

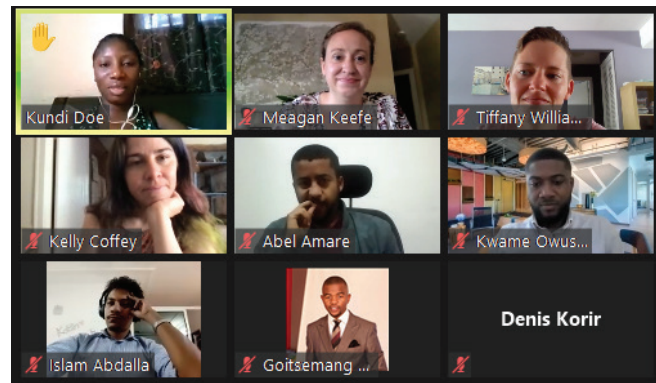
Reflections on an all-virtual YALI experience

By Tiffany Williams-Cobleigh

Since 2014, the US Department of State's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) has awarded Mandela Washington Fellowships to nearly 4,400 men and women—all in their mid-20s or 30s, from 49 sub-Saharan African countries—to enable them to attend six-week professional leadership-development institutes at selected US colleges and universities. The Program of African Studies has hosted a cohort of 25 Mandela Washington fellows every summer—except in 2020, when the pandemic forced cancellation of the fellowships, and in 2021, when the program was held online.

Cancellation of the 2020 fellowships was a disappointment for the PAS staff, who missed the opportunity to interact with a dynamic, diverse group of emerging African leaders. It was a much greater letdown for the fellows, who were notified in early March 2020 that they would have to wait a year for their opportunity to travel to Northwestern for cultural exchange and professional development. When pandemic concerns persisted through March of this year, the State Department decided that the June 22–July 30 Mandela Washington Fellowship program would be virtual.

PAS and our usual campus partner in all things YALI—the Kellogg School of Management—worked from March through June to develop virtual content for the fellows' leadership institute, which included academic coursework through Kellogg as well as community engagement and cultural exchange opportunities through PAS. There was a constant stream of updates and new guidelines from YALI's home base in Washington, DC,



about scheduling the virtual programming; this was especially challenging because the fellows would be logging in across Africa's multiple time zones—from Cabo Verde to Mauritius and everywhere in between. Fortunately, Kellogg faculty were able to deliver course content both synchronously and asynchronously throughout the summer.

As difficult as it was to shift to all-virtual programming, and as sad as it was to have no in-person, on-site contact with the fellows, there were some positives: We were pleased that past YALI fellows from all over the world could readily join virtual networking events with our fellows; we know their interaction led to new opportunities for cross-country collaboration. We were also able to pair fellows with coaches who helped to guide and focus their projects. And from a logistical standpoint, not needing to arrange any local travel made it easier to schedule meetings.

All in all, the 2021 Mandela Washington fellows had an excellent experience despite missing the opportunity to meet in person and see Evanston and Chicago. But the certificate they earned is no less valuable: that credential will unlock doors to career advancement and professional connections for them. We hope that their futures will include a visit to Northwestern and the chance to meet the people they encountered on this summer's Zoom meetings. We at PAS will be more than happy to welcome them.

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Message from PAS director Chris Abani



As we all find our way in these difficult pandemic times—including the new ways of settling into in-person events,

classes, and meetings—I remain ever grateful and heartened to feel connected to all of you by shared interests in all things African. In Igbo we say that the umbilical cord (or the belly button, if you prefer) is our first cut and our first scar—a place of connection and loss but the primal place of connection to self, others, and the universe at large—a nexus. I sincerely hope that we at PAS continue to remain a nexus of connection for all the levels of our community.

Although pandemic-related safety issues have severely restricted opportunities for gathering, we have not stopped creating and deploying stimulating and engaging research, conversations, presentations, and even symposia. We have continued to use online resources, and the metrics show how successful these new media have been in sustaining a community. I remain grateful for all your grace and support in those areas.

Connection is at the heart of our path forward at PAS. With the constraints of the pandemic, we have had to work harder to conceptualize and deliver on our mission to our core community here at Northwestern while continuing to grow the scope and nature of our community. We want to reposition PAS as a node in a larger network of African interests.

We have turned to the African continent itself to develop successful partnerships while staying true to the part of our charge that supports our faculty and students with research, teaching, learning, and work experience in Africa. We have archived and continue to host the Culture Diaries (see story on next page) as a test case for increasing access to the work of creatives on the continent. We have followed up with our partners across West and North Africa who were essential to the Block Museum's *Caravans of Gold* exhibit (see story on page 4).

We have opened conversations around refugees on the continent, security, and the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations.

We have had Nobel Prize-winning writers and public intellectuals speak. We embarked on a series of decolonization workshops this fall, and in the spring we will host online workshops in advance of Professor Wendy Griswold's symposia. We are collaborating on journalism projects in Johannesburg with Professor Douglas Foster and expanding PAS's areas of mutual involvement with the Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications. Our colleagues on Northwestern's Qatar campus have been open to our attempts to build a bridge to their research, and this fall we are running a curated series with Professor Zachary Wright on Islam and trans-Atlantic Black liberation.

We will bring lifestyle and intellectual/academic collaborations to life this winter with a curated series by Wana Udobang on the decolonization of African cuisine, featuring multiple chefs from the continent and an online version of the Herskovits Library's exhibit of cooking and culinary books (see story on page 11).

All this is happening while PAS is undergoing a restructuring that will make us more responsive to the needs of this and future times.

We seek to create equity in the development of programming and collaborations (one of the metrics of our success), and a model is emerging for what these international collaborations can achieve. Thanks to the work of my predecessors, we have memos of understanding with other universities and so much to build on in an expanding network.

As I spend more time coming to understand what we offer and where we should focus our attentions, it is becoming clear that to move forward and create a sustainable and viable program that continues to be relevant well into the 21st century, we have to reinvent ourselves.

So, what does the future hold? We will continue to deliver on our core responsibility to our faculty, reevaluate our curricula offerings, and maintain most of our current shape, but we will revisit our identity and restructure slowly into a viable and exciting new future. Whatever we do and who we become, like a belly button, will be the scar that is our connection to the past and the future.

PAS blog site hosts Culture Diaries video series

By Kelly Coffey



“When I’m interested in somebody’s story, I don’t care for the ugly bits to be the sensational thing. I’m interested in [those] as part and parcel of who you are, of how your wounds are just perfectly situated next to how gorgeous you look.”

The PAS blog site is sharing poet, filmmaker, and journalist Wana Udobang’s Culture Diaries, a video series featuring African artists in film, text, fashion, and music discussing their processes, inspirations, challenges, and personal stories.

Udobang describes the Culture Diaries as an “artist archive” of conversations through which she not only creates a collection of artist profiles but preserves a particular moment in an artist’s journey. By sharing these videos online instead of locking them in an institutional vault, she makes the conversations accessible to anyone with curiosity and access to the internet. With many artists represented and added on a regular basis, one can keep returning to the Culture Diaries for inspiration and reflection about the people and ideas that move us.

