, Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies*; "Gender, Conflict and Peace: Gender and Violence in the Lebanese War Novels," in *From Patriarchy to Empowerment: Women's Participation, Rights, and Women's Movements in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia*.

Tom Bassett (geography) published a selection of papers from the 29th Annual Spring Symposium of the Center for African Studies in the journal *Africa*. He co-authored "Nature as local heritage in Africa: longstanding concerns, new challenges;" "Constructing locality: the terror approach in West Africa," in *Africa*, and "Sudden Shift or Migratory Drift? Fulbe herd movements in the Sudano-Guinean Savannas of West Africa," in *Human Ecology*.

Val Beasley (veterinary bioscience), in August 2006, joined in the creation of a video-documentary of three Ugandan veterinarians who had participated in the earlier Envirovet program. **Innocent Rwego**, who is completing his PhD at Makerere University, as well as working with **Dr. Tony Goldberg** (veterinary medicine, U of I), is featured in the video. To learn more, visit: www.cvm.uiuc.edu/envirovet/webvideo.

Marilyn Booth (comparative and world literature) published "Babies or the Ballot? Women's Constructions of the Great War in Egypt;" *The First World War as Remembered in the Countries of the Eastern Mediterranean*; and (in Arabic) "Al-Tarikh al-fardi wa'l-tarikh al-jam'i: Kitabat al-mudhakkirat fi Misr 1920," (Individual and Collective History: Writing the Memoir in 1920s Egypt) in *al-Riwaya wa'l-tarikh (The Novel and History)*. Booth completed two translations: *The Loved Ones*, by Alia Mamdouh, and *Thieves in Retirement*, by Hamdi Abu Golayyel. Her talks include: "Exploding into the Seventies: Ahmad Fu'ad Nigm, Shaykh Imam, and the Aesthetics of a New Youth Politics," "Translating Huda Barakat," and "From the Horse's Rump and the Whorehouse Keyhole: Ventriloquized Memoirs as Political Voice in 1920s Egypt."

Kenneth Cuno (history) published "Contrat salam et transformations agricoles en basse Égypte à l'époque ottomane," in *Annales, Histoire, Sciences Sociales* and "United States Policy towards the Middle East," in the *Encyclopedia of Western Colonialism since 1450*. He presented "Divorce and the Fate of the Family in Modern Egypt" and "The Salam Contract in Ottoman Egypt."

Christopher C. Fennell (anthropology) is the editor of the *African Diaspora Archaeology Newsletter*. He organized and chaired "Research Designs for Atlantic Africa and African Diaspora Archaeologies," the annual forum for the African Diaspora Archaeology Network, at the Society for Historical Archaeology, Williamsburg.

Valerie J. Hoffman (religious studies) published "In His (Arab) Majesty's Service: The Career of a Somali Scholar and Diplomat in Nineteenth-Century Zanzibar." She presented "Le Digne et l'Indigne: Quatre Modèles de Leadership Soufi en Égypte Moderne" ("The Reputable and the Disreputable: Four Models of Sufi Leadership in Modern Egypt") for a colloquium in Algeria. In addition, Hoffman presented "Ibadi Muslims in Oman and Zanzibar: The Impact of Local Context on a Translocal Tradition," at a workshop on the Indian Ocean and the Swahili Coast and participated in a workshop on Sufi literature.

Al Kagan (library) organized the workshop, "Politics of Digital Projects Concerning Africa." He presented, "The Role of Library Associations in Civil Society" in connection with the XVII Standing Conference of Eastern Central, and Southern African Library & Information Associations, Dar es Salaam. Kagan was re-elected to the American Library Association Council, representing the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table.

David Prochaska (history) published "The Return of the Repressed: War, Trauma, Memory in Algeria and Beyond" and "Rethinking the Historical Genealogy of Orientalism" (with T. Burke). He co-chaired the "Photography in and about the Middle East," at the College Art Association meetings in New York.

Mahir Saul (anthropology) published "Méthodes en histoire orale. Genèse de l'autorité politique moogo," in *L'Homme. Revue française d'anthropologie*; "History as Cultural Redemption in Gaston Kaboré's Precolonial-era Films," in *Black and White in Colour: African History on Screen*. Also, "Burkina Faso," in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Religious Practices* and "Islam and West African Anthropology," in *Africa Today*. Saul was appointed curator at the Spurlock Museum.

