

Message from PAS director Chris Abani

Welcome, or as the Ibibio of Nigeria say, *Emedi*, which is incidentally the language of our inaugural Ama Ata Aidoo Visiting Arts Fellow, Wana Udubong. We're at the beginning of a new academic year, and it feels that we are all at the beginning of a new integration. What do I mean? The past two, going on three, years of COVID, have created immeasurable loss and isolation and have taken a deep toll on each of us individually and in our various communities. A lot of fragmentation. Fragmentation and reintegration are essential processes when dealing with change, something we from the continent know well. Here at the Program of African Studies, we continue to focus on knitting new frameworks for our work.

Recently someone asked me if I could boil down to a short sentence what I feel our mission at the program is. In reviewing our actions since I took leadership, I responded with – fostering and curating decolonized, vibrant, diverse, and sustainable knowledge communities around Africa and the study of Africa. It sounded like a big challenge, something almost unachievable. But it is what we have done and what we are doing. We started with virtual events with Nobel Prize winner Wole Soyinka who spoke to national fragmentations and potentials for reintegration. We spoke about COVID and forced migrations and their impact on refugees with

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Clementine Nkweta-Sala, our collaborations with the Block Museum and Anthropology in the African Heritage in Dialogue with Caravans of

Gold continental partners, the Queering Belonging series, the Islam and Trans-Atlantic Black Liberation series, the Reclaiming the Tongue series, Ato Quayson on The Ambiguity of Colonial Modernity, our Critical African Heritages workshops, our new fellows program, YALI, and our well tested Visiting Scholars series.

Currently, we have two visiting fellows, Paul Naylor, an ISITA visiting scholar, and Eric Berman, a PAS visiting scholar as well as Faith Chebet, our Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant. Some in residence for the fall and some for the whole year. This fall, we are continuing our usual visitor programming with esteemed guest Jean Allman and a new video series on Hair. We are also working on bringing artists and

scholars from the continent to foster a new creative scholarship across disciplines.

We are building a clear map of what we should do, can do, and have committed to do. Hence the welcome today in Ibibio, one of Nigeria's 250 languages. If we know one thing on the continent, we know this, diversity is power and fragments can be synthesized into a common hope, a single direction, yet remain distinct and powerful. Integration isn't a loss of individuality; it is a weaving together of complete things into a shared tapestry. Please, come with us on this ever-renewing, always exciting journey. As our inaugural Pius Okigbo Visiting Research Fellow, Musifiky Muanasali, might say, in the language closest to his heart, Kiswahili, *Asante*, thank you.

Named director of the Program of African Studies in 2020, Chris Abani is a Board of Trustees Professor of English at the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences and director of graduate studies for the Litowitz Creative Writing Graduate Program.



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In Memorium

Professor Akinlawon (Akin) Mabogunje (1931–2022)

By LaRay Denzer



Professor Akinlawon (Akin) Mabogunje, Africa's foremost geographer, died on August 4, 2022, at the age of 90. His early career centered in the Department of Geography at the University of Ibadan, where he taught for 23 years. He was the first African professor of geography and head of

the department (1972–1975). Professor Mabogunje had a long connection to Northwestern University and the Program of African Studies, beginning in March 1963 when he spent a nine-month Rockefeller-sponsored sabbatical in the Department of Geography working with Professor William Garrison, then the leading scholar on theoretical and quantitative geography. He was asked to teach a course on African geography. Among the PAS graduate students he met was Michael McNulty ('66), with whom he formed a decades-long friendship and professional relationship.

Before returning to Nigeria, Mabogunje made an informal agreement to return once every three years to lecture in the department. Unfortunately, Mabogunje's university duties and rising national prominence made such regular trips impossible; however, he did give two PAS lectures in 1968 and 1969, the first on African urbanization and the second on the Nigerian civil war. Nine years later, he returned to Northwestern for a more extended period as Visiting Distinguished Herskovits Professor of African Studies from 1978–1979.

Mabogunje's seminal work, *Urbanization in Nigeria* (1968), incorporated new ideas and methods from his Northwestern experience. It laid the foundation of Nigerian geographical studies and African urban development. It became an international resource on indigenous and colonial urbanization

in Nigeria, surveying the history, composition, and internal structures of towns and cities, modes of production, linkages and flows, population dynamics, and classes of human settlements in Nigeria. He described the philosophies and constitutions of Nigerian cities before the colonial era, which differed considerably from European systems. Moreover, he published many books, book chapters, technical reports, journal articles, and monographs on urbanization, development policy, and the environment. His voluminous autobiography, *A Measure of Grace* (2011), recounts his personal and intellectual journey.

Mabogunje belonged to the first generation of Nigerian nation builders, serving in many capacities nationally and internationally. He participated in planning the 1963 census, which took into account political factors and tensions in the new nation. He played a role in creating the Kainji Dam, Niger State, and the relocation of the peoples who had resided in the area. In addition, he contributed to the founding of Olabisi Onabanjo University (formerly Ogun State University), Ago-Iwoye, the Public Review Commission, and the Western Region Forestry Commission. From 1976–1984, he was a specialist planning consultant to the Federal Capital Development Authority and undertook the ecological and geographical survey of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Mabogunje was often hailed as the Father of African Geography. He was the first African president of the International Geographical Union, the first African elected as a Foreign Associate of the United States National Academy of Sciences, and an early recipient of the Nigerian National Order of Merit in recognition of his scholarship and contributions to national development. In 2017, he was awarded the Vautrin-Lud Prize, the equivalent of the "Nobel Prize in Geography."

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Justice Titilola Mabogunje, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

LaRay Denzer is the editor of the Program of African Studies newsletter.