Udobang is an accomplished artist and writer whose work has appeared in *Brittle Paper*, *Al Jazeera*, *The Guardian*, and *BellaNaija* and on the BBC. Her poetry and fiction have been published across a variety of mediums, including short films and albums that she produces.

To kick off the partnership with PAS, Udobang joined PAS director Chris Abani for a chat about her Culture Diaries, as well as her own artistic process.

In that conversation, Udobang revealed that her inspiration isn’t just one idea or thing: “When people say ‘Oh, who inspires you?’ I can’t answer that question, because I’m constantly transformed by people on a daily basis,” she says. “When I’m interested in somebody’s story, I don’t care for the ugly bits to be the sensational thing. I’m interested in [those] as part and parcel of who you are, of how your wounds are just perfectly situated next to how gorgeous you look.”

In communicating the stories people tell her, Udobang shows an ability to embrace her subject’s core ideas and imbues her interviews and her writing with timelessness and deceptively easy profundity. Her interview style for Culture Diaries creates a space for the artists she interviews to share the many experiences and circumstances from which their art is made.

Udobang and Abani’s conversation can be found on the PAS YouTube channel. Visit WanaWana.net to see her latest work, link to her YouTube channel, and follow her on Twitter @MissWanaWana and Instagram @mswanawana.

New initiative supports ongoing cultural exchange

By Kelly Coffey



The Program of African Studies and Northwestern’s Block Museum of Art have collaborated to launch African Heritage in Dialogue, an initiative to support and expand ongoing interaction between the museum, PAS, and cultural heritage professionals working on the African continent. It aims to provide a platform for the sharing of ideas, challenges, priorities, and questions.

The initiative’s efforts in 2021 included a three-part series of dialogues on the theme “Looking Ahead with *Caravans of Gold Partners*.” Kathleen Bickford Berzock, the Block’s associate director of curatorial affairs, and anthropology faculty member Amanda Logan held conversations with the institutional leaders and archaeologists in Mali, Morocco, and Nigeria (listed below) who played essential roles in the Block’s 2019 exhibition *Caravans of Gold, Fragments in Time*.

Mali

- Baba Coulibaly, director, Institut des sciences humaines, Bamako
- Moulaye Coulibaly, director, Direction nationale du patrimoine culturel, Bamako
- Mohamed Diagayété, director, Institut des hautes études et des recherches Islamiques Ahmed-Baba, Timbuktu
- Daouda Keita, director, Musée national du Mali, Bamako

Morocco

- Rochdi Bernoussi, director, Musée Bank al-Maghrib, Rabat
- Abdelaziz El Idrissi, director, Musée Mohammed VI d’art moderne et contemporain, Rabat
- Abdallah Fili, professor of archaeology, Université Chouaib Doukali d’El-Jadida, Rabat
- Youssef Khiara, director of cultural patrimony, Ministère de la culture et de la communication, Rabat

Nigeria

- Edith Ekunke, director of museums (retired), National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Abuja
- Babatunde Babalola, Smuts Research Fellow in African Studies, University of Cambridge

Among the questions they discussed: How have cultural institutions and researchers managed during the pandemic? What other factors had an impact in the past year? Are archaeologists and museums in each country working together in beneficial ways? Where lies the future of archaeology, museum practice, and cultural heritage in these and other countries and regions?

Their conversations are available on the PAS YouTube channel, along with related content on the PAS blog and main website.

Caroline Bledsoe retires

Caroline Bledsoe, professor of anthropology and the Melville J. Herskovits Professor of African Studies, retired from Northwestern at the end of August, capping a 37-year career on the faculty.

Bledsoe came to Northwestern from the University of Pennsylvania in 1985. She focused her research and teaching on demography, kinship and family, marriage, reproduction and fertility, and gender. Her dissertation research on Kpelle culture in Liberia formed the basis of her first monograph, *Women and Marriage in Kpelle Society* (1980).

When civil strife in Liberia made it impossible for her to continue research there, Bledsoe turned her attention to Sierra Leone, where she pursued research on child fostering. Political conflict and violence there pushed her to develop her next project in The Gambia. Her various West African projects examined cultural visions of kinship and marriage, the life course, and child fosterage, several of which were followed by corresponding studies in the US.

Throughout her career, Bledsoe has been a stalwart member of the PAS community. When John Paden resigned as PAS director in the mid-1980s, she stepped in as acting director in 1986–87 and continued as associate director in 1988–89. Her West African research interests led to a PAS lecture series on AIDS in Africa, workshops, and other events. In 1993 she co-convoked the Institute on Health and Demography under the auspices of the Program on International Cooperation in Africa, which examined factors linking women's health, fertility constraints, and population planning.

Her work in PAS and her home department culminated in her appointment as the Herskovits Professor in 1994. Her inaugural lecture was titled "African Fertility and the Dynamics of Time and Space." In 2001, she led the PAS conference "Discovering Normality in Health and the Reproductive Body," which investigated how the western medical and academic establishments create, remember, and forget ideas about normality. The proceedings were published in 2002 in the PAS Working Papers series.



Bledsoe's numerous publications have garnered international recognition. She has held Guggenheim and Woodrow Wilson Fellowships and received grants from the Ford, Rockefeller, Mellon, and Wenner-Gren Foundations, among others.

Bledsoe's seminal work examines western and African views of normality and the life course. Of particular importance is her work in The Gambia, which resulted in *Contingent Lives: Fertility, Time, and Aging in West Africa* (University of Chicago Press, 2002). The book received the Amaury Talbot Prize. Bledsoe's most recent project, "Transnational Vital Events: Birth, Law, and Migration between Africa and Europe," considers how people allocate major life moments, particularly birth and marriage, across international boundaries and against shifting rights to work and residence.

PAS welcomes new faculty



Dotun Ayobade joined the Department of Performance Studies as assistant professor. His research and teaching interests span late 20th-century dance, performance, and popular music in West Africa. Ayobade is especially interested in how West Africans activate

aesthetic and everyday social performance in real life and form identity in the African political economy. His current book project, provisionally titled *The Afrobeat Queens: Gender, Play, and the Making of Fela Kuti's Music Subculture*, is a study of the complex lives of Nigeria's Afrobeat Queens, an iconic group of dancers associated with the celebrated musician Fela Kuti.



Janet Lucky Ochieng joined Northwestern as an instructor of Swahili. Ochieng graduated from Kenyatta University in 2019 with a BA in English literature. A passionate language teacher who has been a mentor to girls and young women in various schools in Kenya, she

says she is guided by the motto "*Mwanamke anayejitambua ni mrembo Zaidi*," or "the socially empowered woman is the most beautiful." She herself is inspired by women who defy societal odds, and her personal objective is to establish learning centers that motivate young women to realize their worth, overcome obstacles, and achieve their goals. In her free time, Ochieng enjoys dancing and designing fashions inspired by Kenyan culture.

International Studies Program creates Jeff Rice Prize



Northwestern's International Studies Program announced the creation of an annual prize to recognize exceptional undergraduate research. Named in honor of Jeff Rice, senior lecturer emeritus, the prize will be awarded to an ISP senior for a senior thesis or research paper that demonstrates original thinking about a contemporary global challenge. The inaugural prize, which includes a cash award, will be conferred in spring 2022.

