

2007-2008

SCALI 2007: Opportunity to Share My Culture

The 2007 national Summer Cooperative African Language Institute (SCALI) will ever remain a memorable event I will always cherish. Held on the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign campus, SCALI 2007 offered a great and exciting opportunity for me to share my culture with people, including the organizers, students, and instructors. There is one thing I feel proud and satisfied doing and that is to share my rich culture with people, especially those who are interested and wish to know.

During my first year as a grad student at U of I, the first department I visited was the Center for African Studies. When I saw the dynamism and interest applied by the staff and faculty to work around issues concerning Africa, I immediately wanted to get involved. I remember asking about an opportunity to teach Twi. I was referred to Professor Bokamba (Department of Linguistics and SCALI director), whom I was told handles issues



Making delicious Ghanaian food with Rose Korang-Okrah

concerning the teaching of African languages. Then, in February 2007, I heard about this wonderful program, SCALI. I was so excited to know that my application had been accepted and that I had been chosen as one of the SCALI 2007 instructors. At long last, my dream had been fulfilled!

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Illinois Hosts SCALI 2007: An Immersion into African Languages and Cultures

Last summer the Center for African Studies, in cooperation with the Department of Linguistics, hosted the Summer Cooperative African Language Institute (SCALI) for the first time since its inception in 1993. SCALI is an annual collaborative program of Title VI National Resource Centers and FLAS granting institutions in the United States.

SCALI offers African language instruction to current undergraduate and graduate programs and is open to professionals and non-students as well. As a nationwide program, its organization requires careful and considerable planning, unlike that which characterizes single institution-based intensive summer language programs.

The initial planning for us involved the pursuit of various tasks by U of I staff, faculty, and graduate students, while liaising with Indiana University, the host of the 2005 and 2006 institutes. Careful pre-SCALI planning enabled us to attract the largest number of students (125) in the history of the institute and from the largest number of colleges and universities (30) across the nation. We were fortunate at SCALI 2007 to have a group of highly experienced faculty members and graduate teaching assistants who contributed immensely to the institute's success.

The institute began with a two-day teachers' workshop, focusing mainly on teaching methods and classroom management. Professor Antonia Folarin-Schleicher, Director of the National African Language Resource Center as well as the

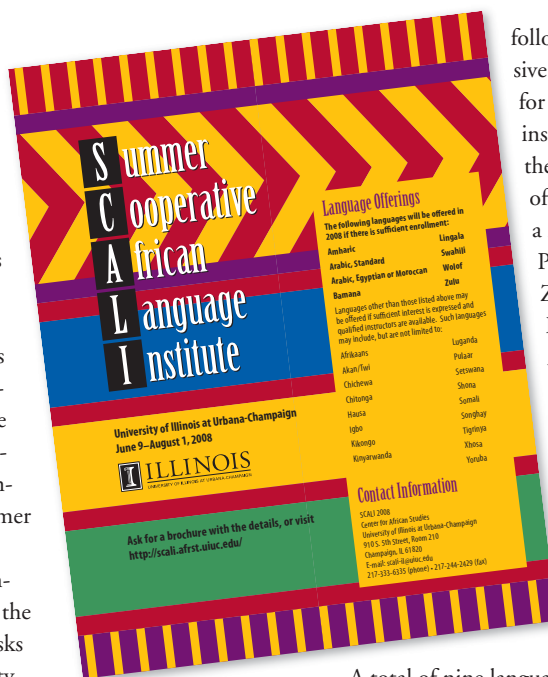
Chair of the Department of African Languages and Literatures at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, conducted the workshop. During this two-day event, Professor Folarin-Schleicher focused on two major topics: the teaching of African languages under total immersion from day one, and the management of a diverse classroom.

The workshop was followed by a comprehensive general orientation for the students and instructors preceding the commencement of classes. It included a lecture delivered by Professor Paul Tiyambe Zeleza (Chair of the Department of African American Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago) on the interrogation of African studies research paradigm in the U.S., and a luncheon buffet for students, instructors, and their guests.

A total of nine languages were offered (Akan/Twi, Amharic, Arabic, Bamana, iSizulu, Kiswahili, Pulaar, Wolof, and Yoruba) in 24 sections arranged to accommodate beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels, as well as the participating students' academic interests. One of our innovations was to divide the classes at all levels into undergraduate and graduate sections. This was done to enable graduate students and faculty members to move as expeditiously as possible through their courses.

The results of the immersion instruction were ultimately displayed through the "Language Showcase" banquet at the end of the institute.

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Merle Bowen

FROM THE DIRECTOR

It has been another exciting and challenging year at the Center for African Studies! New and continuing programs, curriculum development projects, and faculty and staff hires have strengthened the unit and its position in the University and the Africanist community.

Last summer, the Center, in collaboration with the Department of Linguistics, hosted the Summer Cooperative African Language Institute (SCALI) for the first time. Working together with other Africa Title VI National Resource Centers and Foreign Language and Area Studies institutions, SCALI 2007 drew the largest enrollment to date—125 students from 30 colleges and universities. A total of nine languages were offered—Akan/Twi, Amharic, Arabic, Bamana, Pulaar, Swahili, Wolof, Yoruba, and Zulu. In addition to their daily language classes, students were immersed in the culture of their target language, viewing African films, reading recipes in the original languages, cooking, and attending cultural festivals and research presentations. Some of these extracurricular activities were open to the local community. SCALI 2007 could not have happened without the support of the organizing units, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the many campus level service units. Plans are in the final stages for SCALI 2008, which will be the final year for hosting it at the University of Illinois.

The academic year's thematic event, focusing on African cinema—with an international conference in fall 2007 and a film festival in spring of 2008—was a resounding success with its curricular, outreach, and programmatic dimensions. More than 30 international scholars took part in panels, coming from institutions in the U.S., Canada, Europe (England, Germany, Netherlands, and Norway) and Africa (Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso). Other groups of scholars and graduate students arrived from

the University of Wisconsin, Southern Illinois University, University of Minnesota, University of Pittsburgh, and York University, to be part of the audience. The conference started with the keynote lecture of Professor Birgit Meyer at the Knight Auditorium of the Spurlock Museum—one of the best-attended lectures in the MillerComm lecture series.

In spring 2008, the C-U African Film Festival exposed local audiences to representations of various African communities, issues, and stories, as filmed by Africans from Mauritania, Nigeria, Angola, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso. The festival featured multiple screenings of six acclaimed films—*Bamako*, *Ezra*, *O'Heroi*, *Les Saignantes*, *Tasuma*, and *Kirikou & the Sorceress*. The festival was designed to correlate with high school, community college, and university curricula, with entire classrooms engaged through both the films and post-screening discussions. Combined with the film festival, the Center organized an "Educators Workshop on African Film" on the educational uses of African film for faculty, K-12 teachers, and instructors who teach languages, social studies, literature, history, and world cultures.

Besides the SCALI and African cinema, we sponsored a wide selection of events through our regular programming, including the Center's Wednesday noon seminars, the International Summer Institute for Teachers, the International Careers in Business Workshop, and the Joint Area Studies Centers Symposium. The Center also sponsored numerous lectures, forums, and symposia on African culture, health, and politics. Together with the Department of Theatre, we hosted award-winning Zimbabwean novelist, playwright, and filmmaker Tsitsi Dangarembga, and coordinated three talk-back sessions with a team of scholars to follow their plays on Africa. Another fall highlight was the Symposium on Women and HIV/AIDS in Africa, that brought together an interdisciplinary group of researchers from the U.S., Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. Two important events were Professor Abdullahi Ahmed an-Na'im's Center for Advanced Study/MillerComm lecture and Professor Michael Gomez's 2008 DuBois lecture.

One of the goals of the Center and the Department of Linguistics is to raise the level of language instruction on campus to meet rising national standards. The seeding of a permanent Swahili instructor, Dr. Peter Otiato Ojiambo, with Title VI funds last year was a step toward realizing this goal. His energy and expertise have already had a tremendous impact on the quality of Swahili instruction. Over the next year, we plan to hire lecturers in Wolof and Zulu to join our Arabic and Swahili instructors on the U of I campus. By investing in

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CENTER FOR AFRICAN STUDIES NEWS

lecturers, we are professionalizing our language instruction, which will make for a stronger and more stable language program; support the new undergraduate minor in sub-Saharan languages; and provide better language and culture training.

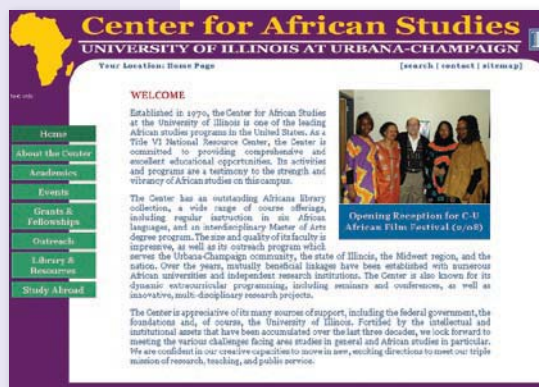
For the past several years, the Center has used part of its Title VI funds for course development grants to create new courses, or expand existing ones, that include the study of Africa. Last summer we provided three stipends to develop courses on Islam and Globalization, Islam in East Africa, and Curriculum Issues in South Africa and the United States. We are also delighted to announce that African Studies 222: "Introduction to Modern Africa," the campus's gateway course into African studies and the Center's largest undergraduate course, has been re-approved and will be taught annually starting fall 2008. The Center offered again, after a short hiatus, paper prizes for the Best Research Paper on Africa by an undergraduate and graduate student written during AY 2007-08, giving public recognition to some of the outstanding scholarship created by U of I students.

The current Title VI cycle marks the beginning of a coordinated effort with area studies centers and the College of Education to develop and administer an evaluation process on all aspects of area studies activities, including Foreign Language and Area Studies recipient evaluations, faculty needs, and programming. This evaluation process is an ongoing effort, and we believe that it will assist in better understanding and improving all aspects of Center activities. Moreover, the Center began the long overdue development of a new website during AY 2007-08. Everything from the basic construction to the narratives and links has been updated, and the new site will go live this summer. We are excited by the design not only for the obvious visual improvements, but also for the ease of finding information and a much simpler design for future development.