Nancy Ellen Lawler Wilks (1943–2022)

By Robert Launay

We are saddened to learn of the passing of Nancy Ellen Lawler Wilks. Nancy was awarded a PhD in 1988 in history from Northwestern, where she worked with Ivor Wilks, John Hunwick, and John Rowe. She conducted her field research in Côte d'Ivoire, mainly in the town of Korhogo, on veterans who had served in the French army during the Second World War. The dissertation was revised and published as a book, *Soldiers of Misfortune: Ivoiriens Tirailleurs of World War II* (Ohio University Press 1992). The book was translated into French and published by L'Harmattan in 2000. It followed on the heels of Myron Echenberg, *Colonial Conscripts: The Tirailleurs Sénégalais in French West Africa 1857-1960* (Heinemann 1990). The two books marked a growing interest in the forgotten history of colonized African soldiers who fought for France. Unlike Echenberg's book, her volume focused on a narrower and more recent period and on a specific region of a single colony. As a result, she was able to collect an impressively rich corpus of oral testimonies on which she relied to make the book a vivid and highly moving account.

Shortly after her dissertation, she married her mentor Ivor Wilks in 1989. She coedited a volume of papers collected as a festschrift for Wilks upon his retirement in 1993: *The Cloth of Many Colored Silks: Papers on History and Society*

Ghanaian and Islamic in Honor of Ivor Wilks (Northwestern University Press 1996). The couple eventually moved back to Wilks' home in Wales, making frequent visits to Northwestern until Wilks' death in 2014.

In Wales, she continued to pursue research and writing in African studies, publishing a second book, *Soldiers, Airmen, Spies, and Whisperers: The Gold Coast* (Ohio University Press 2002). Like her previous book, it focuses on the Second World War from the perspective of colonial Africa, in this case, British Africa, and the campaign of espionage that the British conducted in a colony surrounded by hostile forces under the Vichy regime.

After Ivor Wilks' death, Nancy remained in Wales, where she died on May 19, 2021, at the age of 79.

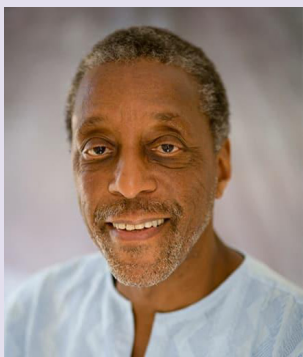


Nancy Wilks (left) pictured with Ivor Wilks.

Robert Launay is a professor of anthropology at Northwestern University.

James Turner (1940–2022)

By Jeff Rice



James Turner, founding director of Africana Studies and research director at Cornell University, died on August 6th in Ithaca, New York, at 82. Of particular interest to Northwestern University was his stint as a graduate student in sociology with a focus on African studies. His legacy at Northwestern is highlighted

by his leadership in the 1968 takeover of the Bursar's Office by 100+ Black students, which led nonviolently to a peaceful resolution resulting in, among other things, the creation

of the Department of African American Studies, which was the first in the US to offer a PhD. In 1969, he was active in a nonviolent student protest resulting from a conflagration at Triangle Fraternity in which members of For Members Only confronted Fraternity Brothers for harassing an African American student who was a kitchen staff member. Later that year, he moved to Cornell to begin this program to which he remained attached for the remainder of his life. Though his time at Northwestern was decades ago, he was an instrumental figure in that generation of Black students who brought awareness to the racial issues on campus and the importance of studying all aspects of Black and diasporic history and experience. He will be missed.

Jeff Rice is a senior lecturer in the Department of Political Science at Northwestern University.

PAS launches new fellows program

The Program of African Studies, supported by the Office of Research, launches two new fellowships this fall quarter. They are the Ama Ata Aidoo Fellowship for visiting African writers and the Pius Okigbo Fellowship for visiting African social scientists. These fellowships are named in honor of the award-winning Ghanaian playwright, author, and former government minister, Ama Ata Aidoo, and the eminent Nigerian economist and public intellectual, who was also Northwestern's first African PhD (1956). Fellows will host masterclasses, seminars, and one-on-one mentoring sessions with graduate students through AfriSem, engage with the campus community, and utilize the Herskovits library resources.



Wana Udobang is the recipient of the Ama Ata Aidoo Fellowship. She is a multidisciplinary storyteller whose work intersects with writing, poetry, and performance. Her writings have been published by the *BBC*, *Al Jazeera*, *The Guardian*,

The Observer, and *Brittle Paper*. She hosts the Culture Diaries, an online archival project that documents established and emergent artists.



Musifiky Mwanasali is the recipient of the Pius Okigbo Fellowship. A political scientist, and international civil servant with a Northwestern PhD (1994), he has worked with various United Nations and African Union agencies and missions in New

York, Mali, and Sudan. He has published many book chapters and articles on conflict resolution. While at Northwestern this fall, he will be conducting research for a project on state fragility and the politics of informality in Africa.

PAS welcomes three new PhD students

Semiu Adegbenle is a first-year student in the Department of History. His research interests are African economic and diasporic history. He holds a MA from the University of Ibadan, where his master's thesis explored the Togolese and Beninose diaspora in Ejigbo, southwestern Nigeria.

Emmanuel Elikplim Kuto joins the Department of Anthropology. He is a Ghanaian who trained at the University of Ghana-Legon. He participated in the 7th Ife-Sungbo Campaign in 2022 and worked with Amanda Logan.

Behailu Shiferaw Mihirete joins the Department of Communication Studies. He has 14 years of experience in media and communications in Ethiopia and East Africa. Most recently, Behailu had a work placement at the BBC Media Action, London, during which time he contributed to the feasibility study for the International Fund for Public Interest Media and worked on PRIMED project development. While in the UK, he was also a Chevening Scholar studying politics and communication at the London School of Economics. Before that, Behailu worked in Ethiopia as a Voices from the Field/Communications specialist for WaterAid, focused on producing strategic media content for the organization's international fundraising and advocacy purposes. He also led communication for nonprofits training in Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Nigeria, and the UK and worked for the Children's Radio Foundation and UNICEF.



YALI 2022 cohort. Sidi Teguedi is in the back row, second from the right.

How the Mandela Washington Fellowship helped redefine my objectives

By Sidi Teguedi

It was around midnight, the end of the last day of the 2022 Mandela Washington Fellowship group in Evanston. I sat on my bed, trying to process the overwhelming emotions, memories, information, and ideas I had been blessed with during the six-week program.