The prize's namesake, Jeff Rice, retired in 2020 following a distinguished career as a teacher, adviser, and mentor at Northwestern. He joined the Judd A. and Marjorie Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences advising office when it was created in 2001 and taught courses on history and politics for over two decades.

Rice's membership in the University's African studies community dates to June 1972, when he earned an undergraduate certificate in African studies. He became a graduate student in the history department in September 1974 and was part of the Asante Biography Project headed by Professor Ivor Wilks. Many of Rice's friends and acquaintances on campus and in Evanston will always associate him with Great Expectations, the beloved independent bookstore at 911 Foster Street in Evanston where Rice worked as an undergraduate and later took over as owner from 1995 until its closing in 2001.

Afrisem hosts annual conference, other activities

By Austin Bryan

PAS's graduate student-run Africa Seminar (Afrisem) held its 2021 graduate student conference in June as a webinar on the theme "Africanist Knowledge That Agitates." Keynote speakers were Kwame Otu (African and African American studies, University of Virginia), a scholar of gender and sexuality studies who is also a filmmaker and screenwriter, and Frank Mugisha, a prominent LGBTQ rights campaigner, 2014 Nobel Peace Prize nominee, and executive director of Sexual Minorities Uganda.

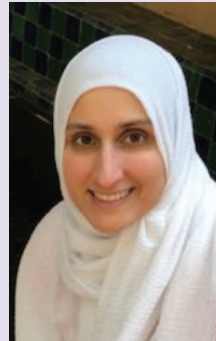
Last winter, Afrisem hosted presentations by graduate students Colin Bos (history), who spoke on the evolution of legal concepts concerning cultural objects in 1930s-1970s Nigeria, and Emma Kennedy (art history), who analyzed the entanglement of Indigeneity and Blackness in Dale Harding's *Blackboy*.

Also last winter, Andrew Wooyoung Kim (anthropology PhD '20), who is a research fellow at Massachusetts General Hospital, organized and moderated a panel of recent and soon-to-be alumni who reflected on navigating the global job market for Africanists. Panelists included anthropology PhD candidate Ashley Ngozi Agbasoga, Delali Kumavie (English PhD '20), and Mlondi Zondi (performance studies PhD '20).

Finally, the Afrisem digital committee developed a website—afrisem.africanstudies.northwestern.edu—that includes the Afrisem blog and allows such materials as past graduate student conference programs and video content to be accessible to a wide audience and centrally archived. Digital committee members included graduate students Sasha Artamonova (history), Anisha Bhat (history), Austin Bryan (anthropology), Shelby Mohr (anthropology), and Angela Tate (history).

Austin Bryan is Afrisem's joint coordinator.

Arabic Student's Dictionary makes its debut online



Fatima Khan, associate professor of instruction in Middle East and North African languages, has created an online dictionary for learners of the Arabic language.

Because Arabic is a root-and-pattern language, looking up words in an Arabic dictionary is a time-consuming process, especially for nonnative speakers. Students must first learn how to identify the three- or four-letter root of a given word, locate the root in the dictionary, and finally determine the meaning of the word.

Kahn's arabicstudentsdictionary.com eliminates any guesswork in figuring out the root. Users can search for a word—using either Arabic characters or in transliterated form using Latin characters—and find not only the definition but also the root and all words derived from the same root. An additional feature (currently in beta-testing mode) shows instances where the word is used in the Qur'an. A mobile app version will be released soon.

The Arabic Student's Dictionary is the product of five years of work by Khan that included acquiring coding skills. The dictionary is not a quick translation tool but a resource to help students build their knowledge, Khan says. She hopes it will contribute to Arabic language learning at Northwestern and around the world.

In memoriam

Cecil Magbaily Fyle



Cecil Magbaily Fyle, a distinguished historian of Sierra Leone, died in Freetown on May 28. He had dedicated his career to nationalizing his nation's history and making it relevant to Sierra Leoneans.

Born in 1944 in

Freetown, Fyle received his BA from Fourah Bay College (FBC) in 1968. In 1971 he came to Northwestern for graduate study in history and received his PhD in 1976. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Fyle worked for FBC's Institute of African Studies, rising to professor of history and dean of the faculty of arts. For many years he edited the *Africana Research Bulletin* and promoted the collection of oral materials for schools and the general public in connection with the People's Educational Association of Sierra Leone. He was a consultant for UNESCO, UNICEF, and the International Culture Institute (Dakar), as well as a consultant editor of the journal *Africa*. He was also the non-executive director of the Central Bank of Sierra Leone from 1980 to 1986.

It was in 1989 that Northwestern political science professor and former PAS director William Reno, then a young graduate student from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, met Fyle. Having arrived at FBC amidst the tumult of student protests and a national economic crisis, Reno recalls Fyle as a man of strong character and strict standards who sought to empower scholars and preserve critical thinking and sober perspective in a difficult time.

In 1991 Fyle left Sierra Leone for Ohio State University, where he became professor of African American and African studies and later director of the Center for African Studies. He remained there until his retirement in 2008, when he returned to his homeland. His books include *Almamy Suluku of Sierra Leone c. 1820-1906* (1979), *The History of Sierra Leone: A Concise Introduction* (1981), *Historical Dictionary of Sierra Leone* (2006), and *A Nationalist History of Sierra Leone* (2011).

Christine Tolbert Norman



Alumna Christine Tolbert Norman—international educator, humanitarian, social entrepreneur, and peace advocate—died on June 23 at age 77.

Born and raised in Bentol City, Liberia, Tolbert Norman was

the third daughter of former Liberian president William Tolbert Jr., who was slain during a 1980 coup. She earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education at Liberia's Cuttington University College and her master's degree in education at Northwestern in 1968.

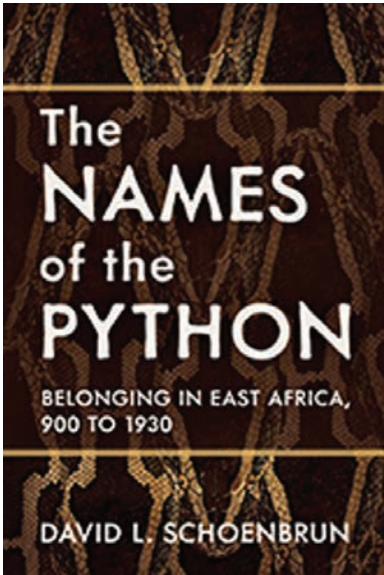
Returning to Liberia, she cofounded a school before joining the government education service, rising to become assistant education minister.

Fleeing the violence surrounding her father's death and the ensuing civil strife in Liberia, Tolbert Norman moved to the Ivory Coast, where she lived for 18 years. She returned to Liberia in the early 2000s and founded Restoration of Education Advancement Program (REAP), an NGO whose mission was (and is) to provide opportunities to Liberia's young people and marginalized groups.

In 2014 Tolbert Norman was elected mayor of Bentol City. She continued to devote time to education projects and served on the board of the Monrovia-based William R. Tolbert Jr. Foundation. Her 2002 book, *It Is Time for Change: Selected Speeches of William R. Tolbert Jr.*, was reprinted this year.

