A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

GARTH MYERS

Spring 2008 was again a very busy and exciting term for KASC. We hosted the NRC-funded symposium on “Literary Studies and Environmental Studies in Africa” at the end of March, four seminar talks on the theme of “Culture and Events in North Africa,” three Ujamaa Brownbag lunch talks from our students, and a multicultural, multifaith forum in honor of the late Babacar Ndiaye. Many thanks go to Byron Caminero-Santangelo, Majid Hannoum, and Emmanuel Birdling for organizing these events, respectively, and to the dozens of speakers from KU and all over the map (especially keynote speakers Jane Carruthers and Rob Nixon, seminar guests Lawrence Rosen, Ali Ben Hmida, and Deborah Kapchan, and Marwa Lecturer Martin Bernal). KASC hosted a number of ad hoc visits, ran or participated in several key outreach programs, and sponsored a record number of faculty and staff development travel awards. None of that would have happened quite as well as it did without Folabo Ajayi-Soyinka, Craig Pearman, Kelley McCarthy, Ashley Depenbusch, Kyle Sherlund, or Emmanuel – thank you, to all of you. (We owe an un-payable debt to Ashley and Kyle, our student assistants, both of whom graduated with Honors this Spring, and to Kelley McCarthy – we will miss them, and the Center will not be the same without them.)

The FLAS competition proved to be the most competitive process in KASC history, with 19 fine applicants seeking our four academic year and three summer-term fellowships. I appreciate the hard work of our FLAS committee (Folabo, Beverly Mack, Shawn Alexander, Harold Torrence, and Mickey Imber) in selecting our exceptional recipients. We had the pleasure of running a second highly competitive student grant process, thanks to the Oswald Foundation support that Elizabeth Asiedu and I obtained for an Applied Health and Development research – Elizabeth, Sandra Gray, and committee chair Glenn Adams did a huge amount of work in the ultimately painstaking task of choosing our three winners. Congratulations are in order for all recipients of FLAS and Oswald support: Dylan Bassett, Ryan Gibb, Ryan Good, Megan Holroyd, Hilary Hungerford, Heather Putnam, Phia Salter, Sarah Sobonya, and Luke Struckman.

One of the most substantive areas of extraordinary progress in the last few years, to me, is definitely in

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the growth of our graduate student community associated with KASC, and the high quality of that community. KASC graduate students have earned the university-wide Dissertation Fellowship two years in a row (Angela Gray for 2007-08, Cathy Collins for 2008-09). Hilary Hungerford earned both the 2008 Howard Baumgartel Peace and Justice Award and the 2008 Outstanding MA Thesis Award, on top of the FLAS. Our students have recently won other awards as well, among them Ken Aikins and Angela Gray, and many are recognized within their home departments as stellar Teaching Assistants. I had the unique opportunity to get to know many of our exceptional graduate students in the inaugural graduate seminar in African Studies in Spring term, as part of the new Graduate Certificate program. I am also happy to report that our undergraduate numbers are growing, and the numbers of them earning Honors and other awards, or moving on to top graduate programs, is also growing. Participation in study abroad in Africa is growing larger and larger, through our own programs in Morocco, Senegal, and South Africa (and thanks to Byron to getting that last one going in Summer 2008), new programs scheduled for Tanzania and Ghana, and other universities’ or organizations’ programs all around the continent. Ashford Njogu, Renata Mai-Dalton, and others have helped with various efforts to build linkages in Africa for our students.

The Center submitted two other, unsuccessful grant proposals in Spring as well, and though we did not succeed, I want to thank everyone who worked on these, particularly Folabo and Hannah Britton, but also Majid, Elif Andac, Bill Comer, Margaret Rausch, Beverly, and a whole team of colleagues in the Public Administration program. Speaking of grants: our NRC grant’s mid-term evaluation process brought three scholars to campus to assess our progress, Steve Howard, Paul Robinson, and Tom Hinnebusch. Each evaluator submitted a separate report. Collectively, the three reports confirm my sense that we are doing well with our NRC-FLAS support, while offering us valuable suggestions for our language program, curriculum, and programming in general. I wish to thank Steve, Paul, and Tom for all of their time and effort in the evaluation, and all of you who met with them.

Unlike some other units on campus perhaps, KASC does not really slow down in the summer, operationally. In fact, we begin the summer by speeding up, throwing everything we have into the Teacher Summer Institute. The 2008 Summer Institute, on the theme of “An African Renaissance?”, drew a wide variety of teachers, students, graduate students, faculty, and friends of the Center over the two weeks of its run, and many KU faculty, staff, and graduate students offered their expertise. FLAS and Oswald support, as well as our remaining year-one NRC funding, which needed to be used by the end of year two (i.e. by the end of this Summer) enabled a great deal of graduate student and staff development travel in the Summer. Students Bassett, Good, Holroyd, Hungerford, Salter, Sobonya, and Struckman, student representative to the Executive Committee Makame Muhajir, Wolof lecturer Alassane Fall, KiSwahili lecturer Ashford Njogu, Africana bibliographer Shiferaw Assefa, and professors Caminero-Santangelo, Britton, Adams and Myers (and maybe more?) were in Africa at the same time – six of us in Tanzania at once, all on different missions. My own trip was largely shaped around building formal linkages with Tanzanian universities, and I visited five of them plus the Zanzibar Indian Ocean Research Institute. We now have a formal link with the private Zanzibar University, and good possibilities for building research relationships or staff exchanges with the State University of Zanzibar, Sokoine University of Agriculture (where our professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Caroline