Since graduating from engineering school five years ago, I have worked in supply chain and sustainable business development at Tasiast Mauritanie Ltd. I also helped companies in Mauritania build and implement their missions and quality management systems. In the process, I noticed several everyday struggles and stresses among local Mauritanian businesses regarding supply management. In response to the needs I saw, started Shary, a distribution company providing an online business-to-business marketplace that connects small and medium businesses with limited resources and big aspirations to wholesalers, manufacturers, and lenders in one place to enable a seamless, insightful, and bold way of doing business.

I felt proud to believe I could make it into one of the most selective African programs. Before starting the program, I reviewed my notes and worked out my top objectives for this opportunity. I decided that my main goal would be

getting out of my comfort zone and learn more about business planning and execution strategies. I am proud that I showed up for the challenge with an open mind and an inclusive approach, ready to learn and participate fully in the academic sessions, and ready to share, interact, and connect with my peers. And ready to grow my skills and embrace the different views, backgrounds, and leadership styles that each fellow brought to the cohort. I am

grateful for the connections and knowledge acquired during the program.

I packed my bags that night and headed home to Mauritania the next day with a strong belief in Africa's future and a clear development plan I wanted to pursue in my community, company, and country. Participation in the fellowship program helped me redefine my leadership vision. I aspire to implement what I learned and build an inclusive environment where we embrace our differences and focus on developing our people and culture to serve our community and empower organizations with more innovative ways to operate and grow efficiently.

As a young African leader, the Mandela Washington Fellowship helped me discover my strengths, identify my weaknesses, and redefine my vision, career goals, and projects. It was a privilege and an eye-opening experience to participate in the various communities at Northwestern University, Evanston, and Illinois. From the site visits and community services we did, I learned that significant projects and big changes could be achieved when we have positive purposes and engaged people.

Sidi Teguedi is a sustainable business development specialist at Tasiast Mauritanie Ltd., a metal ore mining industry. He also has three years of volunteering experience as a student social entrepreneur in Morocco and holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering

In Memorium

Mwanakombo Mohamed Noordin (1967–2022)

By Rebecca Shereikis

ISITA is deeply saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Mwanakombo Mohamed Noordin, senior lecturer in the Department of Kiswahili and other African Languages at Moi University, Kenya. She passed away in March 2022.



ISITA was fortunate to host Dr. Noordin as a visiting junior fellow for three months in 2004 as part of a cohort of fellows pursuing research on the theme of “Gender and Islam in Africa.” At the time, Noordin was a PhD student in the Swahili language at Moi University.

Her project examined the struggles of Swahili women in the Muslim milieu of Mombasa to create visibility and space for themselves in the public sphere—how they have empowered themselves despite patriarchal limitations while also resisting the impetus of secularization by reaffirming their Islamic identity.

Noordin completed her PhD in Swahili literature at Moi University in 2011. That same year she was appointed senior lecturer and director of Moi University’s Coast Campus in Mombasa and served in these positions until her death.

An accomplished scholar of Kiswahili, Dr. Noordin was especially interested in the intersection of language and culture and the potential of language as a tool for development, women’s empowerment, and conflict resolution. Among her publications in English and Kiswahili are a chapter titled “Kiswahili Language and the Future of East African Integration in the Age of Globalization” in *Marginality and Crisis: Globalization and Identity in Contemporary Africa*, edited by Akanmu G. Adebayo, Olutayo C. Adesina, and Rasheed O. Olaniyi (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010) and a coedited volume (with Mosol Kandagor and Samuel Obuchi) titled *Lugha na masuala ibuka* (Eldoret: Chama cha

Kiswahili cha Taifa-Kenya Chama cha Kiin, 2018).

Noordin was a founding member of the Kiswahili Association of Kenya (CHAKITA) and active in many professional organizations, including the African Studies Association of Africa, the Circle of African Women Theologians, and CODESRIA.

At the time of her passing, she was a member of a four-year research project at Moi University on “Islamic Popular Culture and Public Performance Practices: The Production, Transmission of Religious Knowledge and Creation of Cultural Identity in Africa” coordinated by Hassan Ndzovu (also a former ISITA visiting scholar) and funded by the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence of the University of Bayreuth, Germany. According to Ndzovu, the idea for this project originated with Noordin. “It was her desire to undertake collaborative research, combining Kiswahili studies with Islamic studies, that marked her career,” observed Ndzovu, “and her ability to express these ideas clearly would earn her the admiration of colleagues and students.”

Fellow Kiswahili scholar Kenneth Inyani Simala (currently at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kenya), who was an ISITA junior fellow the year before Noordin, contributed this remembrance: “From the moment we shared our first undergraduate Kiswahili class, Mwanakombo’s professional future was enmeshed with mine. We were both employed as graduate assistants and went on to study together for our Masters in Kiswahili at Moi University, shared an office, resided in the same neighborhood in Eldoret town, and were family friends. When I knew her, Mwanakombo showed acute empathy for Kiswahili scholarship. She was charismatic, indomitable, and kind-hearted. She was an ever greater source of spiritual strength and courage, and inspired us to pursue what we believed in. The world Mwanakombo touched poured out its love and sadness at her passing away, as do I, for a remarkable, beloved friend and colleague.”

ISITA sends its condolences to Dr. Noordin’s family, friends, and colleagues.

Rebecca Shereikis is associate director of ISITA.

Workshop on “Teaching with West African Manuscript Collections”: A student’s perspective

By Xena Amro

A May 2022 workshop organized by ISITA and the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures at the University of Hamburg brought together scholars, librarians, and archivists to discuss methodologies and challenges of teaching with Arabic-script manuscripts from Africa. During this workshop, “Teaching with West African Manuscript Collections,” intellectuals from Northwestern University and the University of Hamburg teamed up to brainstorm ways in which faculty can encourage students to engage with the special collection of manuscripts from West Africa found in the Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies.

Zekeria Ahmed Salem, the director of ISITA, and Rebecca Shereikis, the associate director of ISITA, led the multilayered discussions to design practical initiatives relevant to various stakeholders. Of course, the crux of the meeting was not only to stimulate the usage of the existing collections but also to emphasize issues of cataloging and lack of resources. These collections, which I was fortunate to peruse for a short time, can excite any spectator, even scholars whose primary research is not exclusive to West Africa. They cover many topics, such as sorcery, medicine, theology, and grammar.