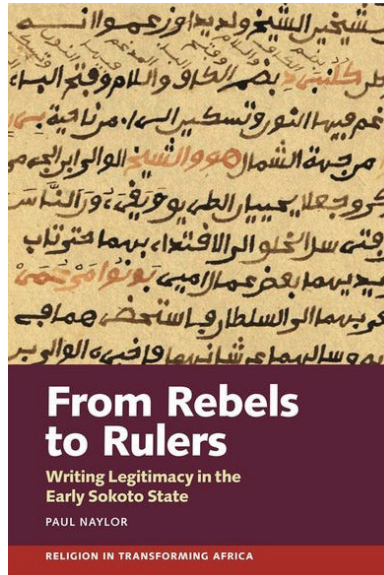
Among her survivors are her husband of 51 years, Laurence Cecil Norman; and her son, Maavi Norman, who earned a PhD in political science at Northwestern in 2015.

PAS bookshelf



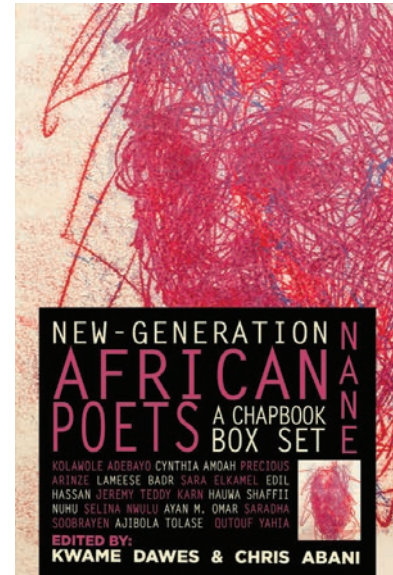
The Names of the Python: Belonging in East Africa, 900 to 1930
(University of Wisconsin Press, 2021)

This new book by **David L. Schoenbrun** (history) demonstrates the fluid nature of knowledge networks and systems of belonging in social and political development in ancient eastern Africa. Based on a wide variety of sources, including historical linguistics and vernacular texts, he examines how people created communities by tracing the origins of nationhood in the Ganda state over a millennium. He maintains that the earliest clans emerged from shared investments, knowledges, and practices rather than political identity or language. This study supplements and redirects current debates about ethnicity in excolonial Africa and beyond.



From Rebels to Rulers: Writing Legitimacy in the Early Sokoto State
(James Currey Publishers, 2021)

Visiting scholar **Paul Naylor** provides a new interpretation of the history of Sokoto's leaders and their vision for the Muslim states. Sokoto was the largest and longest lasting of West Africa's 19th-century Muslim empires. Its intellectual and political elite created a vast written record, including over 300 Arabic texts written by the jihad's three main leaders: Usman dan Fodio; his brother, Abdullahi; and his son, Muhammad Bello. Sokoto's early years are one of the most documented periods of precolonial African history, yet contemporary narratives often overlook how these texts shaped the evolution of Sokoto and its complex scholarly world. This study reveals how revolutionary religious movements gain legitimacy, and how the concept of legitimacy changes as the leaders move from rebels to rulers.



NANE: New-Generation African Poets
(Akashic Books, 2021)

Coedited by PAS director **Chris Abani** (English and African American studies), this limited-edition box set of 14 chapbooks features the work of 13 new African poets. Part of an African Poetry Book Fund project, it is a significant annual literary project that presents the work of new, promising poets in the continent and its diaspora to a wide audience. The series offers some of the best poetry written by Africans working today. Included in this box set are Kolawole Adebayo, Cynthia Amoah, Precious Arinze, Lameese Badr, Sara Elkamel, Edil Hassan, Jeremy Teddy Karn, Hauwa Shaffii Nuhu, Selina Nwulu, Ayan M. Omar, Saradha Soobrayen, Ajibola Tolase, and Qutouf Yahia.

Herskovits Library



SELECTED NEW ACQUISITIONS

Clockwise from top left:

Xhosa War

by Lieutenant Charles J. Fowler

A folio album of 34 watercolor and pen and ink drawings created while Fowler was serving during the eighth Xhosa war. Published circa 1853.

Puzzle Geográfico Angola

A 120-piece jigsaw puzzle of municipalities, provinces, and rivers of Angola (for ages 6 years and up).

Some Birds and Mammals of Africa

by Axel Amuchastegui and H. Hook

Full of illustrations of birds and mammals found on the African continent. A limited edition of 505 copies, of which 500 were numbered. Published in 1979.

Curator joins team expanding access to African poetry

Esmeralda Kale, the George and Mary LeCron Foster Curator of the Herskovits Library, is a member of an international team that has received a three-year \$750,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation to expand an online African poetry portal (africanpoetics.univ.edu) initiated in 2017. The portal documents the work of African poets and gives digital access to related creative and intellectual artifacts, materials, and research. It currently has two major sections: "Contemporary African Poets" and "African Poets and Poetry in the News."

Kale is one of the librarians, archivists, and scholars who make up the team, which is headed by Kwame Dawes and Lorna Dawes, both of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Other team members are from the University of Cape Town, the University of Lomé, the University of Ghana, the University of Oxford, Cambridge University, the University of Michigan, and the Library of Congress.

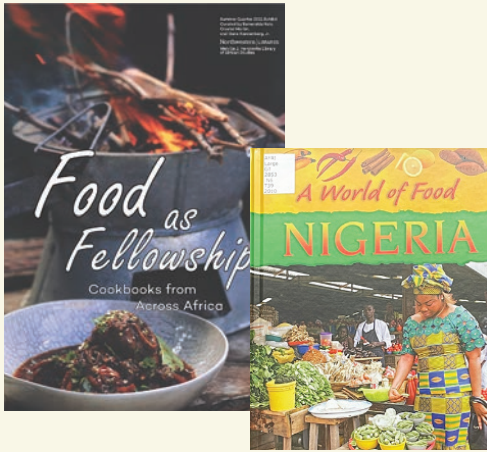
Kwame Dawes observes that the digital portal will highlight the "rich and sophisticated poetic practices and traditions [that] have always existed in African societies and continue to thrive in Africa."

New finding aid to photography collection now available

Many librarians in various departments throughout Northwestern University Libraries help to process the Herskovits Library's collections, including Gary Strawn in the archival processing unit. Strawn helped produce a new finding aid that provides a comprehensive list of the Edward Harland Duckworth photograph collection's 5,000 photos documenting Nigerian life in the decades just before independence. Duckworth spent 20 years in Nigeria, where he was the first editor of, and frequent photographer for *Nigeria Magazine*. Visit bit.ly/MJHL-DuckworthList.

Electronic holdings of East African newspapers expand

Accessible via NUSearch, the African Studies Libguide, or the Center for Research Libraries (CRL) site, the Herskovits Library's expanded collection of electronic newspaper holdings includes more than 450,000 pages of in-copyright material from the 1940s to the early 2000s. Featured newspapers include the *Daily Nation* (1958–2002), an independent Kenyan newspaper; *Ethiopian Herald* (1943–1989), a government-owned, English-language newspaper; and the *Monitor* (1992–2003), an independent Ugandan newspaper. The East African newspapers collection is available to all CRL members and other institutions supporting the alliance. Visit gpa.eastview.com/crl/ean.