In addition to the recent arrival of Dr. Peter Otiato Ojiambo in the Department of Linguistics, we also warmly welcome to our community Professor Brian Dill in the Department of Sociology and Professor Mohammad Hassan Khalil in Religion. We said goodbye to Fran Bell, the Center secretary who transferred to another campus unit and welcomed Charisse Jones who brings renewed vigor, goodwill, and professionalism to the Center. We are delighted that she has joined the Center's team and look forward to working together on new initiatives in the coming year, with the support of our outstanding faculty and terrific graduate students.

U of I Students Explore Egypt this Summer

This year a new study abroad course has been added to the University curriculum: Religion 410: "Islam in Egypt." During the first summer session (May 11-June 6, 2008), Professor Valerie Hoffman, a specialist in Islam, took 11 students to Egypt for firsthand exposure to the diversity of Muslim life and opinion in the cultural capital of the Arab world. The students toured some of the most important Islamic monuments of Cairo, witnessed religious rites, and met with a wide range of people, including government religious officials like an advisor to the Grand Mufti, leaders of non-governmental organizations of various orientations that offer Islamic religious instruction, secondary school teachers of Islam, Sufi shaykhs, university students, a journalist, and activists on women's issues. This course is designed to make the richness and diversity of Islamic religious life come alive.



Center for African Studies Introduces a New Website

We are excited to announce that our new website will be launched in summer 2008. Our URL remains the same (www.afirst.uic.edu) but the new site will feature a cleaner design, an improved menu and layout, better organization, and easier navigation. We thank Naomi Gurevich, who designed the new

site, and all Center faculty, staff, and students who worked on preparing the content and provided assistance over the past year. This is the product of a lot of work, careful thought, and coordination. We hope visitors to the new site will have an easier time browsing and locating the information they need. Above is a snapshot of the new design. We hope you like it!

Email Address Update

Please note that our email address has been updated to african@illinois.edu as part of a campuswide domain name change (from uic.edu to illinois.edu).

Sue Swisher
Center for African Studies

Strengthening Center Curriculum and Academic Programs

The 2007-08 academic year has been a busy but exciting year as we continue our efforts to revitalize the Center's curriculum and strengthen both our undergraduate and graduate programs.

We are delighted to announce that African Studies 222: "Introduction to Modern Africa," which served for several years as the campus's gateway course into African studies and the Center's largest undergraduate core course, has been re-approved and will be taught again annually starting fall 2008. In the past, this course drew a large number of students from several disciplines in the social sciences, and we expect enrollment to grow consistently. Recently, our staff has expanded and undergone some reorganization, making it possible for the Center to entirely administer, control, and teach AFST 222, although it will continue to be cross-listed with anthropology, political science, and sociol-

ogy. Dr. Maimouna Barro, who is in charge of all issues pertaining to curriculum development, worked on revising AFST 222 and will teach it regularly every fall.

As part of our efforts to expand our academic programs, we are currently working with the Graduate School of Library and Information Science on a proposal to establish a joint degree program. The initiative to set up a dual MA in African studies and MS in library and information science comes as a response to the growing need for specialists in librarianship with Africa-specific knowledge and research interests.

We continue to build a stronger and more coherent African studies program across many disciplines at the University of Illinois through both area courses and African language study.

Maimouna Barro
Center for African Studies

Illinois Hosts SCALI 2007 continued from page 1

There, different language classes performed skits that students wrote, and sang some popular songs in African languages. The audience was absolutely delighted by the shows. Instructors and U of I staff were proud of their students' language achievements.

SCALI 2007 was intended to provide the learners with language skills and cultural exposure to their respective languages. A series of extra-curricular activities were organized for SCALI students, which included live music performances on campus, the showing and discussion of five films representing the different African regions and respective languages and cultures, the research forum, and community-wide cooking lessons on selected African recipes. These activities enabled students and instructors to release some pressure from the intensive language classes, and to enrich their experiences through immersion into the culturally filled extra-curricular activities of their choice. The research forums—at which the SCALI director, three instructors, and six

students presented papers on topics that included linguistics, African language pedagogy, economics, and politics—offered yet another intellectual dimension from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Overall, SCALI 2007 was a great success from all perspectives. Serious beginning and intermediate level students developed impressive language skills, while their advanced-level colleagues enhanced their conversational abilities so much that they were able to discuss and debate issues in African cultures, politics, and economic developments. Students who had not traveled to Africa, but participated in the different extra-curricular activities, gained useful insights about this complex continent. We look forward to another year of hosting SCALI 2008, where we will build on our successes and continue to make improvements.

Our success last summer would not have been possible without the dedicated and generous support of the cooperating NRC and FLAS centers, and the local units and personnel at U of I. We are, therefore, deeply indebted to all these participants.

Eyamba Bokamba
Department of Linguistics

AFRICAN STUDIES ROSTER GAINS DEPTH THROUGH NEW COURSES ON ISLAM, GLOBALIZATION, AND EDUCATION

Undergraduate students and educators have new opportunities to explore critical issues relating to Islam, globalization, and the educational representation of African cultures through three new courses offered during the summer and spring semesters.

Professor Valerie Hoffman of the Department of Religion launched a new course that analyzes Islam in East Africa. Hoffman describes the upper-division undergraduate seminar as a means to understand the process of Islamization outside of the traditional scholarly emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa. Not only did East Africa follow a different school of Sunni Islam than West Africa or the Sahel, but communities living along the western rim of the Indian Ocean were washed by successive waves of faiths, including Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and Shi'a Islam. Therefore, East Africa presents a "unique cultural environment and a choice location for examining intra-Muslim relations" as well as wider interactions across the area. The course was offered this spring through African Studies and cross-listed through the Department of History.

Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi, professor in both history and sociology, put together an exciting course for the spring semester: Islam, Colonialism, and Globalization. Covering a wide geographic swath of Muslim regions, from Africa to South East Asia, the course aims to examine how Muslims were subjected to, resisted, and accommodated colonial rule, and how they have been either integrated or excluded from the wider process of globalization. Key moments in Muslim resistance will receive special attention, including the formation of the Egyptian-based Muslim Brotherhood organization and the Algerian war for independence. The course is listed through the Department of Sociology (SOC 396).

Finally, Dr. Bekisizwe Ndimande is currently teaching a new course in curriculum issues in Africa and the United States (CI 499). Designed primarily for in-service and pre-service educators in primary and secondary grade levels, the class aims to increase the educators' awareness of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds, and to design appropriate classroom curricula to transmit that knowledge. Specifically, Ndimande will assess educational policy in post-apartheid South Africa, comparing measures there to reforms implemented in the United States after the passage of the landmark "No Child Left Behind" legislation.

With this trio of courses, it is certain that the Center for African Studies will remain at the forefront of pedagogical training revolving around the continent and its peoples.

Suzana Palaska-Nicholson
Habari Editor

Share My Culture continued from page 1

SCALI is packed with performance-based instructions, which not only train students in the language through reading and writing, but also immerse them into the rich culture of the language they take. For me this cultural immersion is the exciting part of the program, and I love it! Therefore, I envisioned SCALI as a multifunctional program, which trains students in the language (reading, writing, comprehension, etc.), the cultural elucidation of the language, and the practical exposure of the cultures and traditions of the language they choose.

We were ushered into SCALI 2007 by a pre-SCALI workshop led by Professor Antonia Schleicher from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I loved the workshop because it exposed me to various techniques of teaching an African language, which helped me in the classroom, and I also learned words from other languages. For instance, I learned that in Swahili, "asante" means "thank you," but the same spelling, same pronunciation "Asante" is an ethnic group in Ghana to which I belong!

The syllabus I had prepared for teaching was full of activities I planned for students to practice in groups. It turned out that I had to play two different roles in my classroom, an instructor and a student-partner for the one student in my Twi intermediate class. I had the impression that the fewer your students, the more manageable and less exhausting the class is; but, I did not know that this is not "true" when there is only one student in the class. In addition to teaching, I was the partner to my student in all activities that needed practice. It sounds exhausting and tedious but there was a huge payoff, evident in the rate at which the student was able to use more words in a shorter period of time. Moreover, it was gratifying to be a partner with the student during the oral practice activities, and I enjoyed doing that.

There were also times to practically expose students to some of the cultures and traditions of Africa. The cooking class and the cultural display for the final celebration to end SCALI 2007 were two such exposures to traditions. The cooking class, organized by Jamie McGowan, was to expose and teach participants how some selected dishes from Africa are prepared. Four people, a man and three

women, volunteered for this exercise. I had a hard time choosing a dish from the hundreds of dishes we have in Ghana. I finally chose a dish with rice because rice is universal and participants would be able to learn and apply their newly acquired skills.

I chose to teach a dish called "jollof rice" and again chose the method which is easiest to use. Instead of the traditional way of preparing the stew and boiling the rice in the stew, I chose to bake the jollof. Actually, jollof is typical not only to Ghana, but to Nigeria and other African countries, but the difference is in the taste. Ingredients for jollof includes rice, tomatoes (fresh and canned), pepper, onions, vegetable or olive oil, salt, spices, meat or fish, and vegetables.

On June 30, 2007, around 3 p.m., we met for the cooking lessons. There were 12 to 15 partici-

pants. I started with the introduction of jollof and the ingredients. I demonstrated how to get the ingredients ready to use. Then I invited students to do the washing, cutting, blending, cooking, frying, and baking. I was amazed at how all the participants got involved, and at the enthusiasm they showed in what they were doing. The food was ready by 5 p.m. We cooked the

jollof with vegetables for the sake of vegetarians and made chicken stew as a side sauce. Then we fried ripped plantain, chopped into smaller pieces and spiced (Kelewele) as the side dish. When the time came for eating, it was a celebration at the table! Almost everybody at the table went for a second round of food. After everyone had plenty to eat there was still more food left for the take-home parcels.

To crown SCALI 2007 with activities and performances, all languages chose to do some cultural performances. My students and I decided to do a short play. Traditionally, every story or play carries some moral values to teach people. The story we chose involved "aponkye, odwan, and okraman" (goat, sheep, and dog) and carried the moral lessons of good friendship, love, and support for each other, while at the same time warning about the consequences of deceit or cheating.