Invited scholars, such as Dahlia Gubara (Koç University), Mauro Nobili (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign), and Ali Diakite (Hill Museum and Manuscript Library), shared insights and personal experiences as they embark on new pedagogical projects. For instance, Nobili, in collaboration with ISITA, is working on a translation project called *Maktaba* (see the article on page 8 of the Spring 2022 issue of *PAS News and Events*) that will prove to be of extreme significance in classrooms. The special collections room on the fifth floor of the main library that we entered with Esmeralda Kale, the curator at the Herskovits Library, revealed the exceptional ongoing project to organize and digitize the collections. Kale, genuinely worried about the limited physical space and finding an Arabic-speaking assistant, did not hesitate to voice her concerns about the project’s urgency.

A final lecture by Charles Stewart, professor emeritus of history at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a renowned scholar of West African history, revisited an article he had coauthored over ten years ago on the historic “core curriculum” in Islamic West Africa. Using the larger sample of manuscripts from West African libraries that is now available in the West African Arabic Manuscripts Database (WAAMD), Stewart reassessed the earlier article’s findings and examined the concept of literary authority in Islamic West Africa. Ultimately, this workshop marks only the beginning of a conversation that will emerge again and again. ISITA’s diligence in investing in the unique and valuable collection of Arabic manuscripts from West Africa will undoubtedly attract international professors and graduate students.

Welcome to Xena Amro

ISITA welcomes Xena Amro as the Institute’s part-time graduate assistant for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Xena is a second-year Ph.D. student in Comparative Literary Studies, with a home department in Middle East and North African Studies. She is a Mellon Cluster Fellow in Global Avant-Garde and Modernist Studies. Her research interests include Islamic manuscripts, travelogues, global modernism, translation studies, modern Arabic literature, and twentieth-century European novels.

Xena has a bachelor’s degree in English literature from the Lebanese American University and a master’s degree in English literature from the American University of Beirut. Her master’s thesis, entitled “Paris in 1855 and 1922: Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq and James Joyce,” employed global modernist theories to investigate how *Al-Saq ‘ala l-saq* (*Leg over Leg*) already accomplishes

many things claimed for one of the central texts of modernism, James Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1922), such as experiments in narrative form, its polyglot linguistic texture, and breadth of cultural and literary references. Her research focused on the concept of foreignness, whereby a native language is made foreign to its own readers. She has contributed a chapter to an edited volume on al-Shidyaq to be published soon with Barbara Winckler in Reichert Verlag.

In June 2022, the Comparative Literary Studies Department recognized Xena’s work with the “Best Graduate Seminar Paper” prize for her article, “In Search of Lost Proust: The Translator and the Comparatist.” Furthermore, her paper “Global Modernism and Foreign Readers: al-Shidyaq and Joyce in Paris” was accepted at the 2022 American Comparative Literature Association.

In 2022, Xena also received an award from the John Hunwick Research Fund, administered by ISITA, which she used to attend the Summer School

Community News

Alumna **Karen Attiah** (BA, communication studies) has published several opinion pieces for the *Washington Post* relevant to modern Africa, including: “We Must Speak the Ugly Truths About Queen Elizabeth and Britain’s empire,” September 10, 2022, “What Queen Elizabeth Meant for White Christianity,” and “The Dahomey of ‘The Woman King’ Is No Feminist Utopia,” September 23, 2022.

Chernoh Bah (history graduate student) continues to coauthor hard-hitting investigative reports about government malfeasance in Sierra Leone for africanistpress.com.

Adia Benton (anthropology) published “I Argued With Paul Farmer Until the Day He Died. We’re Worse Off Without Him,” in *Slate*, February 25, 2022.

Colin Bos (history graduate student) and **Ken Alder** (history) are developing a course on “The History of the Future” for the spring quarter 2023.

Alumnus **Nnamdi Elleh** (art history ’02) published “African Studies Keyword: Okà,” *African Studies Review* 65(3), 2022, 717-742. He is an associate professor of architecture, history, and theory at the University of Cincinnati.

Bright Gyamfi (history graduate student) has received a Presidential Fellowship from The Graduate School at Northwestern. He has also been selected as a 2022 Edward A. Bouchet

Graduate Honor Society Inductee. The Society, established to honor Edward A. Bouchet, the first African American to obtain a doctorate in the US, encourages diversity and outstanding achievement in doctoral education. His latest publication is “From Nkrumah’s Black Star to the African Diaspora: Ghanaian Intellectual Activists and the Development of Black Studies in the Americas,” in *The Journal of African American History* 106(4) (2021): 682-705.

Karen Tranberg Hansen (professor emerita anthropology) published “How Used Clothes Became Part of Africa’s Creative Economy – and Fashion Sense” in *The Conversation*, August 1, 2022,

Gene Kannenberg Jr. (Africana Library) published a chapter, “Wakanda as a Window to the Study of Africa,” in *Integrating Pop Culture into the Academic Library*, edited by M. E. Johnson, T. C. Weeks, and J. P. Davis (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022).

Congratulations to former visiting scholar **Abdulbasit Kassim** who has been awarded his PhD by Rice University. He is currently a post-doctoral fellow at the University of California-Riverside. He is revising his dissertation for a book tentatively titled *Old Reformers, New Dissidents: Continuity and Change in the Intellectual History of Jihad and Traditions of Reform in Central Bilad*

al-Sudan.

Alumna **Pamela Khanakwa** (history ’11) published “Cattle Rustling and Competing Land Claims: Understanding Struggles over Land in Bunambutye, Eastern Uganda,” in *African Studies Review* 65(2), 2022: 455-478. She is now a lecturer of history at Makerere University.

(**Rita**) **Dela Kuma** (anthropology graduate student) was awarded a Gloria S. King Fellowship in Archaeology for 2022.

Amanda Logan (anthropology) was awarded a two-year grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York to research environmental histories of food security in Africa. Her study will use case studies around the continent to examine how African farmers and cooks negotiated changing environmental, economic, and political conditions to put food on the table over the last 1,000 years.