Summer–fall exhibit: *Food as Fellowship*

The Herskovits Library's current exhibit, *Food as Fellowship: Cookbooks from across Africa*, provides a wealth of culinary inspirations. Display cases present dozens of cookbooks—available to peruse or check out—from countries across the African continent, along with food-related collection items, including figures from a *Thorn Wood Village Scene* (Nigeria), a wicker tea set and wooden forks and spoons with figural tops from the Herskovits Library's Pedersen collection, and a teapot and ceramic tagines on loan from Northwestern University Libraries staff member Aicha Azzaoui.

To accompany the exhibit, *Food as Fellowship* curators Crystal Martin, Gene Kannenberg Jr., and Esmeralda Kale created a YouTube playlist of nearly 30 African cooking instruction videos, which are accessible by scanning the QR code at left or by visiting bit.ly/MJHL-AfricanCooking.

The exhibit also includes an interactive map of African restaurants in the Evanston and Chicago areas, featuring favorites suggested by members of the University Libraries and PAS communities. The map can be viewed online by scanning the QR code at left or by visiting bit.ly/MJHL-AfricanRestaurants. Send your additions or changes to the map to africana@northwestern.edu.



Cooking videos



Restaurants

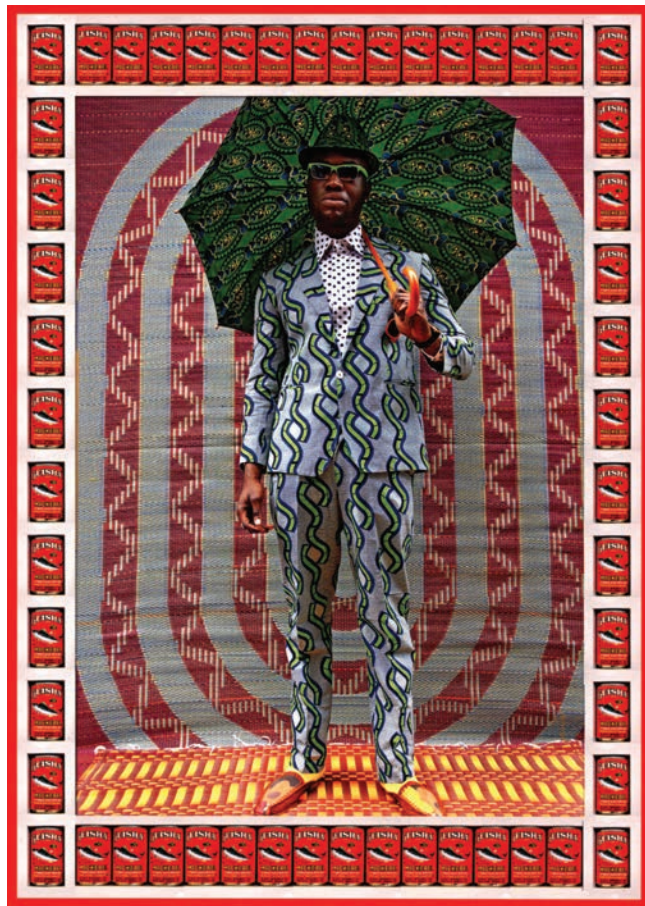


Focus on fashion

By Gene Kannenberg Jr.

The Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies collects printed materials of all types and in all languages as research resources. Our extensive collection ranges from books and academic periodicals to newspapers and current popular magazines. We're also growing our resources on material culture, including publications related to the subject of this article: fashion.

With a continent's worth of coverage in our collections, we present here just a handful of the Herskovits Library's materials on myriad facets of African fashion.



Wax print fabrics

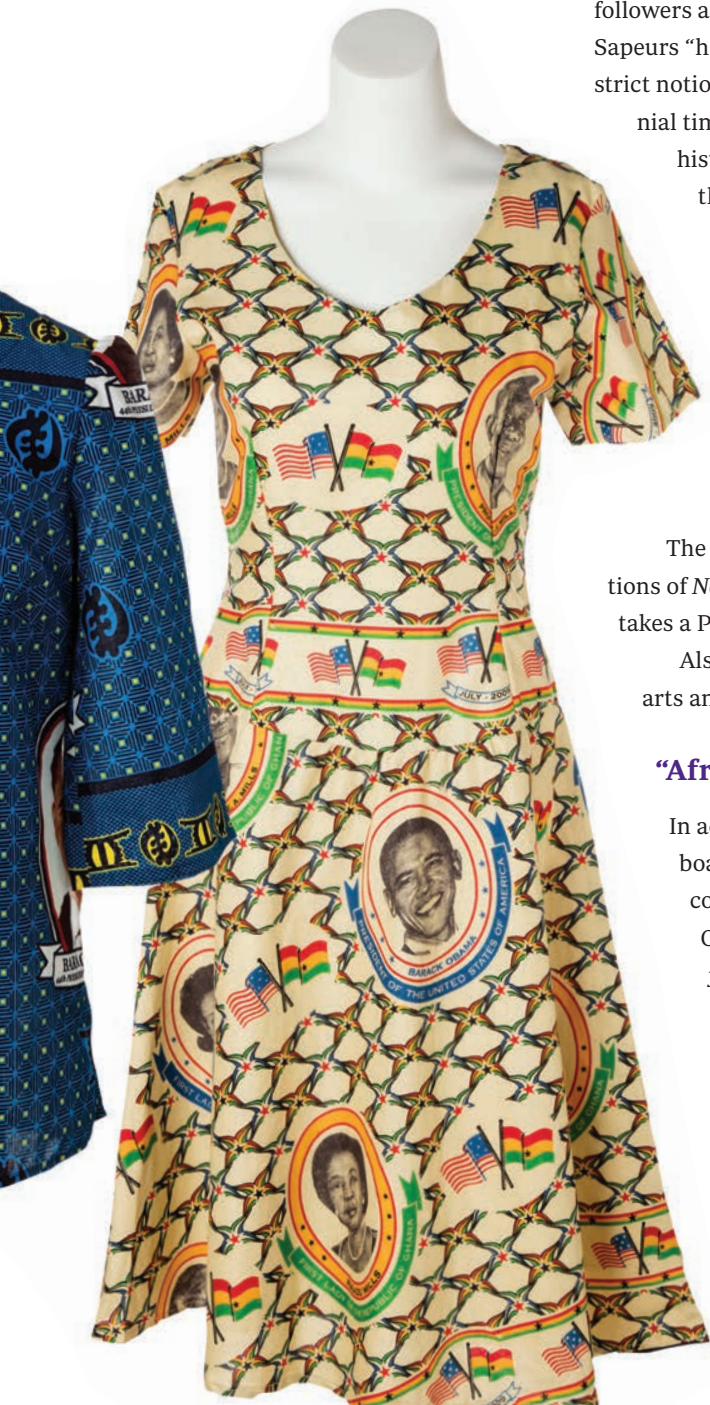
Wax print fabrics, wildly popular in western and central Africa, are generally considered to be the successors to 19th-century European imitations of Indonesian batiks. While Europeans may have introduced wax print fabrics to West Africa, the fabrics' origins date back centuries earlier, according to *African-Print Fashion Now! A Story of Taste, Globalization, and Style*, an essay collection edited by Suzanne Gott, Kristyne S. Loughran, Betsy D. Quick, and Leslie W. Rabine and published in 2017.