Robert L. Tompson (agricultural and consumer economics) spoke in Lusaka, about "Making the Agricultural Sector a Priority," at a workshop organized by the Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa and the International Food and Agricultural Trade Policy Council. He presented "Unlocking Barriers for Improving Africa's Agriculture Production and Access to Markets" to the Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference. Tompson also served as the conference synthesizer at the International Conference on Cotton—The Next Steps for Africa at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and was an invited speaker at the Congressional Research Service's Seminar on Legislative Issues and Procedures for Newly Elected Members of Congress. In addition, he co-chaired the Chicago Council on Global Affairs' Agriculture Task Force.



David Wright sample collection.

David K. Wright (anthropology) received a National Geographic Society Committee for Research and Exploration award for his project "Exploration of Holocene Resource Exploitation in the Chalbi Desert, Kenya." He published "Tethered Mobility and Riparian Resource Exploitation among Neolithic Hunters and Herders in the Galana River Basin, Kenyan Coastal Lowlands," in *Environmental Archaeology*.

TEACHERS RANKED AS

EXCELLENT

African studies faculty and affiliates ranked as excellent by their students during the spring, summer and fall semesters, 2006.

FACULTY

Richard Akresh	ACE 450
Abdulkafi Albirini	LING 201, 404
Jean Allman	HIST 510
Stan Ambrose	ANTH 448
Marilyn Booth	CWL 205, 471
Merle Bowen	AFRO 298
Sundiata Cha-Jua	AFRO 490
Leon Dash	JOUR 415
Hadi Esfahani	ECON 552, 568
Karen Flynn	AFRO 102
Alain Fresco	FR 210, 501
Alma Gottlieb	ANTH 267, 511
Valerie Hoffman	RLST 223, 482
Erik McDuffie	AFRO 474
E. McLaughlin	HIST 341, 357
Faranak Miraftab	UP 199, 521
Jan Nederveen-Pieterse	SOC 561
Helen Neville	AFRO 411
David O'Brien	ARTH 395, 447
Cynthia Oliver	DANC 340, 360, 460, 495
Fazal Rizvi	EPS 530
Dana Rush	ARTH 391, 491
Zohreh Sullivan	ENGL 274
Alex Winter-Nelson	ACE 254

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Brahim Chakrani	ARAB 202
K. Dirani	ARAB 202
Kwame Essien	LAST 170
Esther Lisanza	SWAH 202, 405
Wemba Lombela	AFST 212
Heidi Lorimor	LING 225
F. Machungo	GEOG 110
Dumi Mkize	ZULU 403
Leonard Muaka	SWAH 201, 403
S. Rowe	ANTH 102
Bala Saho	AFST 201
Awa Sarr	FR 209
Batamaka Somé	AFST 202
S. Winston-Dolan	CWL 242
Josephine Yambi	CI 405, 406
A. Zouhir	ARAB 202, 403

Jeffrey Ahlman (history) conducted pre-dissertation research at the National Archives of Ghana and at the George Padmore Research Library in 2006, funded by the West African Research Association and the Bastian Fellowship in Global and Transnational Studies from the U of I. He returns to Accra for dissertation research funded by the Council on Library and Information Resources' Mellon Fellowship in Original Sources.

Christobel Asiedu (sociology) graduated in May and is starting a tenure-track job at Louisiana Tech University.

Sylvia Bruinders (music) lectures in ethnomusicology, with a special focus on African and African diasporic music, at the University of Cape Town. She published a chapter in *The transformation of the musical arts education: Local and global perspectives from South Africa*. She regularly publishes reviews on CDs and films in the *Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa*. She is an executive member of the South African Society for Research in Music, an amalgamation of the Symposium on Ethnomusicology and the Musicological Society of Southern Africa.

Brahim Chakrani (linguistics) presented, "Cultural Context and Speech Act Theory: A Socio-pragmatic Analysis of Bargaining Exchanges in Morocco" at the Arabic Linguistic Symposium at Brigham Young University and at the Symposium About Language and Society at University of Texas, Austin.