Robert Launay (anthropology) published “What Does It Mean to Be a ‘Person’? Different Cultures have Different Answers,” in *The Conversation*, July 12, 2022.

Alumna **Caitlin Monroe** (history 2022) was awarded a summer graduate fellowship for an AHA project on “Teaching Things: Material Culture in the History Classroom.” She published an article, “Searching for Nyabongo: An Unconventional Ugandan Intellectual

and the Limits of Global History,” in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 42 (202), 389–403. She is currently an associate professor at the University of Northern Colorado.

Peter Mwangi (Swahili) copresented with **Janet Ochieng** (2021/22 Swahili FLTA) a paper, “Reconnecting through the Open Education Resources (OER): The Swahili Program at NU,” at NU’s 2022 Teachx annual conference in May. He also collaborated with colleagues from Arabic, German, and Portuguese language groups on the CLI’s public relations committee to organize the first-ever NU Festival of Languages and Culture. Over the summer, Mwangi had a University of Chicago Mellon grant for professional development, which he used to liaise with colleagues at the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign) to create elementary Swahili curricula. In August, he participated in a conference on Shared Less Commonly Taught Languages (SLCTL) in Rosemont, Illinois. In September, he presented a paper on the foreign language teaching/learning revolution occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic at the Global Association for the Promotion of Swahili/Chama cha Ukuzaji wa Kiswahili Duniani (CHAUKIDU) annual conference at Howard University.

Alumnus **Ato Kwamena Onoma** (political science ‘06) is now an associate professor at the Department of Political Science at the University of Toronto. He served almost a decade as a senior research officer at the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) in Dakar. For alumnus Godwin Murunga’s farewell tribute

about Onoma’s CODESRIA service, see: codesria.org/a-kind-of-farewell-to-ato-kwamena-onoma. His most recent publications are: “Citizen Vector: Scapegoating within Communal Boundaries in Senegal during the COVID-19 Pandemic,” in *Viral Loads: Anthropologies of Urgency in the Time of COVID-19*, edited by L. Manderson, N. J. Burke, and A. Wahlberg, 181–98 (London: UCL Press, 2021). “The Allure of Scapegoating Return Migrants during a Pandemic,” *Medical Anthropology* 40(7), 2021: 653–666. He is a coeditor and contributor to *African Politics of Survival Extraversion and Informality in the Contemporary World* (Bamenda, Cameroon: Langaa RPCIG, 2021).

Ewurama Okai (sociology graduate student) and **Julia Behrman** (sociology and IPR fellow) coauthored “Identificational Orientations among Three Generations of Migrants in France,” an Institute for Policy Research working paper, WP 22–30, July 6, 2022.

Andrea Rosengarten (history) was awarded a Chabraja History Department Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship for the fall quarter.

Alumnus **Lee Seymour** (political science ‘08) is currently a Canada Research Chair in the Politics of Violence at the Université de Montréal.

Angela Tate (history graduate student) published the article “Sounding Off: Etta Moten Barnett’s Archive, Diaspora, and Radio Activism in the Cold War,” *Resonance: The Journal of Sound and Culture* 2 (2021): 395–410. She also participated in a podcast with Utrecht University’s The Decolonisation Group on the

episode “Unsettling Bridgerton: Race, Representation, and Royalty” and was a panelist on WBEZ’s episode about Juneteenth.

Chris Udry (economics), Dean Karlan (economics), and others have coauthored “Machine Learning and Phone Data Can Improve Targeting of Humanitarian Aid” in *Nature*, vol.603, no. 7903, 2022: 864–870, doi.org/10.1038/s41586-022-04484-9

Jessica Winegar (anthropology) has been appointed to the Hamid Bin Khalifa Al-Thani Chair in Middle East Studies.

Sera Young (anthropology) has received the Norman Kretchmer Memorial Award in Nutrition and Development from the American Society for Nutrition Foundation (ASN). The award is given to young investigators with a substantial body of independent research in nutrition and development with potential relevance to improving child health. Young has been involved with Northwestern’s prison program, “Bachelor Behind Bars,” Statesville Correctional Center. She has coauthored several articles: “The Co-occurrence of Water Insecurity and Food Insecurity among Daasanach Pastoralists in Northern Kenya,” in *Public Health Nutrition*, August 9, 2022: 1–11, and “Pathways Linking Social Support, Self-efficacy, and Exclusive Breastfeeding among Women in Northern Uganda,” *Global Public Health*, August 12, 2022: 1–13; and “A Novel Measure of Developing Countries’ and Agricultural and Food Policy Readiness,” *World Development* 158, October 2022.

Northwestern's Music Library acquires the archive of Egyptian composer Halim El Dabh

By Gregory S. MacAyeal

The Music Library recently acquired the archive of Egyptian composer, Halim El-Dabh (1921–2017). Included are musical manuscripts, personal papers, and over 700 ethnographic field recordings. For over five decades, the Music Library has been obtaining primary source collections of 20th and now 21st century composers, and this archive finds a ready home among the archives of other luminaries of modern music.

For many visitors, the Sound and Light show at the Pyramids at Giza is a memorable event. While catering to the vast tourist audience, the narration and musical accompaniment is well received. This how is many people first hear the music of Halim El-Dabh. Beginning in 1960, his music has been played daily at the pyramids. He was serious composer of concert art music, experimental electronic music, and a composer for the Martha Graham Dance company.

Halim El-Dabh was born in in Cairo 1921 to a well-off Coptic family, and he had a Western learning upbringing. With the family piano alongside traditional instruments of North Africa, he began musical explorations at an early age. El-Dabh did not find a career in music until later in life,

however, and as a young man, he worked in agriculture. Still, he remained an active musician and gained attention for his compositions. He was offered a Fulbright scholarship in 1949 and came to the United States to study music, eventually earning a graduate degree at the New England Conservatory of Music. In 1969, he accepted a faculty position at Kent State University. He remained there for the rest of his life, retiring from teaching in 1991 at 70 years of age.