Rose Korang-Okrah
School of Social Work



Alumni Profiles:

Amy & Tunde Brimah



Amy, Tunde, and the Brimah children



Tunde Brimah (1995-1997, African studies, FLAS scholar) and Amy Brimah (1995-1997, political science, FLAS scholar) were married in July 1999 and traveled together to Ghana in August 2000. Tunde recently returned to Ghana for a visit this January. Their son, Rashad, is almost four years old and their daughter, Lila, is two years old. The entire family is avidly working to elect Barack Obama as the next president of the United States.

Since leaving the U of I, Tunde attended the University of Colorado at Denver where he earned an MPA in public policy and currently is working on a PhD in educational policy. He is a conference director with Academic Impressions, where he designs seminars and workshops for college and university administrators and faculty. He specializes in professional development offerings in instructional technologies, faculty evaluation and development, student assessment, and copyright and intellectual property issues. Amy Brimah attended the University of Colorado School of Law (JD 2000) and practices in the area of corporate and real estate transactions. She is currently working on the development of low-income housing communities in Latin America as well as the development of several office communities and corporate governance issues. Amy can be reached at amy@b-e-law.com and Tunde can be reached at tundebrimah@hotmail.com

PROGRAMMING AND OUTREACH 2007-08

Jamie McGowan

Center for African Studies

African Musi

ON THE QUAD, IN THE COMMUNITY, AND IN THE SCHOOLS

The Outreach Program coordinated a range of musical entertainment during the year. We worked to bring musical groups featuring African rhythms into the spotlight at local clubs, in public spaces, and at local schools. Some of the highlights are featured below:

Shiko Mawatu, a rising soukous star, performed with legendary soukous musicians on the U of I Quad. Shiko Mawatu, with his new album "Kimbanda Nzila," was a nominee for the NAACP Image Awards in 2008.



Legends of Soukous:
Lokassa Ya Mbongo (left)
and Professor Ngouma
Lokito (right) Shiko
Mawatu perform on the
U of I Quad.



Mhondoro opened the afternoon of African music on the U of I Quad. Their Zimbabwean rhythms have attracted a dedicated following and their concert on the Quad certainly drew in new fans.

Mara-Giri Drum and Dance Project, which features Djibril Camara, is actively promoting West African dance and drumming in the community, offering two classes each week, and participating in various outreach events in local schools. African studies facilitated performances at a number of venues, as seen below. Djibril and Mara-Giri are also scheduled to perform at the first African Institute for Educators held at the U of I this summer and at a 4-H camp called, "Passport to the World Camp: Countdown to the Beijing Olympics: Sports and Games around the World."



Originally from Uganda and now living in Champaign, Krukid joined Mhondoro on stage to perform "African." His song speaks to the solidarities across the African world and his hip-hop style blended with the southern African rhythms.



Champaign-Urbana's Adzido Drum Club also coordinated the visit of a group of Ghanaian drummers and dancers. With support from several campus units, including African Studies, the Midawo Gideon F. Alorwoye & The Afrikania Cultural Troupe performed for 374 school children at Leal Elementary and at a packed house at Spurlock Museum. Professor Gideon F. Alorwoye is in the Department of Music at the University of North Texas and is a master drummer.



What's Cooking at African Studies?

In summer 2007, we arranged a series of African Cooking Classes that were successful with students enrolled in SCALI and with the wider community. We offered four community cooking sessions featuring Rwandan, Ethiopian, Kenyan, and Ghanaian meals. Participants learned about the cultures of cooking and eating. Topics addressed gender and home life, agriculture and nutrition, and meals meant for celebrations and everyday consumption. They also had the opportunity to chop, dice, stir, simmer, fry, pour, taste, and swallow. After cooking, the class sat and enjoyed the meal, while listening to music from the featured country and continuing our discussions.



An Ethiopian meal with Tesfaye Wolde-Medhin cooking Teff injera, qai meser wat' (red lentils), gomman wat' (kale dish), and Tesfaye's famous spicy salsa.



Ghanaian meal with Rose Korang-Okrah cooking baked jollof rice, chicken and gravy, fried ripe plantain.



Rwandan meal with Pascasie Adedze cooking Ibishyimbo—a bean and spinach dish with potatoes.

New Africa-Focused Curriculum Kits and Units Created for K-6 Teachers

Trying on a school uniform, using adrinkra stamps, or handling a calabash, an akuba fertility doll, or prayer beads can stir a child's imagination when a topic seems otherwise abstract or distant. Harbert Jones, a K-5th grade fine arts teacher, and Marcia Richards, a 5th grade classroom teacher, worked on three touch kits and curriculum units that would help bring African materials, history, and society to life in their classrooms. Working with African studies and the Krannert Art Museum, Jones and Richards sorted through numerous artifacts and books this summer.

They compiled materials that would intrigue young learners and fit into the K-5 curriculum. They narrowed the resources down to units on fine arts and Islam in West Africa, children's lives in Ghana, and textiles in Africa. The three units include a diverse collection of resources books, games, toys, fabrics, outfits, proverbs, household objects, and paintings. The objects are also cross-referenced between various texts, images, and curriculum projects included with the kits. We look forward to seeing the objects begin to circulate this year and getting feedback from teachers and students as they use each kit.



PROGRAMMING AND OUTREACH 2007-08

Workshops Address Educators on Teaching African Content

African studies' Outreach Program served K-12 and post-secondary educators in part through workshops and new curriculum kits.

We also organized several school visits and programs.

The African Studies Association Annual Teachers Workshop in New York City was supported by our unit.

Held at the Metropolitan Museum, the workshop included a welcome address and three sets of four concurrent sessions on topics ranging from Islam to gender, novels, colonialism and independence, art, and more. The workshop ended with a performance by Alhaji Papa Susso & Co., a griot and master kora

player from The Gambia. Over 100 New York teachers attended the program.

The Outreach Program organized an

educators' workshop on teaching African film. Held in February, mostly post-secondary educators and one high school teacher attended the program. Professor Mahir Şaul introduced the social, cultural, and

historical context of African cinema and video, and he highlighted films and filmmakers featured in the film festival. Professor Maggie Flinn presented teaching techniques and strategies using African cinema.

In conjunction with other international and area studies centers in Illinois, we hosted



Maggie Flinn leads an African film workshop

our annual teachers' workshop, known as the Illinois Summer Institute. The 2007 summer program addressed the teaching of international literature and film. The six-day program included presentations by several scholars affiliated with African studies, including: Professor Wail Hassan on literature from North Africa and the Middle East, Dr. Rosemary Onyango on African folk literature, Professor Mahir Şaul



Zohreh Sullivan and Ritu Saksena at the keynote address of the International Summer Institute on Literature and Film

on African film, and Professor Zohreh Sullivan gave the keynote address on global literature and fragmentation.

Uhuru Summer Arts Program: Africa through the Arts, Hip Hop, and Spoken Word

The African Studies Outreach Program worked with Urbana Free Library to initiate new youth programming. The project emerged out of discussions with representatives of community groups and offices that work with youth, faculty, staff, graduate students, the organizer of Speak Café, and a youth librarian at the public library. Tage Biswalo and Carol Inskeep at Urbana Free Library organized much of the program and aimed to provide a fun environment for young teens to gather and learn about African cultures through media that interest them—arts, music, and spoken word being among the popular topics that they might find engaging.

Tage arranged for Amira Davis to teach the South African gumboot dance, which the teens related to the popular film, *Stomp the Yard*. The second presenter, Kevin J. Hales, discussed images of Africa in the local media and schools. Jean Allman engaged the group in a discussion of Pan-Africanism and the role of Kwame Nkrumah in the Pan-African movement for peace and independence. The teens also heard a local spoken word artist, who engaged the young adults around discussions of race and culture in the U.S. and Africa. Shawn Uthandi discussed and demonstrated African martial arts and drew connections between martial arts and Egyptian hieroglyphics.

The program was open to all youngsters who were interested.

But at the same time, we aimed to keep the program relatively small, so that every child would receive individual attention. We averaged 14 youngsters per week. The program drew in kids affiliated with the Don Moyer's Boys and Girls Club, Peer Ambassadors of the Mental Health Center, and the youth involved in mediation with the Champaign County Court Diversion program.

A poster for the Uhuru Summer Arts Program. It features a silhouette of a person in a dynamic pose against a background of the African continent. The text is in various fonts and colors, including red, yellow, and black.

Uhuru Summer Arts Program
Africa through Hip Hop, Spoken Word, & Performance

Connecting Youth to the African World

- Discuss and learn about: Music and Dance in Africa, Spirituality, Pan-Africanism, and more
- Spit some rhymes—by developing lyrical and spoken word connections
- Kick it with folks in the know—engage with scholars from the U of I and our community

Take it to the next level

- Perform your works live at SPEAK Café and on the radio
- Publish your work
- Refreshments served

The details

For teens a FREE program at
The Urbana Free Library
 210 West Green Street, Urbana
 Wednesdays • 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
 July 11 through August 15

Sign up at: www.afrst.uiuc.edu/uhuru
 Contact: Tage Biswalo • biswalo@uiuc.edu
 and by the many volunteers
 at the Urbana Free Library, Urbana, Illinois

Henry Drewal Delivers Jerrold Ziff Lecture in Modern Art

The Department of Art History was pleased to welcome Henry John Drewal, Evjue-Bascom Professor of Art History, Afro-American Studies, and Adjunct Curator of African Art at the Chazen Museum of Art at the University

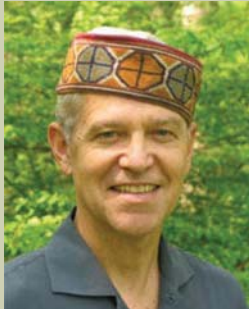
of Wisconsin-Madison to the University of Illinois. Professor Drewal delivered his talk, "Mami Wata and Santa Marta: Traveling Images and Ideas in Africa and the African Atlantic," as part of the annual Jerrold Ziff Lecture in Modern Art, at the Krannert Art Museum on April 28, 2008. Drewal, a specialist in the arts of the Yoruba-speaking peoples of West

Africa and the African Diaspora, is the curator of "Mami Wata: Arts for Water Spirits in Africa and the African-Atlantic World," on view currently at the UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History.