Batamaka Somé (anthropology) presented "Singing, Dancing and Acting as at Home: The Takiboronse Effect in Burkina Faso's Popular Culture" at a conference on popular culture at University of Texas, Austin. He presented "Recapturing Development: A Farmers' Rationality in West African Cotton Production" at the African Students' Organization annual forum. Somé was awarded a National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant and a Barbara Yates Dissertation Research Grant to conduct research in Burkina Faso on negotiations within the cotton farming household.

Nicole Tami (anthropology) presented, "Cheating is Like Eating: The Politics of Romance Tourism in Kenya," at the American Anthropological Association, San Jose.

New MA Students in African Studies

Inka Alasade has two areas of focus in African studies: Yoruba historiography and the oral literatures and cultures along the Bight of Benin and the presence of Yoruba based epistemologies in the Black Atlantic. Inka also studies the slave narratives and cultures along the Swahili Coast and the cultural identities among their descendants in India.

Steve DiSanto's work centers on the music of Guinea, specifically the role of music in impelling the nationalist movement for independence and its role in the education, transformation, and construction of a nationalist identity from a territory of disparate ethnic groups.

Nick Pelafas' study interests are Lingala, the relationship between Afrika and a global consciousness, post-9/11 neo-colonialism in Afrika, and strategic non-neoliberal development models.

Heather Schaad is pursuing a GRID minor in conjunction with her MA in African studies. Her work focuses on gender issues within development and social movements in West Africa. Her research examines the role of women in HIV/AIDS community programs and social movements—specifically how their predominant involvement is shifting socio-cultural gender roles in the African family and in African society.

CAS Bids a Fond Farewell to Graduating MA Students

The Center for African Studies would like to congratulate **Jessica Horn, Esther Somé,** and **Bala Saho** on their academic achievements. Jessica Horn moved to Chicago to start her career in micro-financing and works with ACCION Chicago. Esther and Bala will continue their PhD studies in curriculum and instruction at the U of I, and history at Michigan State University, respectively. Best of luck to all!

Maurice Amutabi (history) published: "Intellectuals and the Democratization Process in Kenya" and "Power and Influence of African Court Clerks and Translators in Colonial Kenya: The Case of Khwisero Native (African) Court, 1946–1956." He is Assistant Professor at the Central Washington University, Ellensburg.

Nic Cook (African studies and LIS) and Jill Leonard (anthropology) had a boy, Lars Leonard-Cook, in 2006. Nic still works for the Congressional Research Service, where he covers Africa issues for the U.S. Congress.



Laura Downing (linguistics) is a research fellow at the Center for General Linguistics in Berlin, where she leads a project on southern Bantu languages. Her research concerns the phonology-syntax-focus interface in Durban Zulu, Chichewa, and Chitumbuka. She made a research trip to Malawi and has been working on Durban Zulu. She was a visiting researcher at the University of Leiden in 2005-06 and continues to work with Dr. L. Chang. In 2006, she published, *Canonical Forms in Prosodic Morphology* (Oxford University Press).

Fallou Ngom (French) was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure at Western Washington University, in 2007. He was awarded a Fulbright Research/Teaching Grant to Senegal for 2007-08. Ngom published "Lexical Borrowings as Sociolinguistic Variables in Saint-Louis, Senegal" and "Loanwords in the Senegalese speech community: Their linguistic features and sociolinguistic significance" in *Language, communication and information*. He presented "Popular Culture in Senegal: Blending the Secular and the Religious" at a University of Texas, Austin, conference.

Stephen Wooten (anthropology) organized the panel, "Global Mande," for the Symposium on African Art held in Gainesville, and he delivered "From Mande Soil to the Global Stage: Ciwara's Diasporic Journey." He presented "The Power of the Ciwara is Awesome: How Traditional Bamana Culture Becomes Modern" at a conference at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Wooten returned to the U of I, Urbana, to deliver "Ciwara Yèrè Yèrè: Champion Farmers and Powerful Dancers on the Mande Plateau" at the Spurlock Museum.

IN MEMORIAM

VICTOR CHIKEZIE UCHENDU

The Center for African Studies at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, is very saddened to share the news that Professor Victor C. Uchendu, founding director of our unit, passed away on December 7, 2006. He was buried in Nsirim, Nigeria, on December 22, 2006.