All while working as a composer and teacher, El-Dabh remained interested in the music of his native North Africa. He made many trips to rural areas across Africa over the course of his life, documenting traditional music by making field recordings on audio tape. The Smithsonian Institution deployed El-Dabh in the 1970s and 1980s as a consultant and his work led to the release of several field recordings on

the Smithsonian Folkways label, an important record producer and conservator of traditional music.

During his time working in agriculture, El-Dabh used a wire recorder (a precursor to the tape recorder) to experiment with using audio as an insect repellant. As a composer, however, he discovered a new way to hear and combine sounds. Considered the first example of kind of electronic music known as *musique concrète*, his composition called *Wire Recorder Piece* (1944) is pioneering in its use of

recorded sounds as musical building blocks. This composition predates similar developments in Europe and the US by many years.

Halim El-Dabh enjoyed success in the West, and he is well regarded in his homeland Egypt. In addition to the Sound and Light commission, El-Dabh was asked to provide special music for the long-awaited opening of the modern Library of Alexandria. The celebration in 2002 featured four



Professor Halim El Dabh demonstrates a drumming technique for ethnomusicologists William Anderson (second from left) and Terry E. Miller and Thai graduate student Kovit Kantasiri.

Inspiration from faculty leads to the donation of a painting

By Esmeralda Kale

Gifts come in all shapes and sizes, and this past year the Herskovits Library was fortunate to receive a gift of a painting by the world-renowned artist Paul Collins of Grand Rapids, titled the *Maasai Warrior*. This painting is a gift from NU alum Stan McConner Jr. on behalf of the McConner family trust in honor of Professor Ivor Wilks, a man who inspired him. Professor Emeritus Ivor Wilks was a distinguished historian renowned for his work on the history of the Asante empire of Ghana.

The painting was unveiled on May 19, 2022, in the south tower of the Herskovits Library. It had originally resided in the offices of Johnson & Johnson in Chicago. Mr. McConner Jr. tells how this painting enthralled him while he had a summer job at the Johnson & Johnson offices in 1975. He would look at it and think of how majestic it was (just like himself). Given as a gift to his family by the Johnsons, many years later, a codicil in his father's will indicated that the painting should be given to his alma mater. In 2018, Mr. McConner Jr. contacted me about giving the painting to Northwestern University, the institution that granted his father his second PhD in 1985.

Stan came across Professor Wilks during his sophomore year at Northwestern. On the recommendation of his roommate, he signed up for a 12-to-20 class offered by Wilks. Back then, a 12-to-20 class only required submitting a 12-to-20-page essay. Stan tells the story that after he submitted his paper, Professor Wilks asked him to include footnotes. He retyped the paper, resubmitted it, and was inspired by the comment he received: "Submit for publication" words that encouraged him to go a little further in life. At the unveiling, Stan said, "this painting represents what Ivor meant to meIvor Wilks was a good man, and having him in your life was a good thing. Those of you who met him, knew him, and worked with him, you were privileged and didn't even know it."

Stan McConner Jr. is a businessman and retired educator with interest in rocketry. Esmeralda Kale is the George & Mary LeCron Foster Curator of the Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies,



Stan McConner Jr. (right) poses with the painting he donated to the Herskovits Library.

concerts of his music, one strictly of electronic works and three concerts of his orchestral chamber music.

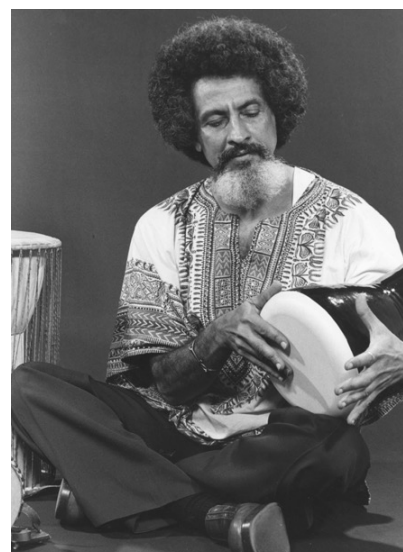
Halim El-Dabh's music remains fresh and exciting, effectively combining many traditions to create something truly new. Nigerian composer and musicologist Akin Euba coined the term "creative ethnomusicology" to describe a style of composing that embraces a deep integration of music from distinct cultural practices. Halim El-Dabh stands as the most important composer working in this manner. The Music Library is proud to have this archive.

Gregory S. MacAyeal is the Curator of the Music Library, Distinctive Collections, and a lecturer in the Henry and Leigh Bienen School of Music.



Above: Ethnographic field recordings made by Halim El-Dabh.

Right: Halim El Dabh, professor of Music and Co-Director of the Center for the Study of World Music, plays a drum.



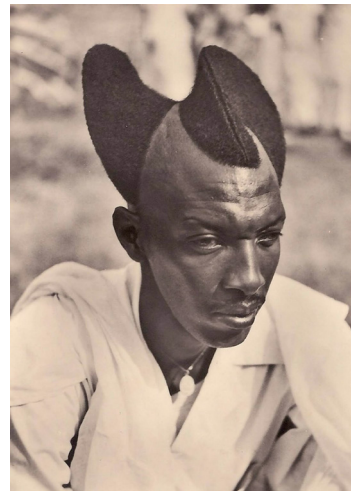


In The Same Follicle: African Hair Across Cultures

By Ayinoluwa Abegunde

This exhibit celebrates African hair: beauty, traditions, and practices across African cultures. Coily hair is a unique identifier of people of African descent in the diaspora. Although we come from the same continent (in the same follicle), our diverse experiences impact how we choose to wear our hair. This exhibition celebrates our diversity while honoring our shared experiences. I curated the exhibit around my hair journey growing up in Nigeria, living in France, England, and Spain, and then studying at Northwestern. In creating the exhibit, I used my struggle with caring for and styling my hair to reach the realization that it is beautiful, which led me to found my startup KOYLD that innovates products and services to simplify afro hair care. The exhibition highlights three main topics: the politics of hair, attitudes about hair, and hair style through history.