To create wax print fabrics, a pattern in wax (or resin) is applied to both sides of the cloth before the dyeing process; afterward, the wax is removed, and additional elements may be printed on one side. For today's wearers, these fabrics, are striking forms of self-expression, often worn to mark special life events.

Sapeurs/dandies

Brazzaville, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, is the birthplace of the fashion and lifestyle movement known as La Société des Ambianceurs et des Personnes Élégantes, or Le Sape. Our collections include Daniele Tamagni's book *Gentleman of Baongo*, featuring photos of Sapeurs (one is shown at left), as the movement's





followers are known. In his introduction to the book, Peter Goodwin notes that Sapeurs “have their own code of honour, codes of professional conduct, and strict notions of morality.” Initially inspired by French fashion trends in colonial times, Sapeurs express an elegance that both acknowledges colonial history and recasts it as a form of self-empowerment, often at odds with their day-to-day living environment.

Contemporary fashion

Our periodicals collection includes many fashion and art magazines, as well as tabloids with fashion as a feature. One example is the magazine *Conakry Fashion* (pictured above), which debuted in 2015 with a mission to promote Guinean textiles and other artistic and cultural works in the subregion and around the world.

The Herskovits Library holds both French- and English-language editions of *New African Woman* (above), published out of Paris. The magazine takes a Pan-African perspective and is “dedicated to the professional woman.”

Also in our collections is *The Lake* (above), a free but lavishly produced arts and culture magazine published in South Africa.

“Africa Embracing Obama” in fashion

In addition to fashion-related materials in print, the Herskovits Library boasts a unique treasure: Our “Africa Embracing Obama” collection contains more than 500 items from across Africa that celebrate Barack Obama’s candidacy and presidency. The item types include paintings, jewelry, bottles (water, beer, and whisky), and, perhaps more than anything else, clothing (pictured at left). Photographs of the entire collection will be available soon in our image repository.

Gene Kannenberg Jr. is the research and media assistant at the Herskovits Library.



Community news

Chad J. Achenbach (Feinberg School of Medicine) coauthored the articles “SARS-CoV-2 Surveillance in the Middle East and North Africa: Longitudinal Analysis” and “A SARS-CoV-2 Surveillance System in Sub-Saharan Africa: Modeling Study for Persistence and Transmission to Inform Policy” in the *Journal of Medical Internet Research*.

Ashley Agbasoga (graduate student, anthropology) was inducted into the Edward A. Bouchet Graduate Honor Society.

Omoyemi Ajisebutu (graduate student, English) presented the paper “Mobility and Displacement: Exploring Departures and the (Im)possibility of Returns in Chimamanda Adichie’s *Americanah*” at the Lagos Studies Association conference in June.

Bimbola Akinbola (performance studies) published “Disbelonging and Unruly Return in the Performance Art of Wura-Natasha Ogunji” in *Text and Performance Quarterly*.

Marcos Leitão de Almeida (history PhD ’20) published “Slave Sacrifices in the Upemba Depression? Reinterpreting Classic Kisalian Graves in the Light of New Linguistic Evidence” in *Azania*.

Chernoh Bah (graduate student, history) and coauthors Matthew Anderson and Mark Feldman continue to publish Africanistpress.com articles documenting corruption in Sierra Leone. Their reports have been widely featured in the international press, including the BBC, Radio Deutsche Welle, Agence France-Presse, News24 (South Africa), and newspapers in West Africa.

Julia A. Behrman (sociology) coauthored the articles “Learning Inequality in Francophone Africa: School Quality and the Educational Achievement of Rich and Poor Children” in *Sociology of Education* and “Attitudes toward Intimate Partner Violence in Dyadic Perspective: Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa” in *Demography*.

Galya Ben-Arieh (political science) coauthored the article “Criminalisation of Kindness: Narratives of Legality in the European Politics of Migration Containment” in *Third World Quarterly*.

Adia Benton (anthropology), a 2021–22 Kaplan Faculty Fellow, published the essay “Mourning, Survival, and Time: Writing through Crisis” in *Writing Anthropology: Essays on Craft and Commitment*, edited by Carole Ann

Class of 2020 Africanist PhDs

Maxwell Akanbi (health sciences), “Impact of Antiretroviral Therapy Eligibility Expansion on the Epidemiology of HIV-Associated Kaposi Sarcoma in Nigeria.” Lucy Bilaver, adviser.

Rachel Mihuta Grimm (French and Francophone studies), “The Afterlives of Amnesia: Remembering the Algerian War of Independence in Contemporary France and Algeria, 1999–2019.” Nasrin Qader, adviser.

David Peyton (political science), “Property Security in the Midst of Insecurity: Wealth Defense, Violence, and Institutional Stasis in the Democratic Republic of Congo.” Will Reno, adviser.

McGranahan. She also presented the webinar “Spy, Patrol, Police: Black Life and the Production of Epidemiological Knowledge from Atlanta, Georgia, to Freetown, Sierra Leone” in Boston University’s spring 2021 Walter Rodney Lecture Series.

James R. Brennan (history PhD ’02) published “The Secret Lives of Dennis Phombeah: Decolonization, the Cold War, and African Political Intelligence, 1953–1974” in *International History Review*.

Antawan I. Byrd (graduate student, art history) was awarded a fall 2021 Weinberg Fellowship.

William Fitzsimons (history PhD ’20) was a fall 2020 Chabraja Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow at Northwestern. Last winter he accepted the position of historian with the US Air Force.

Shannon R. Galvin (Institute for Global Health) coauthored the article “Enhancing Knowledge in Informal Settlements: Assessing Health Beliefs and Behaviors in Nigeria” in *Annals of Global Health*.

Jonathon Glassman (history) published “Toward a Comparative History of Racial Thought in Africa: Historicism, Barbarism, Autochthony” in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*.

Wendy Griswold (sociology) presented the paper “Urban Representation in the Colonial, Postcolonial, and 21st-Century African City” at the Lagos Studies Association conference in June. She was also a discussant on the panel “Author Meets Readers: Engaging Imagined States: Law and Literature in Nigeria, 1900–1966.”

Bright Gyamfi (graduate student, history) published the article “Pioneers in Black Studies” on the Africa Is a Country website and participated in the panel “Reconnecting Black Internationalism: New Directions in Historical Radicalism,” sponsored by Africa Is a Country and the Ghana Studies Association. His review of Jeffrey Ahlman’s *Living with Nkrumahism: Nation, State, and Pan-Africanism in Ghana* appeared in the *African Studies Review*. The Graduate School featured Gyamfi as its spotlight student last February: tgs.northwestern.edu/about/our-people/spotlight/bright-gyamfi.html.

Brannon Ingram (religious studies) published “Is Islam a ‘Religion’? Contesting Din-Religion Equivalence in 20th-Century Islamist Discourse” in *Words of Experience: Translating Islam with Carl W. Ernst*, edited by Brannon Wheeler and Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst.