His talk drew upon over 30 years of study and fascination with the "beautiful and seductive, protective yet dangerous" water spirit. Portrayed as a mermaid, a snake charmer, or a combination of both, Mami Wata is esteemed throughout much of Africa and the African Atlantic. Drawing on art and imagery from Africa, the Caribbean, Brazil, and the United States, Drewal traced the history and evolution of Mami Wata and related water spirits. For Drewal, she is an amalgam of transcultural sources: African deities, European mermaids, Hindu gods and goddesses, snake charmers, and Christian and Muslim saints.

Although the origins of Mami Wata visual culture and history are somewhat clouded in mystery, Drewal indicated that the concept of this water spirit has its source in the first Euro-African encounters of the 15th century. Mermaid

figures, he proposed, may have been introduced in the form of figureheads located on the prow of Portuguese explorer and trading ships. One of the first known mermaids to appear in African art was carved onto a delicate ivory saltcellar



created in the late 15th century by an artisan of the Sapi peoples on Sherbro Island. The ornate figurine shows a mermaid, naked from the waist up, swimming with crocodiles. Crocodiles, according to Drewal, have long been a symbol of the female water spirit.

Similarly, Drewal believes the name "Mami Wata" is a Pidgin English variant, which links her pervasiveness to commerce and trade with the outside world. This association with commerce and, therefore, its benefits and pitfalls, make Mami Wata an early "capitalist" deity par excellence," according to Drewal.

Mami Wata traveled across the Atlantic with African slaves, as well. Most notably she was incarnated in Haiti and Brazil as La Sirene and Yemanjá, respectively. "She became this deity that comes from across the sea from Africa," Drewal said, "She personifies the meeting of people from different cultural worlds." Mami is represented, in these contexts, in glittering sequined flags, sculptures, paintings, and elaborate mixed-media altars.

Like the mermaid, images of snake charmers also merged with African water spirits. Not long after its publication in Hamburg around 1887, a chromolithographic poster of the Samoan snake charmer Maladamatjaute reached West Africa, likely through African sailors or European merchants. Drewal showed a later edition of the iconic image with a photo of Maladamatjaute

to illustrate this connection. He noted that in Africa, the poster had a dramatic and almost immediate impact. By 1901, according to Drewal, the snake charmer had already been interpreted as an African water spirit, translated into a three-dimensional carved image and incorporated into water spirit masks and headdresses of the Niger River Delta. Snake charmer imagery, in Drewal's opinion, also fostered a "complex fusion" of visual elements from Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, and other faiths in later 19th and 20th century incarnations.

Contemporary artists seem to have fallen under Mami Wata's spell, as well. Drewal showed works by artists including Alison Saar, Sonya Clark, Bruce Onobrakpeya, Twin Seven-Seven, Claudette Schreuders, and Edouard Duval-Carrié. These artists imbue the water spirit and her companions with new meanings and renewed significance. Contemporary manifestations of Mami Wata, and the innumerable mami and papi wata spirits, point to the complex and ever-evolving nature of their identities. Drewal noted that as conditions change, so do the attributes, personalities, and actions of the spirits.

Recognizing the constant state of flux and acknowledging the complex spaces in which Mami Wata operates is fundamental to the view that Drewal presented. In closing, he advocated on behalf of the water spirit, who in recent times has become demonized by various religious groups. As perhaps evidence of his devotion, Drewal allowed those in attendance a rare glimpse into the sometimes slippery, but always splashy, life of Mami Wata.

About the Jerrold Ziff Lecture Series

The Jerrold Ziff lecture series honors the distinguished Turner scholar and professor, who was the principal architect of the doctoral program in art history at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Jennifer E. Furlong
Department of Art History

Alumna Profile: Elizabeth Aseidu



(c) KU University Relations

After completing her bachelor's degree from the University of Ghana, **Elizabeth Aseidu** enrolled in the master's program in math at the University of Illinois, in January 1990. Upon finishing the MA, she transferred into the PhD program in economics. While at U of I, Elizabeth was a TA in the economics and math departments. She also worked for four years as a computer programmer at the Office of Minority Student Affairs.

Since leaving the U of I, Aseidu has had many achievements. In 2003 she was the recipient of the Outstanding Woman Educator Award, awarded by the Emily Taylor Women's Resource Center at the University of Kansas. A few years later, in 2007, her dedicated work was recognized once again with the nationwide Emerging Scholar Award given by *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education* news magazine. Most recently, in 2008, she received the Byron Shutz Award for Excellence in Teaching.

She currently serves as an associate chair and director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Economics at the University of Kansas. Elizabeth is also an associate professor of economics within the same department and a research scholar at the Policy Research Institute. She is married and has two children.

AFRICAN CINEMA

CELEBRATED FROM CONFERENCE TO FESTIVAL

Why should anyone care about watching an African movie?

This question jump-started a journalism student's recent interview. Depending on what you look for in film and literature, the answer will sway you. Simply time off from daily worries? I suspect most people ask for a bit more: edification, emotional maturity, discovery about life—vaguely, a change for the better. Yet, our world thwarts this expectation. Parents and children, managers and office clerks—these folks do not watch the same movies and do not recognize the same actors. We've been sorted out. Studies have figured out who we are and what we desire. We will receive what has been planned for us, researched, fine-tuned, packaged, and placed right on our path. We look and find that we stand to catch our own reflection. Is there any chance of breaking this spell? This hope, for me, would be the main reason to bring in a set of African movies to a town theater, and to recommend that someone go and watch them. No demographics, no test screenings. Something out of the blue. Maybe we will like it, maybe not, but chances are we'll be slightly different at the end of it.

Time to concede—a second reason also inspired the African film series. Most of us here at the Center, whether born and raised in a part of Africa or sometime residents there, nourish our emotional ties to it. We know Africa is not all problems, civil strife, or war. We want to share the beauties of the place we know, spread the word on the achievements of its people. And what better way to do so than allowing African artists to give the word themselves. Let them guide us to Africa's cities and villages, to their tales, dreams, and aspirations.

African cinema was the central theme of the Center's activities this year, with the international film conference in the fall and the C-U African Film Festival in the spring as its two major events.



Amira Davis Group performs at the opening night of the C-U African Film Festival

AFRICAN FILM CONFERENCE

The African Film Conference gathered November 8-10, 2007, with participants from the U.S., Canada, Barbados, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria, Denmark, England, Germany, and the Netherlands. A call for papers had been launched the year before and widely reproduced on websites, mailing lists, and specialized academic news publications. Ralph Austen (University of Chicago) and I were the organizers. Out of about 100 proposals submitted, we selected 25 papers grouped in four panels, and four rapporteurs to present remarks on each panel. Birgit Meyer delivered the keynote lecture, also sponsored as a CAS/Miller-Comm lecture. The conference included leading scholars of African film studies, junior researchers, and, by serendipity, a group of bona fide film practitioners who broadened our horizon with their insights on production. Ghanaian video film producer Socrate Safo made a presentation illustrated with part screenings. Others, hosted by the Media Research Center of Southern Illinois University, accompanied conference participant John McCall: well-known Nigerian actress Joke Silva; president of the Association of Movie Producers of Nigeria and publisher of *Movie Africa Magazine* Madu Chikwendu; and Nigerian actor/director Francis Onwochei.



C-U African Film Festival

The C-U African Film Festival featured six films between February 22-28 at the Beverly Cinemas in Champaign. Thirty-five screenings during that week presented a sample of the variegated nature of African film production to the community. A first in our twin cities, the event was promoted in the local media, with major stories in the *News-Gazette*, the buzz, other local publications and websites, and public service announcements and guest commentary in local radio shows, including an hour-long interview on WILL's Focus 580.

The films ranged from *Bamako*, this year's widely discussed mock courtroom-drama, by the Malian Abdurrah-



Opening night at Jackson's Restaurant

man Sissako to *Ezra*, by the Nigerian Newton Aduaka, which dynamically pieces together a former child soldier's record (FESPACO Grand Prize, 2007). *O'Heroi*, a beautiful film debut

by the Angolan Zeze Gamboa, won the Sundance Grand Prize in world drama (2005). *Tasuma* was a comedy from Burkina Faso, by Kollo Sanou. *Les Saignantes*, innovative Cameroonian Jean-Pierre Bekolo's most recent work, gave a taste of world avant-garde in Africa. Finally, we had a children's animated movie, *Kirikou and the Sorceress*, with a soundtrack by Senegalese music star Youssou N'Dour.

Faculty and student guests from the Universities of California, Minnesota, Pittsburgh, and Wisconsin traveled to town to attend the panels.

The original aim of the conference was to expand the understanding of African films with more sustained attention to the social and cultural issues they evoke outside their representation in films, and, at the same time, encourage social science interpretations to consider more than the narrative/ethnographic content of the movies by taking into account their specifically filmic qualities, as well as their reception/reconfiguration by African audiences. The papers and discussions delivered more than we expected. They brought into greater relief the new Nigerian popular movie industry, on video and DVD, which is now imported and emulated in other parts of Africa, and the contrast between popular culture on the one hand and film as expressive art on the other. A substantive report on the conference and the questions raised in it appeared in the June 2008 issue of *Scope*, the online journal of film and TV studies (University of Nottingham), penned by conference participant Audrey Evrard (www.scope.nottingham.ac.uk).

Mahir Saul
Department of Anthropology

Symposium Puts Focus on Women and HIV/AIDS

A two-day Symposium on Women and HIV/AIDS in Africa was held at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, on September 13-14, 2007. The symposium was organized by Ezekiel Kalipeni and Karen Flynn with major funding from International Programs and Studies (Hewlett Conference Grant), and the Center for African Studies, including other units on campus. The



Richard Djukpen and Ezekiel Kalipeni

symposium brought together a leading and interdisciplinary group of researchers that interrogated the topic of women and HIV/AIDS in Africa. There was a realization among the participants that the unequal burden of HIV/AIDS on African women, particularly young females in the age group of 15-34, is symbolic of the low and unequal status of women. With reference to Africa, young females are at greater risk of contracting HIV than men since they are less likely to be educated than young men, less empowered socio-economically, and more prone to coercion and violence in sexual

relationships. Stigma with reference to AIDS has made life for those living with HIV unbearable, particularly women who have seen stigma come in the form of violence, abandonment, and ridicule.