Beyond the straightforward exhibit display, we also used it as a springboard for other activities. The Pan-African Students Union (PASU) and KOYLD sponsored a photo hunt in which attendees were given three pictures to find in the books on display. We set up an in-house salon with a curly-haired mannequin, hair tools, products, and accessories to recreate the myriad of hairstyles documented in several books that we displayed. There were photo props of different female and male hairstyles in which attendees could stick



“try a new hairstyle.” In addition, we created a photobooth for participants to take a picture of themselves, which we used to recreate salon posters, as a digital keepsake from the exhibition.

With the success of the initial exhibition, it was selected to be privately presented to various groups.

I gave the 2022 Mandela Washington fellows at Northwestern University a tour of the exhibition, highlighting important themes through pictures in the books around the subject of hair and entrepreneurship in Africa. The tour concluded with a presentation of my entrepreneurship journey at Northwestern and followed up with a Q&A session with Babatunde Oladosu, a Mandela Washington Fellow ‘19 and current Kellogg PhD student.

On invitation by Kathleen Bickford Berzock and Erin Northington from the Block Museum, I gave the NCMM team a tour of the exhibition, highlighting the important role Nigeria plays in African hair history. One example is how architecture is woven into Nigerian hairstyles. We discussed the importance of investing in African hair care and styling education in schools to close the knowledge gap caused by colonialism among other topics.

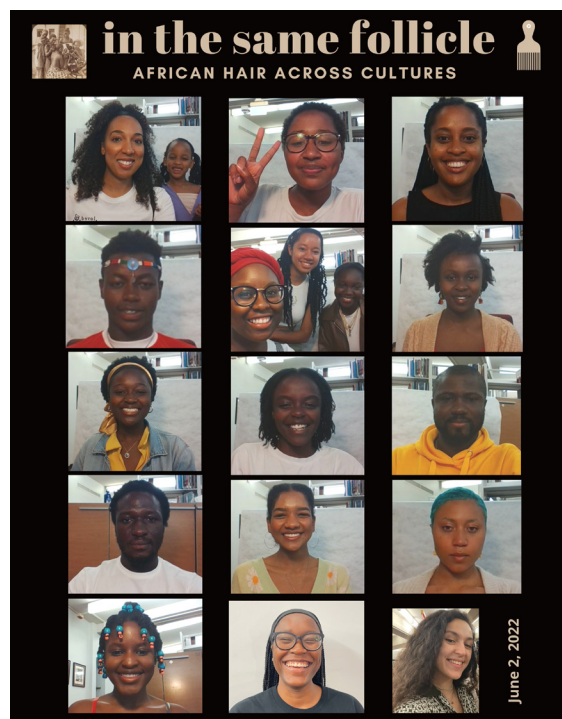
Members of BNP were invited for a tour of the exhibition where we shared cross-cultural experiences about our hair. I also gave a short presentation on the history of Black hair in the US and shared how I was able to turn my passion for hair

art and science into a business as well as a career as a hair scientist.

This exhibition would not be possible without the support from staff at Herskovits Library: Esmeralda Kale, Crystal Martin, and Gene Kannenberg; and my mentor, Mrs. Daniella Omor. I'm grateful to God for blessing me with this passion and surrounding me with people to help cultivate it.

With over 70 attendees and counting, we will be sharing the exhibit with the world by recording the full tour of the exhibition and creating a Library Hair Guide where all the books from the exhibition can be accessed. In the meantime, visit Herskovits Library to see the exhibit in person before the end of fall quarter.

Ayinoluwa Abegunde graduated in June 2022 with a BSc in Chemical Engineering



Opposite page: an exhibit case featuring books about traditional African hairstyles and a picture of a traditional Rwandan hairstyle shared with visiting groups.

Above: a poster advertising the exhibit modeled after classic beauty shop posters showcasing hairstyle choices.

New acquisitions at the Herskovits library

By Esmeralda Kale

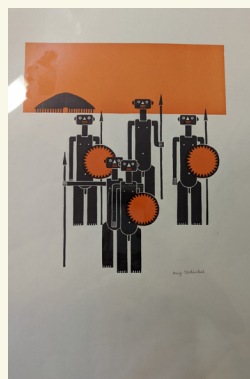


The limited edition of the tale of the hero warrior Antar. This is an old story known to many. Antar was the son of an Abyssinian slave and an Arab nobleman who rose from humble beginnings to become a poet, a leader, and a protector of his tribe. Antar:

Poème héroïque arabe. Trans. L. Marcel Devic and Etienne Dinet. Paris: L'Édition d'art, H. Piazza et Cie, éditeurs, 1898.

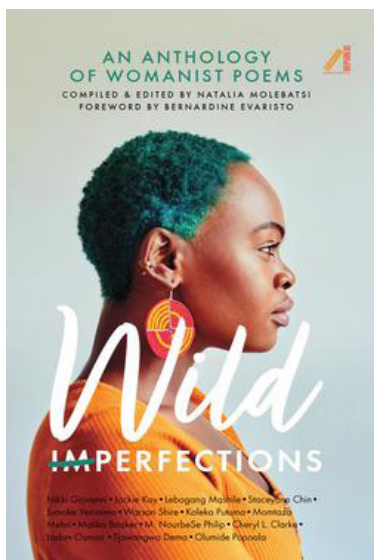


A collection of photobooks published by Republican Press in South Africa. Magazines of this nature were popular in various parts of the world from the 1960s–80s.



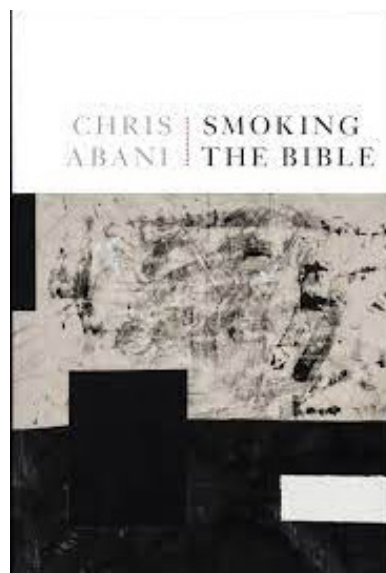
A poster by Augustin Tschinkel, *Neger (Negroes)*. Color linocut 44 x 32.5 cm. Berlin: Édition Werner Kunze, (1972). His Linocut “Neger” was initially issued in 1931 in response to the Exposition Coloniale in Paris. Tschinkel presents Africans not as colonial subjects but as proud warriors.