Teacher Summer Institute Participants enjoying the sculptures in Powell Gardens, Kansas City, MO.
I am excited to be part of KASC again. Africa has always been, and will always be a part of who I am. I have always enjoyed advancing the cause of this great continent at the University of Kansas. Working as a Swahili TA in the late nineties, a lecturer and KASC Outreach Coordinator in the years that followed, I have strong roots in the Center and coming back will give me another opportunity to continue being actively engaged in fulfilling a mission that I strongly believe in. Continuing the great work of my predecessor, Khalid El Hassan will be daunting, but I am hoping to build on to the foundation that he has laid with the help of the wonderful staff and the direction of our current Director who is doing a fabulous job already. I will count on Africanists in KU and our affiliates and friends around the world to help me continue the work that has been started by those who have made KASC such a dynamic Resource Center.

Please remember that we are here for you and count us as your resource as you continue your research, classes, travel abroad, or whatever else you have planned this semester. Connect with us and others who are working on Africa related issues in our seminar and brownbag series.
Literary & Environmental Studies in Africa: An Interdisciplinary Symposium

Byron Caminero Santangelo

In the spring, Garth Myers and Byron Caminero-Santangelo hosted an interdisciplinary invitation-only colloquium on the theme of literature and environment in Africa. All the participants were established scholars in their fields, and, in order to encourage real dialogue, we kept the number of participants purposely low. The colloquium focused on the potential benefits of the uses of literature (both oral and written) and literary modes of analysis for the study of the African environment by geographers, anthropologists, and historians, as well as of the application of theoretical frameworks and forms of knowledge drawn from geography, anthropology and environmental history for the study of African and colonial literatures. Put more simply, the two key questions we focused on were: In what ways might African literatures and modes of analysis drawn from literary studies contribute to ways of reading the environment in the other disciplines? How might African literary studies productively draw from studies of African environments?

The papers at the colloquium were uniformly outstanding and provoked lively interdisciplinary discussions. Participants included Rachael Carson Professor of English Rob Nixon (University of Wisconsin), pioneer of South African environmental history Jane Carruthers (University of South Africa), David Hughes (Rutgers University), Amanda Hammar (Nordic Africa Institute), Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka (KU), Anthony Vital (Transylvania University), Mara Goldman (University of Colorado), Laura Wright (Western Carolina University), Chris Conte (Utah State University), and Jonathan Highfield (Rhode Island School of Design).

We now plan on producing an edited volume based on the colloquium, tentatively entitled “Environment at the Margins: Literary and Environmental Studies in Africa.”

“An African Renaissance?” Teacher Summer Institute

Jane Irungu

In 1994, Thabo Mbeki, current president of South Africa, gave a speech entitled, “I Am An African” in which he popularized the concept of an “African Renaissance.” His goal was to erase the problems plaguing the entire continent, and unify Africa into a peaceful state of being. In order to do so, there needs to be great development and a renewal of nations. Europe had its renaissance between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries; is this now the time for Africa’s renaissance? – a time for great revival in literature, the arts, science, commerce, etc. This years’ Institute entitled, “An African Renaissance?” focused on this philosophical and political movement, enhancing teacher knowledge of the continent. Over the Institute’s two week period, Africanist faculty and field experts from Kansas and Missouri provided partici-
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pants with cultural, political, economical, geographical, literary, educational, and additional outlooks relating to this movement. This was useful information that provided a wide-range of information, on various topics including but not limited to: “Introduction to Africa’s Human Geographies,” “Geography of Africa’s Renaissance” presented by KASC’s Director Garth Myers, “Gender, Violence and War” by Associate Director Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka, “The Economic Effects of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Sub-Saharan Africa” by Elizabeth Asiedu, Associate Professor in the Economics Department, “Women and Islam in Africa” by Professor in African and African American Studies [AAAS] Beverly Mack, and “Religion in Africa” by Professor Peter Ukpokodu, Chair of AAAS. A complete list of topics covered, faculty and guest presenters is listed on the KASC website. These sessions provided a wealth of information that teachers can incorporate in their curriculum and it expanded the knowledge that our graduate and undergraduates have about Africa.

As part of the Institute, 30 participants, who included teachers from Kansas and Missouri School Districts and KU graduate students, were also able to enjoy African art by visiting the African Collection at Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City where they also enjoyed authentic African cuisine at an Ethiopian restaurant. Later participants enjoyed a tour of the beautiful Powell Gardens where visiting African artist sculptors gave a guided tour of the Chapungu exhibit from Zimbabwe.