A total of 18 papers were presented at this two-day symposium with five of them from graduate students from the University of Illinois. The conference also benefited greatly from the presence of two distinguished international scholars from Mozambique and Zimbabwe: Professor Ana Laforde and Dr. Chiratidzo Ndhlovu, respectively. Most of the participants present at the conference had many years of research on the African continent. The papers presented examined in greater depth the following issues: popular culture and HIV representations; issues of women's access to sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS medicines and services; masculinity, sexuality, and women's vulnerability to HIV; family, marriage, and care-giving to people living with HIV; condoms and globalization; human rights, women's vulnerability, and livelihoods in the era of HIV; HIV/AIDS testing; and the promotion of health for women. The lively discussions and debates at the conference raised a number of important issues, including vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, obstacles to accessing preventive public health programs and medical care for people living with HIV/AIDS, and how these obstacles may be overcome through insights from the social sciences. Although this appeared to be the common

theme and thread running through all the papers, the presenters used different angles in approaching this theme given the interdisciplinary nature of the gathered participants, which included medical doctors, economists, geographers, anthropologists, and educators.

In a roundtable discussion, it was agreed that although the link between gender and stigma is complex, women have taken the brunt of HIV-related stigma as they are expected to uphold the moral traditions of their societies. The participants resolved to offer both short-term solutions (therapy) and long-term solutions if HIV is to be stopped in its tracks. The long-term solutions need to include female empowerment and eradication of the stigma that is often perpetrated against those living with HIV, particularly women. It was noted that HIV/AIDS is a complex virus and syndrome and as such requires a multi-pronged approach. Thus, from a scholarly point of view, the participants situated their specific papers to address obstacles that limit access to sexual and reproductive health services and medical care for women and children with HIV/AIDS and those at risk for HIV infection, and how these obstacles may be reduced or even eliminated through insights gained from the social sciences. The final outcome of this symposium will be an edited book to soon be published by a reputable printing house.

Ezekiel Kalipeni
Department of Geography

AFRICAN STUDENTS' ORGANIZATION HOSTS 5TH ANNUAL ACADEMIC FORUM

The African Students' Organization annual forum has evolved over the last five years into a robust intellectual environment where members, presenters, and members of the audience, engage one another on issues of development in and of Africa. This year, the theme was "Africa's Development in the Global Encounter," a topic that interested scholars from a variety of academic disciplines. In total, nine presentations were made, including an intensive, thought-provoking speech by the guest speaker, Professor Leo Zulu, a U of I alum who is now a faculty member in the Department of Geography at Michigan State University.

His talk was titled, "Around Africa and Back in an Hour: Staking a Place for Africa at the Globalization Table." Following is the list of the other presentations. All participants were graduate students at the U of I at the time. Since the presentations were viewed as part of an ongoing dialogue, the email contact of each presenter is included to facilitate such a process.

Margaret Njeru
President, African Students' Organization

"Estimation of Production and Consumption Elasticities in Subsistence Agriculture in the Presence of Dual Selection Criteria," by Hiroyuki Takeshima (htakesh2@illinois.edu), Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics;

"Is Foreign Aid Beneficial to Sub Saharan African Countries? An Econometric Analysis," by Stephen E. Armah (sarmah2@illinois.edu), Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics;

"Identifying a Time-Varying Risk Premium in the Cocoa Futures Market: An Econometric Analysis," by Stephen E. Armah (sarmah2@illinois.edu), Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics;

"Collateral Damage: Geo-Political Repercussions for Kenya's Tourism Economy," by Nicole Tami (tami@illinois.edu), Department of Anthropology;

"Continuing Medical Education in Africa: Where Are We?" By Jacqueline Gitonga (jgitonga@illinois.edu), Department of Human Resource Education;

"The Forgotten Local Parameters in Development," by Leonard Muaka (muaka@illinois.edu) Department of Linguistics;

"Self-Reliance and Education: An Analysis of Tanzania's Development and Future Success," by Nathaniel Moore (nmoore3@illinois.edu), Center for African Studies;

"Growing Up in the Diaspora: Who are these People? Some Responses from Children of African Immigrants in the U.S.," by Margaret Njeru (njeru@illinois.edu), Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

The forum was also attended by other guests including the Director of the Center for African Studies Dr. Merle Bowen, who graciously introduced Dr. Zulu.

The success of the forum was the result of a hard-working forum committee that was made up of the following people: Kevin Gitonga (co-chair), Stephen Armah (co-chair), Margaret Njeru, Rose Korang, Dumi Mkhize, and Abdulai Iddrisu.

This year's forum was co-sponsored by African Students' Organization, SORF, Center for African Studies, and Dr. Jean Due (professor emeritus, College of ACES).

Our gratitude goes to all those who sponsored, presented, helped organize, or attended the event.



Dr. Yumkella and Professor Esfahani

Dr. Kandeh Yumkella Receives the Madhuri and Jagdish Sheth International Alumni Award for Exceptional Achievement

Early April brought a distinguished visitor to the U of I campus. As this year's recipient of the Madhuri and Jagdish Sheth International Alumni Award for Exceptional Achievement, Dr. Kandeh Yumkella returned to his alma mater with a message of hope for the developing world. Yumkella, who is the current Director General of United Nations Industrial Development Organization and a former Minister of Trade, Industry and State Enterprises for Sierra Leone, reiterated that sustainable development, based on responsible resource use, educated workforce, and smart partnerships is the way to the 21st-century markets for many developing nations.

Even though his schedule was packed with engagements on both sides of Green Street, we sat down for a short interview following his visit to the Center for African Studies.

A QUICK CHAT WITH DR. YUMKELA

Suzana Palaska-Nicholson: The first topic I had for you was already touched on earlier, during your informal conversation with students and faculty, but I would like us to return to it.... As a former Minister of Trade, Industry and State Enterprise of Sierra Leone and a Director General of the UN's Industrial Development Organization, you've focused a great deal on stimulating economic growth in African countries while strongly believing in promoting sustainable development.

Having in mind that China's presence in Africa is stronger than ever and is continuing to gain relevance in all African markets, what do you see as the future of this (Africa-China) relationship? In particular as it relates to sustainable development in Africa?

Dr. Kandeh Yumkella: I believe that the Africa-China, Africa-India, Africa-Asia partnership is good for Africa. That's my personal belief. I think that we can learn from these countries how they were able to transform their economies. We can learn how they were able to move 200-300 million people out of poverty within 30 years. I think that it creates a new opportunity for technology transfer, so these partnerships, therefore, must emphasize technology transfer, wealth creation locally in the African economies, sustainability standards for various operations, and corporate social responsibility. So, all of those key principles should be in these new partnerships. Also, trade in high value products is very important. So I see it as a good sign for Africa.

One of your life causes has been to seek solutions for more efficient use of the world's resources. Africa has been left with a legacy of exploitation and natural resource squan-

dering, not to mention all the long-lasting resource conflicts, which have impaired both human and economic growth on the continent. What kind of preservation strategies and regulated consumption should African countries adopt in order to protect their abundant natural resources for future generations?

I think African leaders and the elite today have the responsibility to ensure the first principle-sustainable exploitation of natural resources. I underline sustainable because whatever extractive methods are being used, they must protect the environment for the future generations. Second, they must ensure that the returns on this abundant natural resource should go into diversifying their economies, should go into investments in education and infrastructure. So that, in fact, when the minerals are finished there are economic opportunities for future generations. The third principle they should consider is value addition. I know some are doing it today, in South Africa; they like to call it "panification" of natural resources. Value addition means jobs; it means you can get more from the natural resource than selling raw materials, those are important. Number four... I believe that the African governments and the elite have the responsibility as well, not to be addicted to commodities. They have to ensure that the idea of sustainability and diversification of the economy is a priority, so job creation is built into new partnerships. When they are looking at these long-term contracts for natural resources, they should conduct tests to see whether the communities where these endowments are, are in fact benefiting. That is, whether the communities have job creation possibilities and that they are in fact input suppliers to these conglomerates. I think that these are very important principles.

And lastly, many U of I students want to get involved in making the economic gap between the global North and South smaller. Would you care to give us some practical advice and share a few tips when it comes to working on issues of poverty reduction and sustainable development?

Look at what the NGOs and non-profit organizations are doing. Some of them are bigger than ever today. Internships are available. For those students who have masters' degrees and are working towards their PhDs, look into consultancies as well. Look at the UN websites, our agencies are going through processes where our staff are aging, and will be advertising positions. Look for some of those opportunities. Those are some suggestions I'll give.

Does the UN respond to outside applicants?

Yes we do, we do. In varying degrees, but we do. We are all looking for talent, but we face the same challenge; corporations and new social entrepreneurs and foundations also go to the same source. So, there is a big competition, and I think that all this creates opportunities for students interested in development.

Excellent! Thank you very much for your time.

Thank you for having me.

Suzana Palaska-Nicholson
Habari Editor

10th Annual Dubois Lecture: Gomez Weighs on Africa's Past and Future

As a graduate student, it is a rare treat to meet with a scholar whose work you find intellectually engaging, respect, and admire. It was with these very words that I began an email sent to Dr. Michael Gomez, following his visit to campus last February. Prior to his afternoon lecture,

eight other graduate students and I were afforded the opportunity to have lunch with Dr. Gomez, where topics of conversation were as varied as the issues that would be covered

by the NYU professor of history, at the 10th annual lecture, hosted jointly by the Center for African Studies and the African American Studies and Research Program. Dr. Gomez demonstrated a genuine interest in the research projects being conducted by the young scholars who attended the lunch and his compelling presentation later that afternoon. He showed during both events a sense of commitment to responsible and action oriented scholarship and a profound dedication to both the production and dissemination of knowledge concerning the African diaspora internationally.

In his lecture "Global Africa: Whence Its Past? Whither its Future?" Gomez presented those in attendance with an honest and well-cal-

culated assessment of the impacts of globalization on the African continent and its diaspora. Moving beyond the act of merely "rehashing Africa's woes," Gomez effectively correlated the history and experiences of people of African descent throughout the world to contemporary issues

facing those in developing nations whose access to greater participation in the ever growing global economy continues to be restricted. Presenting globalization as a "crisis of expectations," Gomez discussed the role of institutional and systemic racism and the efficacy of structural adjustment programs, and he detailed how the consumption patterns and control of the global economy by the West works to keep developing nations on unequal footing in the global market.