Abdulbasit Kassim (visiting scholar, ISITA) received a dissertation completion fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies.

Lamin Keita (graduate student, political science) received fellowships from Fulbright-Hays and the Social Science Research Council for his dissertation research in Mali and Burkina Faso. He published “Dilemma of Insecurity and Civil Society Participation in Malian Politics” on AfroSaharo.org, a website Keita launched to create a community of experts on political violence, civil conflict, terrorism, social movements, and democracy in West Africa and the Sahel.

Andrew Wooyoung Kim (anthropology PhD ’20) coauthored several articles: “‘Thinking Too Much’: A Systematic Review of the Idiom of Distress in Sub-Saharan Africa” in *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*; “Evaluating the Mental Health Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Urban South Africa: Perceived Risk of COVID-19 Infection and Childhood Trauma Predict Adult Depressive Symptoms” in *Psychological Medicine*; “Digest: Synergies between the Developmental Origins of Health and Disease (DOHaD) Framework and Multiple Branches of Evolutionary Anthropology” in *Evolutionary Anthropology*; and “Health System Experiences of Breast Cancer Survivors in Urban South Africa” in *Women’s Health*. Kim is a postdoctoral research fellow in the Chester Pierce Division of Global Psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard University Medical School’s psychiatry department.

Community news

Dolores Koenig (anthropology PhD '77) presented the paper “The Roles of Youth in the Changing Economy of Manantali, Mali” at the International Conference on Mande Studies in June.

(Rita) Dela Kuma (graduate student, anthropology) received a 2020–21 Mellon International Dissertation Research Fellowship.

Christa Kuntzelman (graduate student, political science) is a 2021–22 Global Impacts Fellow at the Buffett Institute for Global Affairs. She published “The Importance of Refugee Inclusion in Research Design” in *Scholars Strategy Network*.

Robert Launay (anthropology) published “Savagery in 18th-Century Scotland: An Intellectual Portrait of Adam Ferguson” in *Bérose: Encyclopédie internationale des histoires de l'anthropologie*.

Caitlin Monroe (graduate student, history) is a 2021–22 Global Impacts Fellow at the Buffett Institute for Global Affairs.

Peter Mwangi (Swahili) participated in May–August workshops on oral proficiency interviews and test design through the University of Chicago. He also collaborated with a colleague at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to develop a comprehensive proficiency assessment for first-year Swahili students.

Kwame Ato Onoma (political science PhD '06) published “Xenophobia’s Contours during an Ebola Epidemic: Proximity and the Targeting of Peul Migrants in Senegal” in *African Studies Review*.

David Peyton (political science PhD '20) received the American Political Science Association’s Gabriel A. Almond Award for the best doctoral dissertation in comparative politics. He was a summer 2021 Donald R. Beall Fellow at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

Nasrin Qadir (French and Italian) was nominated to serve on the Conseil scientifique international pour les lettres et sciences sociales at École Normale Supérieure in Paris.

Will Reno (political science) published “Contingency Planning from Top to Bottom” in the *PS: Political Science and Politics* roundtable on “COVID-19 and Fieldwork: Challenges and Solutions.”

Susanna Sacks (English PhD '19) published “Evan Mawarire’s #ThisFlag as Tactical Lyric: The Role of Digital Speech in Imagining a Networked Zimbabwean Nation” in *African Studies Review*.

Zekeria Ahmed Salem (political science and director of the Institute on Islamic Thought in Africa) published “Rethinking the Weak State Paradigm in Light of the War on Terror: Evidence from the Islamic Republic of

Mauritania” as part of the Project on Middle East Political Science’s study *Africa and the Middle East: Beyond the Divides*; and the chapter “Hands Off My Nationality: Biometric Enrollment, Exclusion, and Controversies over Identification in Mauritania” in *Identification and Citizenship in Africa: Biometrics, the Documentary State and Bureaucratic Writings of the Self*, edited by Séverine Awenengo Dalberto and Richard Banégas. He also presented the paper “Islam and Slavery in Mauritania” at the workshop “Racial Formations in the Middle East and Africa,” coorganized by the Columbia University and George Washington University Project on Middle East Politics in February. In April he participated in a roundtable on “Black in Morocco and Mauritania: Histories of the Haratin,” organized by the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

Rebecca Shumway (history PhD '95) published the articles “Naming Our African Ancestors: Pushing, and Respecting, the Limits” in the *Journal of the Early Republic* and “Identifying Enslaved Africans beyond Ports of Departure” in *Panorama: Expansive Views from the Journal of the Early Republic*.

Shayna Silverstein (performance studies) coauthored “An (Un)marked Foreigner: Race-Making in Egyptian, Syrian, and German Popular Cultures” in *Lateral: Journal of the Cultural Studies Association*.

Abdoulaye Sounaye (anthropology PhD '12) presented the webinar "Projecting Life: Boko, Learning, and Religiosity on a University Campus in West Africa," in Boston University's Walter Rodney Lecture Series in April. He published "*Malama Ta Ce!* Women Preachers, Audiovisual Media, and the Construction of Religious Authority in Niamey, Niger" in the *Routledge Handbook of Islam and Gender*, edited by Justine Howe. He also contributes articles to Radio France Internationale. Sounaye heads the research unit on "Contested Religion: Between Religiosity, Morality, and Intellectual Culture" at Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient in Berlin.

Rhiannon Stephens (history PhD '07), associate professor of history at Columbia University, presented the webinar "Early East African History and the Possibilities of Paleoclimatology" in a spring lecture series at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Craig Stevens (graduate student, anthropology) was awarded a 2020–23 National Science Foundation graduate research fellowship.

Noelle Sullivan (global health studies) published "Like a Real Hospital: Imagining Hospital Futures through Homegrown Public-Private

Partnerships in Tanzania" in a special issue of *Africa* on the theme "Beyond Realism: Anthropology of Africa's Medical Dreams." She also coauthored "Hospital Side Hustles: Funding Conundrums and Perverse Incentives in Tanzania's Publicly Funded Health Sector" in *Social Science & Medicine* and coauthored the op-ed "COVID-19 Is a Stress Test for the WHO," published in *The Hill* in 2020.

Mariam Taher (graduate student, anthropology) received a Wenner-Gren dissertation grant for her research on gendered mobilities in Siwa, Egypt.

Angela Tate (graduate student, history) presented the Ubuntu Dialogues webinar "When Glamour Was African: Etta Moten Barnett and Race, Gender, and Celebrity in the Black Freedom Struggle, 1945–1970," in April. She is now curator of women's history at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. See her contribution to the blog posts on Juneteenth at nmaahc.si.edu /blog-post/why-juneteenth-important and nmaahc.si.edu/blog-post/who-celebrates-juneteenth.

Marcia Tiede (Herskovits Library) presented the paper "From *Kotia-Nima* (1968) to *Nima, le fils du bon-heur* (2018): Colonial Education in Francophone West African Memoirs"

at the International Conference on Mande Studies in June.

Helen Tilley (history) published the article "COVID-19 across Africa: Colonial Hangovers, Racial Hierarchies, and Medical Histories" in the *Journal of West African History*.