PAS bookshelf



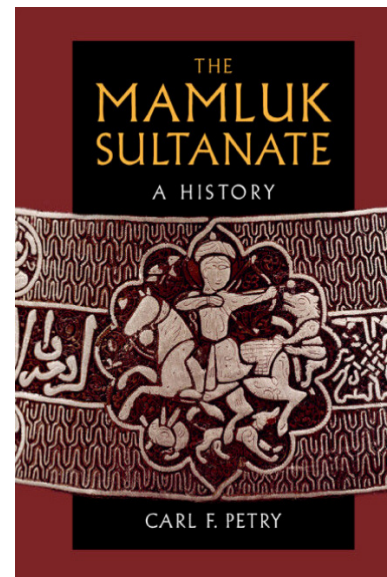
Wild Imperfections: An Anthology of Womanist Poems
(Abuja: Cassava Republic Press, 2022)

This collection of Black women's poetry edited by South African poet and performer **Natalia Molebatsi** features the work of Black women poets from Botswana to Brazil. Their poetry celebrates the nuns, the singers, the clowns, the diviners, and the conjurers who reject the constant attempt to clean up history. These wildly imperfect women do not believe in tough love that disguises hurt to prove a point and who dance with the dead with beautiful feet, cheekbones high, reflecting their mothers' smiles. They walk cities as they own them, choosing the battles of their hearts, embracing love that is often messy.



Smoking the Bible
(Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, 2022)

Smoking the Bible is an intriguing collection of poems by **Chris Abani** that reveal the personal story of two brothers—one elegizing the other—and the larger story of a man living in the realities of exile, culturally, geographically, and emotionally. It encompasses a variety of multicultural artistic, intellectual, and beliefs from Africa, Euramerica, and beyond. These poems follow the personal story of two brothers and a man in exile.



The Mamluk Sultanate, A History
(New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 2022)

Carl Petry's history of the *Mamluk Sultanate* explores how the Mamluk Sultanate can be regarded as a significant experiment in the history of state-building within the premodern Islamic world. He considers the Sultanate's identity and heritage after the Mongol conquests, the expedience of conspiratorial politics, and the close symbiosis of the military elite and civil bureaucracy. The Mamluk Sultanate, a regime of slave soldiers, ruled Egypt, Syria, and the Arabian hinterland along the Red Sea from the deposition of the Ayyubid dynasty (c. 1250) to the Ottoman conquest of Egypt in 1517. While it incorporated some of the political structures and cultural traditions of its Fatimid and Ayyubid predecessors, its political structure represented radical departures from the hierarchies of power that predated it.

*NU delegation: from left to right
Audrey Klopfer, Faith Bitok, Peter
Mwangi, Clark Murphy, and Ciella
Ininahazwe.*



Northwestern students present at Swahili conference in DC

Northwestern University was well represented at the 2022 Global Association for the Promotion of Swahili/Chama cha Ukuzaji wa Kiswahili Duniani (CHAUKIDU), which took place at Howard University. Swahili professor Peter Mwangi presented, as well as two of his former Swahili students, Audrey Klopfer and Ciella Ininahazwe, who presented their spring research papers. Also joining them was a high school student, Clark Murphy, from North Shore County Day School, who volunteers at the weekly Swahili language tables. He learned Swahili on Duolingo during the lockdown and spent this past summer in Tanzania and Kenya learning more Swahili.

PAS welcomes new Foreign Language Teaching Associate

PAS welcomes new Foreign Language Teaching Associate Faith Jebet Bitok. She holds a BEd from Kenyatta University, Nairobi, and has completed a short course in Leadership, in which she attained a distinction. While studying at Kenyatta University, she became fascinated by Psycholinguistics, which she hopes to pursue further. After graduating, Faith taught English and literature in various schools, including Gulab Lochab Academy (Eldoret). Faith describes herself as friendly, a free-thinker, and hardworking. She loves traveling to new places, learning about new cultures, and meeting new people. She looks forward to sharing her culture and knowledge with Northwestern Swahili students.



Conducting fieldwork in Kiswahili

By Shelby Mohrs

One of the most significant steps toward ethical fieldwork for an archaeologist is learning the local language of the community you are working. After all, how can you prove you are committed to an equal research partnership if you make no effort to learn their language? For me, that means learning Kiswahili!

My dissertation research concerns reconstructing Swahili cuisine in Zanzibar through archaeological plant remains. I typically spend a lot of time dumping soil into buckets of water to retrieve ancient seeds and staring at them through a microscope. However, I spent two months in Stonetown (Zanzibar) this summer, breaking out of the lab and into archaeological and ethnographic fieldwork. From digging at the Old Fort in Stonetown to running around the island in search of clay pits to surveying Darajani Market for bags of sorghum and millet, I accomplished a lot of preliminary research for my dissertation project (along with enjoying some great food!).

Thanks to Mwalimu Mwangi and Mwalimu Janet Ochieng and a year's worth of Kiswahili classes here at Northwestern, I could conduct a significant portion of my fieldwork in Kiswahili. My Kiswahili skills allowed me to convey a level of commitment and respect to my interlocutors that would not have been possible if I had only spoken English. It also allowed me to form more meaningful connections: daily *Mambo's*, *Habari's*, and *Shikamoo's* led to lasting friendships and tearful goodbyes as I stopped to see friends and neighbors on my way to the airport going home.

I am incredibly grateful to my interlocutors and friends in Zanzibar for indulging my elementary Kiswahili. Still, perhaps most of all, I am thankful to Mwalimu Mwangi and Mwalimu Janet for having given me the skills to form these meaningful relationships in the first place.

Shelby Mohrs is a third-year Ph.D. student in the Anthropology Department at Northwestern University.



*Shelby Mohrs in the midst of field work.
Photo credit: Adria LaViolette.*

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