Citing a 2005 report provided by the United Nations, Gomez stated "80 percent of the world's GDP is owned by the 1 billion people living in the developed world while the remaining 20 percent is divided among the 5 billion living outside of the developed world." Balancing his examination of the "steady incline of inequalities" throughout the African diaspora as a result of globalization, Gomez highlighted recent successes in various

nations including Trinidad and Tobago's rising GDP, Uganda's successful HIV/AIDS campaign, and Mali's increased efforts to ensure public education for all children, particularly girls.

While these achievements are far less likely to make national news due to the media's unfortunate preoccupation with tales of a forlorn and forgotten Africa, the promise and potential of the African diaspora were central themes throughout the presentation. Posing the question, "How do we harness such potential?" Dr. Gomez asserted that the answer could be found by re-examining the roles and responsibilities of our leaders and a greater commitment to the forging of relationships and connections across the diaspora. Additionally, he argued that the development of and subsequent support for a steadfast and conscientious leadership invested in maintaining and/or re-establishing stable nations and committed to placing the needs of the people above all else were essential if ever the immense potential of Africa and its diaspora were to be fully realized.

In sum, Dr. Gomez's lecture was as powerful as it was poignant, challenging those of us in attendance to question the status quo while proactively seeking ways to improve our social world. It is a nearly impossible task to adequately synthesize the lecture based on the scope and breadth of the topics covered by Gomez. Fortunately, footage of the entire 10th annual W.E.B. Dubois lecture is available on the Center for African Studies website at www.afrst.uiuc.edu, and I would not be surprised to find that upon viewing it, many of you, too, feel compelled to draft an email to Dr. Michael Gomez.

Erica Alane Hill
Department of Sociology



Michael Gomez and Merle Bowen; Gomez talks with students

Dr. Miraftab Promotes Equitable Land Policies at UN Meeting in Kenya

Faranak Miraftab accepted the invitation to a United Nations Center for Human Settlements meeting on large-scale land policies for gender equity (Gendering Land Tools for the Global Land Tool Network). This meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya, October 11-12, 2007, was to formulate policy guidelines and criteria for the UN to promote equitable land policies around the world through national governments of its member states. The objectives of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) are to:

- Establish a continuum of land rights, rather than just focus on individual land titling,
- Improve and develop pro-poor land management as well as land tenure tools,

- Unblock existing initiatives and help strengthen existing land networks,
- Improve global land coordination and help develop gendered tools affordable and useful at the grassroots level,
- And improve the general dissemination of knowledge about how to implement security of tenure.

The GLTN meeting was unique in that the UN brought women members of the social movements and grassroots activists to the table (as opposed to bureaucrats and government officials) to hear their feedback on the existing land policies and learn from the strategies and tools that grassroots activists use to provide access by poor women to urban and

rural land. This opening in the UN spaces for policy formulation was promoted by the main program funders (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and the Huairou Commission. The latter (www.huairou.org) is an international non-profit organization based in New York that works closely with the grassroots movements around the world to influence national policies on women's access to land and housing. More information on the GLTN can be found at www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=503

Faranak Miraftab
Department of Urban and Regional Planning

Zimbabwean Artist Tsitsi Dangarembga Visits the University of Illinois

The Center for African Studies and the Department of Theatre were thrilled to host award-winning Zimbabwean novelist, playwright, and filmmaker Tsitsi Dangarembga last October 8-9. Her visit coincided with the Department of Theatre's Approaching Africa play series, which featured three one-act plays highlighting various African socio-political issues. Ms. Dangarembga's visit was co-sponsored by the Department of English, the Unit for Cinema Studies, Campus Honors, the Center for Advanced Studies, and the Gender and Women's Studies Program.

Dangarembga is best known for her first novel, *Nervous Condition* (1988), which won the Commonwealth Writers Prize. The book is a coming-of-age story about a young Rhodesian girl, Tambudzai, and her desire to obtain an education and gain her independence (Zimbabwe was formerly Rhodesia under British rule). An important 20th-century novel, *Nervous Condition* has been translated into 12 languages; its sequel, *The Book of Not*, was published in 2006.

In 1996, Dangarembga made Zimbabwean history as the first woman to direct a feature film, *Everyone's Child*, which explores the AIDS crisis in her country, focusing on the plight of the millions of orphans left in its wake. Her latest film, *Kare Kare Zvako (Mother's Day)*, featured at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival and released October 9, 2006, is based on a traditional Shona tale detailing greed, faithlessness, and retribution. A striking departure from

Ms. Dangarembga's realistic style, *Kare Kare* is a mixture of genres and styles.

On her first day in Champaign-Urbana, Dangarembga was interviewed on WILL-FM by David Inge. Later, she met with students, faculty, and staff from the Campus Honors Program and the Unit for Cinema Studies. Gender and Women's Studies Program hosted a reception in the evening, and she ended her day with a discussion of contemporary African theatre for the Department of Theatre. In the evening, there was a public showing of *Everyone's Child* at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts.

The next day, the Center

hosted a luncheon, during which Dangarembga addressed a variety of topics, including the political situation in Zimbabwe. The highlight of Dangarembga's visit was her public presentation, "Creating Zimbabwe as an Artist," given at the Krannert Center to a very diverse, enthusiastic, and vocal audience. During the two-hour event, she showed "*Kare Kare*," as well as two recent music videos she produced, that were created by young Zimbabwean female aspiring filmmakers and musicians. Prior to the screening, she discussed the current filmmaking situation in Zimbabwe and her desire to develop a "Zimbabwean identity in the film world," similar to that of Hollywood, Bollywood (films from India), and Nollywood (films of Nigeria).

As Dangarembga emphasized, the major challenge facing filmmakers in Zimbabwe is lack of funding. She discussed the non-profit organization, Women Filmmakers of Zimbabwe (WFZ), for which she is the executive director (she is also the director of the annual Women's Film Festival in Harare). Although WFZ was founded

in 1996, Dangarembga was not involved in the organization until 2003. Before that, she studied film in Germany and directed and produced films for Media Development Trust (MDT) in Zimbabwe. Through MDT, she helped develop the film *Neria*, based on a true story about land rights for women and, later, *Everyone's Child*. Her initial four-day workshop with WFZ led to more intensive training, which, in turn, expanded into larger projects. Dangarembga later developed her own production company to produce *Kare Kare*,

Dangarembga expressed her desire to move away from developmental films that were "more statistical in nature," to works of "burning issues that accurately portray her nation." *Kare Kare*, although controversial for its scenes of cannibalism, is an attempt to tell Zimbabwean stories to Zimbabweans. Several southern African students in the audience, familiar with the folk tale on which the movie is based, appreciated and clearly understood the message of the film.

Dangarembga concluded her visit with a talk with the cast and production team of Approaching Africa, who detailed their experiences with the plays and subject matter. Dangarembga's visit to campus was indeed an honor, and students from the various units expressed that they learned much from her visit.

Kathy A. Perkins*
Department of Theatre

*Kathy's forthcoming anthology *Contemporary Plays by African Women* (University of Illinois Press) will include *She No Longer Weeps*, by Tsitsi Dangarembga.



Kathy Perkins and Tsitsi Dangarembga



RESEARCHING THE

My research experiences in Ethiopia took me to many places. The two pictures display not only the diversity of Ethiopia, but also my experiences in the country. I spent the first few months at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies (IES) in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, working in their massive collection of MA/BA theses, traveler's documents, Royal Chronicles, and PhD dissertations. After the rainy season ended, I traveled to another region of Ethiopia, the former province of Wello, currently in the Amhara region and spent weeks in the city of Desse. There I visited the palace and churches built by Ras, later Negus Mikael (r.1913-1916) and focused on collecting information. Afterwards, I traveled to the

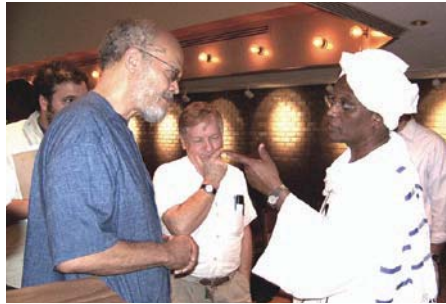
Professor An-Na'im Negotiates the Future of Shari'a and the African State

On September 5, 2007, Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, Charles Howard Candler Professor of Law at Emory University, spoke in the University's Center for Advanced Study/Miller Comm lecture series on "Islam and the Secular State: Negotiating the Future of the Religious Law of Islam," sponsored by the Department of Religion and the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. Earlier that day, Professor An-Na'im spoke in the Center for African Studies' brown bag series on "Shari'a and Constitutionalism in Africa." A native of Sudan who has personally suffered for his advocacy of a liberal interpretation of Islam, An-Na'im is an internationally recognized scholar of Islam and human rights, Islam and constitutionalism, and human rights in cross-cultural perspectives.

An-Na'im argued that although Muslims generally believe that the Shari'a (usually translated as "Islamic law") is divine, any interpretation or application of Shari'a is a human endeavor; all states are secular, even theocracies, because theocracy is a secular, human ideology. An-Na'im stated that from his point of view, advocacy of a religious state is an abdication of responsibility, because it is based on the illusion that God is in control, but God honors human beings by making us responsible for our lives. In a theocracy, particular human beings are invested with the authority to act in the name of God. He said, "What I advocate is a secular state so that a society that can be religious. A secular state ensures the possibility of being Muslim. The U.S. is more conducive to my being the Muslim I choose to be than Sudan, Iran, or Saudi Arabia. My quest for a secular state is a quest to be the kind of Muslim I choose to be." Shari'a, he argued, is always a human interpretation, and is always countered by another human interpretation. Space must be allowed for all competing interpretations to coexist. Constitutionalism is a structural, institutional way to establish, secure, and protect human rights; a constitutionalism that does not do this is not worthy of the name. A human right is a right guaranteed

to every human by virtue of being human. Citizenship is the anchor of membership in modern states, not gender, religious affiliation, or any other basis. An-Na'im argues that African constitutionalism is succeeding, not failing, but it takes time to succeed; it is never born perfect or complete. It becomes perfected through practice, not waiting for ideal conditions.