Aili Tripp (political science PhD '90) published the article "Women in Ugandan Politics and History: Collective Biography" in the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*.

Jessica Winegar (anthropology) published the article "The Power of Nonsense: Humour in Egypt's Counter/Revolution" in the *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*.

Zachary Wright (Northwestern University in Qatar) authored "The Islamic Intellectual Traditions of Sudanic Africa, with Analysis of a 15th-Century Timbuktu Manuscript" in the *Handbook of Islam in Africa*, edited by Fallou Ngom, Mustapha Kurfi, and Toyin Falola.

Send your news updates to laray.denzer@northwestern.edu so that PAS can share word with the Africanist community at Northwestern and beyond.

An off-the-beaten-path choice

By Nina Fridman



When I first came to Northwestern, Weinberg College's six-class foreign-language requirement felt like a chore. I wasn't interested in continuing to learn Spanish, as I had done in high school, but at the same time I didn't want to start over and learn another language from scratch.

So I deferred making a choice and planned not to take any language classes at all in my first year.

A few months later, when I noticed a sophomore and fellow debate team member completing his Swahili homework in Hardy House (home of the Northwestern Debate Society), I asked him about the class. He recommended that I take Swahili to fulfill my language requirement, citing how fun Professor Peter Mwangi made learning the language.

The following fall, although I was still hesitant, I signed up for the first course in the Swahili sequence—a decision I would not regret. On the first day of class, I could immediately tell how passionate Professor Mwangi was about teaching the Swahili language and East African culture. At Northwestern, it can be daunting to choose which classes to take out of the hundreds of courses offered, and often the best classes are those that you've never heard of but somehow stumble upon.

Swahili is one of those: an off-the-beaten-path choice that not many students even have on their radar. Yet that's what makes the class such a great opportunity. Because Professor Mwangi teaches the entire six-course sequence, you get a personalized language-learning experience with a group of Swahili peers. We not only learn Swahili vocabulary

and grammar rules but also apply what we learn to facets of East African culture—whether that be food, music, celebrations, customs, or anything else. I would recommend Swahili to anyone!

Nina Fridman is a senior and a member of the Northwestern Debate Society. She and her debate partner won the Fullerton Georgetown College Debate Tournament last January and competed in the National Championship in March.

Learning “actual” Swahili

By Nasser Nduhi



In 2018 I traveled from my home in Goma, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, to Kenya to visit a cousin who was completing her university degree in Nairobi, where the primary language is Swahili. As someone who grew up where Swahili is also spoken,

I was expecting to communicate easily; it was only when I boarded the bus in Nairobi and could not understand a single word the bus driver said that I realized that my knowledge of Swahili was extremely poor. The Swahili spoken in Goma is so mixed up with French, Kinyarwanda, and Lingala, it is almost an entirely different language. Someone who speaks that version of Swahili can't claim to speak actual Swahili.

When I came to Northwestern as a first-year undergraduate last fall, I was required to take a foreign language. For me, this was an opportunity to enrich my knowledge

“Through our Swahili language table, my classmates and I had many conversations on many topics. This was my favorite part of the class—and a comfortable way of socializing, practicing Swahili, and learning from one another at the same time.” —Nasser Nduhi

of Swahili and learn to speak and write it correctly, without using any words from other languages. When I took the placement test, I was surprised to be placed in the intermediate level. From that moment on, I had strong hopes that the class was going to help me achieve my goals.

Everything went smoothly. The professor was kind and understanding and gave students the opportunity to participate in class, attend conferences, and interact with visitors from Kenya and Tanzania. I expanded my knowledge of Swahili culture and simultaneously practiced what I was learning. Not only did I learn Swahili, I also made friends. Through our Swahili language table, my classmates and I had many conversations on many topics. This was my favorite part of the class—and a comfortable way of socializing, practicing Swahili, and learning from one another at the same time. I could not have had a better experience.

By the time I finished the intermediate-level class, I had achieved my goals: I was able to interact and even do presentations and write research papers in Swahili—something I never imagined three years ago! Today I can proudly say that I can speak and write correctly in actual Swahili.

Nasser Nduhi is a second-year civil engineering student.

Students participate in international Swahili conference

By Peter Mwangi

Last spring, Northwestern undergraduates studying Swahili had the rare opportunity of presenting their work at an international conference. Organized by the Global Association for the Promotion of Swahili, the online conference drew participants from about a dozen countries—including Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, China, Germany, Poland, South Korea, Canada, and the US—where Swahili is either spoken or taught as a foreign language.

The Northwestern students presented *Huduma kwa Jamii: Mradi wa Kutafsiri Matangazo ya Janga la UVIKO-19 Chuoni Northwestern*—their project on the translation of on-campus pandemic-related signage into Swahili. Begun during the winter quarter, the work involved students holding a series of virtual conversations during which they translated the signs (captured in photographs taken by their instructor, Peter Mwangi) and consulted with other Swahili speakers at the University and in the local community.

At the conference, along with presenting their work, students reflected on how the pandemic had altered their Swahili learning experiences. They discussed the advantages and disadvantages of online learning, how they coped with the “new normal,” and why they believed that translation projects like theirs were important.

In addition to covering the students’ conference registration fees, PAS published the students’ translation work on the PAS blog: sites.northwestern.edu/africanstudies/2021/02/25/swahili-corner-covid-safety-in-swahili.

Teaching Swahili in pandemic times

By Nyanjala Maingu



In September 2020, I left my home in Tanga, a coastal city in Tanzania, and came to Northwestern to teach Swahili. Before I left, I remember my dear mother saying, “Are you going in the middle of the pandemic?”

I knew how concerned she was.

I gave her a bright smile and said, “Yes, Mother, you know the more dire the situation, the greater the opportunity.”

When I first arrived at Northwestern, I was met with hand sanitizers, six-foot distancing, face masks, and face shields. The “new normal” was online teaching. It was a new culture I had to embrace. It entailed using a learning management system and Zoom and incorporating features such as Google Docs, Whiteboard, and Padlet. Because I was teaching a foreign language, it also involved peer learning through quarterly Council on Language Instruction meetings, language symposiums, and Swahili conferences.

My students included diverse elementary and intermediate Swahili learners, each with their particular motivations and interests. We read Swahili textbooks, conversed informally at language tables to encourage fluency, and sang in

Swahili. I shared experiences of my country and East Africa, and students shared their plans to visit East Africa.

The intermediate students worked on more advanced projects. One student translated her poems into Swahili, and another created a video on how to cook chips mayai (a popular Tanzanian street food). Another student was my coauthor on a journal article about digital entrepreneurship among college students. A group of students did a project on translating the Evanston campus’s COVID safety signs into Swahili for presentation at a Swahili Zoom conference (see story on page 19).

My experiences evolved through my classes. My students and I embraced the transformation from traditional teaching and learning to online teaching and learning. We created a social and educational environment for learning Swahili and exchanging ideas about our respective cultures. We created room for communication. We found the “greater opportunity” that came with teaching and learning in the middle of a pandemic.

Nyanjala Maingu spent the 2020–21 academic year at Northwestern as a Swahili Fulbright foreign-language teaching assistant.

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