Uchendu was the director of the Center for African Studies, University of Illinois, from 1971-1980. He led a very distinguished academic career. As a professor of sociology and anthropology for more than 30 years, he taught and held academic and administrative positions in leading Nigerian and international universities: Stanford University; Makerere University; University of Ghana, Legon; and University of Illinois.

LOUISE CRANE

Louise Crane, who was passionately committed to educating Americans about Africa, died on August 1, 2006, in Stanardsville, Va. at age of 89. Crane was born in 1917 and grew up in what was then the Belgian Congo. She returned to the U.S. to attend Queens College, N.C. and later Union Theological Seminary, N.Y., where she earned a Master's degree in sacred music. She also studied ethnomusicology at Columbia University, and French at the Alliance Francaise in Paris.

From 1980 until her retirement in 1987, Crane served as an outreach coordinator for African studies at the University of Illinois. She also lectured, led workshops, and gave presentations at numerous educational, cultural, and religious institutions, as well as on radio and T.V. in the U.S. and Africa. From 1986-88, Crane directed a youth exchange program between Illinois and the Ivory Coast.

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FALL 2007 EVENTS

For more information on events,
visit: www.afrst.uiuc.edu.

AUGUST

- 31 Exhibit opening: Berni Searle, Approach, Krannert Art Museum (KAM)

SEPTEMBER

- 5 Brown Bag Seminar: Abdullahi An-Na'im, noon, 101 International Studies Bldg (ISB)
Abdullahi An-Na'im, CAS/MillerComm: "Islam and the Secular State..." 4 p.m., Levis Faculty Center, Urbana
- 12-13 Conference: Women & HIV/AIDS in Africa, 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m., 101 ISB
- 15 Discussion "Six Strings to Unite the World" Banning Eyre, 11 a.m., Stage 5, KCPA
Music: "Evening Blues" with Abdoulaye Alhassane Toure, Banning Eyre, et. al, 9:30 p.m., KCPA
- 19 Brown Bag Seminar: David Wright, noon, 101 ISB
- 26 Brown Bag Seminar: Tesfaye Wolde-Medhin, noon, 101 ISB

- 27 "Berni Searle: The Body in Place," a Gallery Conversation with Leora Maltz, Harvard University, 5:30 p.m., KAM

OCTOBER

- 3 Brown Bag Seminar: Alma Gottlieb, noon, 101 ISB
- 4 Play: I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document Given to Me by a Young Lady from Rwanda, 7:30 p.m., KCPA
- 5 Play: The Syringa Tree, KCPA, 7:30 p.m.
- 6 Play: In the Continuum, KCPA, 7:30 p.m.
- 7 Play: I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document Given to Me by a Young Lady from Rwanda, 7:30 p.m., KCPA
- 8 Film: "Everyone's Child," 7 p.m., Studio Theatre, KCPA
- 9 Lecture: Tsitsi Dangarembga, "Creating Zimbabwe as an Artist" & film Kare Kare Zvako (Mother's Day), 4 p.m., KCPA, Studio Theatre
- 10 Play: The Syringa Tree, 7:30 p.m., KCPA
- 11 Play: In the Continuum, 7:30 p.m., KCPA
- 11-12 Joint Areas Centers Symposium: Transnational Popular Culture Industries

- Thursday, 3:30–5 p.m., 217 Noyes Lab;
Friday, 9 a.m. – 5:15 p.m., 195 Lincoln Hall
- 12 Play: I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document Given to Me by a Young Lady from Rwanda, 7:30 p.m., KCPA
- 13 Play: The Syringa Tree, 7:30 p.m., KCPA
- 14 Play: In the Continuum, 7:30 p.m., KCPA
- 24 Brown Bag Seminar: Abdulai Iddrisu, noon, 101 ISB

NOVEMBER

- 2-8 African Film Festival, Boardman's Art Theatre, Champaign
- 8-10 African Film Conference
CAS/MillerComm: Birgit Meyer "African Popular Cinema, Pentecostalism, & the 'Powers of Darkness,'" 7:30 p.m., Spurlock Museum
Thursday & Friday sessions at General Lounge, Illini Union
Martine DeSouza at Global Crossroads Living and Learning community

DECEMBER

- 31 Berni Searle exhibition at KAM closes