An-Na'im pointed out that Muslims are one-fifth of the total world population, and more than 40 countries have a Muslim majority in their population, which means that one-fourth of the membership of the UN are countries with a Muslim majority population. Out of the 40 countries with a Muslim majority, only three or four are engaged in any discourse about an "Islamic state." "So Muslims



Professor An-Na'im in discussion with faculty and students

are actually engaged in the same struggle as all other people, to promote constitutionalism and human rights in a way that makes sense to them. I resist notions of exceptionalism, whether we are talking about Muslims or America." An-Na'im indicated that Senegal is a good example of a Muslim country that has embraced secularism and constitutionalism. He said that it is an illusion to think that one can live by the divine Shari'a, because there are only human interpretations of Shari'a. Shari'a must be outside the framework of the state; the state should not be given authority to impose a particular interpretation of Shari'a. Public policy, he argued, must be based on probable outcome, something to which all citizens can refer regardless of religious belief. He concluded by protesting the tendency to question the compatibility of Muslim identity and American citizenship. What we say on this matter, he argued, will influence how Muslims will deal with this issue, both within and outside the United States. Muslims, he said, should not be defined as anything other than human.

Valerie Hoffman
Department of Religion

OROMO AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO MODERN ETHIOPIAN IDENTITY

cities of Bahir Dar (lit. "sea edge") and Gondar to gain perspective of the country. Travel to these areas included trips to the source of the Nile and several centuries-old monasteries along Lake Tana in Bahir Dar, the famous Debra Brhan Sellassie Church and the pictured Royal Compound in Gondar. After my return to Addis Ababa, I spent a few weeks in the manuscript wing of the IES and then traveled to areas of the former province of Shewa, currently in the Oromia Regional State. This portion of the research trip required me to take a mule to many of the research sites, due to the lack of quality roads in the area. Much of the information obtained on this particular trip was very important and added a significant amount to

my research experience. I would like to thank all the individuals in Ethiopia who helped me, including Doctors Alaya and Ahmed and my colleague Habtamu Mengistie. I would also like to thank the Department of History at the University of Illinois and the Mellon Hays Undergraduate Fellowship for funding this trip, and, of course, the Center for African Studies for two summers of language training at SCALI and an academic year of Amharic language training.

Bryan Yates
PhD student, Department of History

Below: Brian Yates, his research assistant Melaku Abera (far right), and his family near the Sulunta District-Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia



Above: Brian Yates at the Royal Enclosure in the city of Gondar, Ethiopia



FACULTY NEWS

Elabbas Benmamoun (linguistics) edited a new book: *Perspectives on Arabic Linguistics XIX*, published by John Benjamins. In addition, he also delivered a keynote lecture at the Arabic Linguistic Symposium, held at the University of Maryland, in March 2008, and was invited to give two papers at the Heritage Language Institute, held at the University of California at Davis, in August 2007. Several other lectures followed in fall 2007, one of which was at the University of Kuwait, Qatar University, and the University of the Emirates at the UAE and another at an international linguistics conference held at the University of Amsterdam, in December 2007. Last, but not least, Benmamoun received a Fulbright award to spend fall 2007 in Kuwait, to work on Arabic dialects.

Eyamba G. Bokamba (linguistics) published several book chapters, including: "Arguments for Multilingual Policies in Public Domains in Africa," in Eric A. Anchimbe, ed. (2007); and "Linguistic Identity in Postcolonial Multilingual Spaces and D.R. Congo: Language and 'Authentic' Nationalism," in Andrew Simpson, ed., (2008), *Language & National Identity in Africa*. He also served as the Director of SCALI 2007, and will serve the same role for SCALI 2008. Most notably he was a recipient of the 2007 Champaign-Urbana International Humanitarian Award for his achievements in Education and Research Category (October 18, 2007). In addition, Bokamba delivered several lectures titled: "Challenges and Prospects in African Language Program Development in African Studies" (presented at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill on March 20, 2008) and "Linguistic Imperialism in Africa: The Role of Ukolonia & Critical Game Theory in Explaining African Language Outcomes" (a keynote address at University of Georgia, Athens).

Ken Cuno (history) published "Household: Comparative Practices," in the *Encyclopedia of Women in World History*, Ed. Bonnie G. Smith (4 vols.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 2:486-491. He organized a panel entitled "Family, Gender and Law 18th-20th Centuries" for the Middle East Studies Association annual meeting in Montreal, in November 2007, which included his paper "Restitution of Conjugal Rights/bayt al-ta'a in Egyptian law." He is continuing his research on the history of the family in Egypt, currently with a focus on changes in family law.

Alma Gottlieb (anthropology) published "Loggers v. Spirits in the Beng Forest, Côte d'Ivoire: Competing Models," in *African Sacred Groves: Ecological Dynamics and Social Change*, ed. Michael J., and "Babies' Baths, Babies' Remembrances: A Beng Theory of Development, History and Memory," reprinted in *Collective Memory and Reproduction in Africa*, ed. Pamela Feldman-Savelsberg. She also presented papers from her new research project at two conferences: "Human Rights Issues in Two Intersecting Diasporas: The Case of Cape Verdeans of Jewish Heritage," at the African Studies Association meeting, New York; and "Two Visions of Africa: Reflections on Fieldwork in the 'Animist Bush' and the Urban, Jewish, Cape Verdean Diaspora," at the American Anthropological Association meeting, Washington, D.C. In addition, she presented a talk "Cape Verdeans of Jewish Heritage: Some Preliminary Thoughts on Two Intersecting Diasporas," to the Centro de Estudos Africanos, ISCTE (Lisbon), in June 2007.

Valerie J. Hoffman (religion), in addition to teaching a new course, "Islam in East Africa," led a study abroad course titled "Islam in Egypt," during the summer. She has delivered lectures at Illinois Wesleyan University and Miami University in Ohio this spring on "Islam and Muslim Scholars in Nineteenth-Century Zanzibar."

Alfred Kagan (library) edited the latest issue of *Innovation: Journal of Appropriate Librarianship and Information Work in Southern Africa*. It was based on the U of I workshop titled "The Politics of Digital Initiatives Concerning Africa." He wrote a short piece titled "Librarians Take a Stand on Darfur," for the *Progressive Librarian*, based on a resolution he initiated and passed by the American Library Association Council. Kagan was the program chair for the last two years for the Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression Committee (FAIFE) of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). The panels were on Access to HIV/AIDS Information (Seoul, 2006, and Durban, 2007).

Ezekiel Kalipeni (geography), in September 2007, together with Professor Karen Flynn, co-organized a conference under the theme "Women and HIV/AIDS in Africa," with funding from International Programs and Studies (Hewlett Conference Grant), the Center for African Studies, the Department of Geography, and other units on campus. The second conference he organized was the annual meeting of the 2007 West Lakes Division of the Association of American Geographers, where he was elected as chair of the West Lakes Division of the Association. He also traveled to Malawi, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda, networking and attending conferences. He assisted in organizing a session at the fifth conference of the Union for African Population Studies, which was held in Arusha, Tanzania, in December 2007. Kalipeni was invited to present a paper titled "Delivery of Health Services Targeting Rural Areas to Control Diseases that Severely Affect Labor Productivity," at a conference organized by the International Food Policy Research Institute held at the University of Kwazulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, January 2008. Kalipeni and three colleagues from the School of Public Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago (Dr.

TEACHERS RANKED AS

EXCELLENT

**African studies
faculty and
affiliates ranked
as excellent by
their students
during the spring,
summer, and fall
semesters, 2007.**

Judith A. Levy, Dr. Susan Levy, and Dr. Claudia Morrissey), in collaboration with colleagues from the University of Malawi, have recently received a research grant from the National Institute of Nursing Research at NIH to the tune of \$840,620 to study traditional male circumcision in Malawi and its relevance for HIV prevention. His most recent publications include two books and several articles. The books are titled: *Global Issues: Africa* (Dubuque, Iowa: McGraw-Hill Contemporary Learning Series) and *HIV/AIDS in Africa: Gender, Agency and Empowerment* (special issue of *Social Science and Medicine*).

Bekisizwe S. Ndimande (College of Education), who is an assistant professor in curriculum and instruction, has published "It is a Catch-22 Situation: The Challenge of Race in Post-Apartheid" and "South African Desegregated Schools" in *International Journal of Educational Policy, Research & Practice: Reconceptualizing Childhood Studies*. He has also presented a paper titled: "The Struggle for Democratic Reforms: Neo-liberalism and its impact on post-apartheid South Africa," at the Toward an Africa Without Borders Conference, Durban, South Africa, July 2007.

Peter C. Otiato Ojiambo's (linguistics) publications include a book: *Teaching Beyond Teaching: Dr. Geoffrey William Griffin and Starehe Boys Centre and School* (VDM Verlag Publishers, 2008), and an article "Quality of Education: A Tool for Development: A Case Study of Kenya's Educational Reforms," in *African Educational Research Network Journal*, December 2007.

Robert L. Thompson (agriculture and consumer economics) was reappointed in January by the U.S. Trade Representative and the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to their Agricultural Policy Advisory Council for Trade, to a new four-year term.

NAME

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STUDENT NEWS

Timothy Landry (anthropology) received a pre-dissertation research grant from the West African Research Association to conduct research in Bénin this summer. The title of his project is "Local Production and Global Imaginings of Vodun in Bénin."

Leonard Muaka (linguistics), in April 2008, presented papers at the ACAL 39 (University of Georgia), as well as at the ALTA annual conference (University of Wisconsin- Madison). For these conferences, Leonard was awarded traveling grants from the Graduate College, Center for African Studies, and the Department of Linguistics.

Peter Muhati (African studies) completed the MA in African studies and will transition into the doctoral program in curriculum and instruction, starting fall 2008.

Nick Pelafas (African studies) presented a paper on "The Impact of Frantz Fanon on the Global African Movement" this spring at the African American Studies and Research Program's Conference: "Rupture, Repression, and Uprising: Raced and Gendered Violence along the Color Line," April 3-5, 2008.

Center for African Studies Welcomes New MA Students

Megan Bronson is interested in the impact of HIV/AIDS, and looks at the role of NGOs in development in East Africa. She is also in the process of completing the Gender Relations in International Development minor offered by the Women and Gender in Global Perspectives Program at U of I.

Yaa Opare Cuguno's research focuses on West African education and issues around indigenous African languages. Yaa also has a particular interest in Ghanaian cinema.

Nathaniel Moore's work focuses on the resistance movements in South Africa and the internationalization of Black Power. Nathaniel presented a paper on the topic "Self-Reliance and Education: An Analysis of Tanzania's Educational Development and Future Success" at the

spring 2008 ASO Annual Forum: "Development in Africa: Are We Ready to Participate in the Globalized World?" April 5, 2008.

Anna Rivara's work centers on the socio-cultural perceptions of health and illness in East Africa.

Hapsatou Wane's research focuses on nationalist African literature and cinema. She is also interested in classical and African mythology and Egyptology.

Sherri Williams's work centers on gender and sexuality in Kenya.

Student Paper Prizes

Melissa Bushnick won the best undergraduate paper prize for her essay, "The Transcultural Art of José Bedia: Kongo/Cuba Connections." It is a superb paper that related not only the core of her topic, Kongo art and ideas, but also demonstrates how Kongo in Cuba plays out in the art of an internationally renowned Afro-Cuban artist, José Bedia, who is also a priest of two Afro-Cuban religions (Palo and Ocha).

Nathaniel Moore won the best graduate paper prize for his essay, "Self-Reliance and Education: An Analysis of Tanzania's Educational Development and Future Success," which analyzes how former President Julius Nyerere's educational policies and the institutionalization of Kiswahili helped create and strengthen a Tanzanian identity based on African modes of learning and promoted an ideology of self-reliance—integral for success in postcolonial societies.

Both students received a certificate and monetary awards for their essays.

IN MEMORIAM

We have just been notified of the untimely passing of **Christina Jalasi**, an MA student in natural resources and environmental sciences, who passed away while in Zambia. Our sincere condolences go to her family and friends.

ALUMNI NEWS

Maurice N. Amutabi published several book chapters: "The Politics of Deception, Survival and Oppression in Zimbabwe: Retrospection," in Shadrack Nasong'o's (Ed.) *The African Search for Stable Forms of Statehood: Essays in Political Criticism*; "Introduction and Overview," "The History of Lifelong Learning in Africa," as well as "Conclusion" (co-author), in Moses Oketch's and Maurice Amutabi's (Eds.) *Perspectives on Lifelong Learning in Africa: The Distant Future* (2008). Also, "Intellectuals and the Democratization Process in Kenya," in S.W. Nasong'o's and Godwin R. Murunga's (Eds.) *Kenya: The Struggle for Democracy* (2007). Maurice presented "Neither Bold nor Beautiful nor Young and Restless: Interrogating the Impact of Western Soap Operas on Africa," at the conference on Popular Cultures in Africa, University of Texas at Austin; "Memory and Nostalgia in African American Identity: The Legacy of 'Africanness' in James Baldwin's Fiction," at the AAAHRP Annual Black History Conference, February 3, 2007; and, lastly, "Multiculturalism, globalization, hybridity and the dilemma of Western Education in Africa: The Case of Kenya's Education Curriculum," presented at the Third International Globalization, Diversity, and Education Conference, March 1-3, 2007. In addition, he led a spring break study group from Central Washington University to South Africa (March 13-24, 2008).

Sylvia Bruinders has published an article in *South African Music Studies*, the official journal of the South African Society for Research in Music (SASRIM). She also serves on the executive board of this journal. Sylvia will return to U of I in the fall semester to complete her doctoral degree in musicology, on her sabbatical from the University of Cape Town, where she teaches courses in African music and world music. She presented a paper at SASRIM's annual conference, in 2007, and she plans to do a presentation at the annual conference of the Society for Ethnomusicology in Middletown, Conn. later this year. She assisted with the editing of two editions in 2007 of the newsletter, *The Talking Drum*, in which her students and fellow colleagues shared their research with teachers and students in South Africa. Besides her academic and scholarly duties, Sylvia Bruinders is also an active participant in the local musical practices in Cape Town.

Brian Bunyan is currently living in London and working as a data analyst for an online travel company. Brian also volunteers as a news editor for an anti-militarist magazine in London.

Patricia Clark (PhD '02, history) taught African history in Oxford, England, in autumn 2006 through the Westminster at Oxford program. She has recently served as a consultant in world history for the College Board Advanced Placement Best Practices Course Study and Course Audit, and published "At Ease in

Zion?: Imaginary Places in *James' Journey to Jerusalem*." In May 2008 she led an undergraduate study tour to Malawi.

Simon Donnelly, U of I student in the Department of Linguistics, completed his PhD studies with a dissertation on a small Bantu language spoken in Lesotho/South Africa.

Michelle Johnson published "Making Mandinga or Making Muslims? Debating Female Circumcision, Ethnicity, and Islam in Guinea-Bissau and Portugal" in *Transcultural Bodies: Female Genital Cutting in Global Context*, ed. Ylva Hernlund and Bettina Shell-Duncan, (2007).

Maxim Matusevich, assistant professor of world history at Seton Hall University, is serving as a 2007-2008 Sheila Biddle Ford Foundation Fellow at the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research at Harvard University. He also presented "An Exotic Subversive: Africa and Blackness in Soviet Popular Culture and Imagination," at the Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Colloquium at Harvard University (2007); and "Race Travelers and Black America's Romance with Soviet Russia," at the Russian Academy of Sciences Special Meeting on Russian-American Relations (St. Petersburg, Russia, September 2007). He published "Reparation and Repair: Reform Movements in the Atlantic World," in Toyin Falola's and Kevin Roberts's (eds.), *The Atlantic World, 1450-2000* (Indiana University Press, 2008). Matusevich published "Africa, Africans and the Soviet Everyday" in *Race and Class*, vol. 49, no. 4 (April 2008).



Mwenda Ntarangwi has moved to a new position as associate professor of anthropology in the sociology department at Calvin College, in Grand Rapids, Mich. He spent 2007 with a prestigious Richard

Hunt post-doctoral fellowship from Wenner-Gren Foundation for anthropological research working on a manuscript titled "Reversing the Gaze: An 'African' Ethnography of American Anthropology" and has a manuscript titled "East African Hip Hop," to be published by the University of Illinois Press under the *Interpretations of Culture in the New Millennium* series, edited by Professor Norm Whitten of the U of I Department of Anthropology. During fall 2007, he was appointed to the American Anthropological Association Commission on World Anthropologies for three years. In 2008, he received a research grant from CODESRIA to work on a project on youth identity in East Africa under the CODESRIA multinational working group on youth and identity.

Denise Roth Allen (PhD '96, anthropology) is still working as an anthropologist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. In August 2007, she transferred to the Malaria Branch in order to work on research projects in Tanzania, Kenya, and the Mekong Delta. Currently, she oversees the qualitative research component of the Interdisciplinary Monitoring Programme for Antimalarial Combination Therapy in Tanzania. The project examines various aspects of antimalarial drug use from the perspective of pregnant women, caretakers of young children, and health care workers. She says it is definitely great to be working on Africa-related public health issues once again.

Amber Stott is traveling to Ghana this summer for Freedom from Hunger. She'll be interviewing women and staff about their newest program called MicroBusiness for Health. "It's truly an innovative idea—putting health protection products into the hands of micro-entrepreneurs, training them to educate their buyers, and sending them door-to-door in rural areas where such products are not accessible. The products include insecticide-treated bed nets, water purification tablets, etc."

Cheryl Toman's first single-authored book came out in July 2008. It is titled *Contemporary Matriarchies in Cameroonian Francophone Literature: 'On est ensemble'*, Summa Press. Toman is an assistant professor of French and a program faculty in women's studies at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland-Ohio.

Mattito Watson is the new country director for Save the Children South Sudan programs. Based in Juba, South Sudan, Mattito is managing health, education, and protection programs for the large number of Southern Sudanese whose lives were devastated by the 20-year civil war, and is assisting those who have been living in refugee camps in the surrounding countries and are ready to return home.



Kibondo refugee camp in Tanzania

In September 2007, Mattito was one of the key panel speakers at the New York City Council symposium held at Sotheby in New York City. In addition to presentations by Senator Bill Frist, the first lady of El Salvador, Mark Shriver, and others on the important work that is being done for children globally and in

the U.S., Mattito emphasized the special needs and rights of children in conflict and cited examples of how his work in Sudan and Guinea had provided basic services and facilitated recovery of children in war-torn regions. In October 2007, Mattito spoke at the Long Island Leadership Council Banbury symposium held in Cold Springs Harbor Laboratory in New York. Mattito gave a brief overview of how children are conscripted into armed groups during conflicts and the process of reintegrating these children back into their communities.

Shana Wills, in May 2007, was seconded by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Populations, Refugees & Migration, to participate in overseas processing and cultural orientation trainings for the first group of refugees known as the "1972 Burundians" to be resettled to the U.S. This group has been living in the camps since they fled Burundi in 1972—35 years! Shana was able to travel back to the U.S. together with the first group, and she has since helped resettle more than 50 "1972 Burundians" through her work in Chicago. In October 2007, she facilitated a four-week online course on "Demobilization, Reintegration, and Rehabilitation of Child Soldiers" for a group of practitioners from Rwanda, Liberia, Somalia, Israel, the Philippines, Colombia, Brazil and various other countries. In August 2008, Shana will lead a group of 20 Chicago public school teachers and students on an educational exchange trip to Angola through "Making the Road by Walking" (Prexy Nesbitt's organization).

Jonathan Zilberg was a visiting research fellow at the National Museum of African Art at the Smithsonian in April and May, as well as a visiting fellow at the Royal Anthropological Institute in London in April and June, where he will be completing the manuscript *From Bloodstains to Brancusi: A History of Zimbabwean Modernism*. Most recently, he gave the opening address "Principles of Active Learning" at a seminar on active learning at the National University for Teacher Training in Jakarta on January 22, 2008, in which he discussed the lessons learned from the Power and Beauty project on African art at Krannert Art Museum (U of I, 1996-2006). Jonathan has presented the following papers: "Mass Rape as a Weapon of War" at the conference Wars and Conflicts in Africa at the University of Texas at Austin, March 28-30; "The Commodification of Shona Sculpture" at Packaging the Past: The Commodification of Heritage (The Cambridge Heritage Seminar at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research), April 15; and, lastly, "New Media and Information Politics in and about Zimbabwe," at Zimbabwe Research Day at Oxford on June 29.

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