As you make your plans for next summer, please consider attending the institute. With graduate and teacher in-service credits available, these are two weeks that are well worth your time. If you would like to participate as a presenter or a participant, email kasc@ku.edu and we shall be glad to discuss the opportunity with you.

Emir of Machina Visits KASC: Exploring Educational Partnerships with KU

Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka

On Friday July 18, 2008, KASC welcomed His Royal Highness (HRH), A. Bashir Alibishir Bukar, (OON), the Emir of Machina Yobe State, Nigeria who was visiting the University of Kansas to explore various levels of educational partnership, especially in language development, between his state university, the University of Maiduguri, and the University of Kansas. Notwithstanding that it was the high noon of summer rather than during the regular academic year bustling with numerous activities, Jane Irunu, the brand new KASC Associate Director, was able to put together an impressive schedule for him. His itinerary included meetings with Provost Richard Lariviere and Dean Barbara Romzek both of whom, on very short notice, found the time to meet with the Emir and his team. Chancellor Hemenway and Dean Bob Steinmez (represented by Dean Romzek) were away on university business. After a brief meeting with KASC representatives and a quick tour of the Center’s facilities, HRH Bukar was accompanied to keep his appointments with the Dean and Provost.

The Emir stated his proposals clearly and convincingly at the end of the introductions and formalities. He talked about facilities available in his state and at the university, and the various forms and directions the partnership could take – a student exchange program, faculty research opportunities, a Kanuri language program, development of, and comparative gender studies, and even city-to-city cultural exchange. He emphasized that Nigeria is a safe place to work, and how seriously the government takes the question of
terrorism. Answering a related question from the Provost, he pointed out that the often-reported unrest associated with oil exploration is well contained within the drilling area, which is actually thousands of miles from his state. He was keen to illustrate how the Federal government is addressing the environmental issues raised by the protesters. In fact, he pointed out that the University of Iowa has had a continuous and successful Exchange Program with Bayero University, Nigeria for the past eight years. Moreover, he added, Professor Jimmy Adegoke, Chair, Department of Geosciences, UMKC (who facilitated this visit) has been conducting environmentally-related research in Yobe state for the past three years, and will soon be expanding his team of researchers to Delta, an oil drilling state.

Without any doubt, the program at the core of his visit is the teaching of Kanuri, a major ethnic language in Nigeria at KU, and his state’s commitment to this program. This was a commitment that his Advisor, Mr. Mohammed Kati, who is also the Permanent Secretary to the Yobe State Government, could not emphasize enough. Giving a brief historical background of the Kanuri language area to underscore his point, HRH pointed out that teaching Kanuri at KU would complement Hausa, another major Nigerian language currently taught at KU. He lamented that while Kanuri is often taught in Europe especially in German universities, it is non-existent in American institutions, not even in Title VI universities. He would like KU to take a leadership role in reversing the trend.

By all accounts, it was a successful exploratory visit. Both Provost Lariviere, and Dean Romzek, agreed that the partnership has very strong potential, but also noted it is the faculty that drive such initiatives through their scholarly research. Speaking on behalf of the KASC Director, Professor Garth Myers, who was away on a research trip to Tanzania, Associate Directors, Jane Irungu (administrative), and Omofo-Olabo Ajayi-Soyinka (faculty), expressed great appreciation for the university’s encouraging response, and affirmed that KASC was keenly interested in pursuing the partnership idea further. The meeting ended with an exchange of gifts, the Provost presented HRH Bukar with KU memorabilia, who in turn gave him a decorative, broad-brimmed Kanuri sun hat, and a DVD about his state, and a special cultural state festival he instituted after assuming office. In addition, he extended a special, open invitation to Jayhawks to the festival, adding that he would be honored to welcome the Provost and other KU officials as his personal guests in his modern palace.

Back at the KASC office, there was another round of gift exchange consisting of souvenirs from Kanuri land artisans and technicians, and crimson and blue Jayhawk memorabilia. The visit was formally brought to a close with a lunch at the Impromptu Café in the Student Union. There was no doubt that the Emir was highly impressed by the reception accorded him by the Provost and Dean. Although he expressed regret that he did not meet Chancellor Hemenway or Dean Steinmez, nor did he have the opportunity to present the full-length position paper he had prepared for the larger academic community about his mission, he was very satisfied with how it all happened and, was honored to have been received by Dean Romzek and Provost Lariviere. He noted his visit to KU compared favorably with other universities he had visited in the

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GLENN ADAMS, Associate Professor, Dept. of Psychology and Director of Culture and Psychology Research Group, traveled to Ghana in July 2008 to renew the foundations for a program of research on the sociocultural structure of personal relationship. While there he traveled to meet colleagues and collaborators at the University of Ghana in Legon; the Institute for Statistical, Social, and Economic Research (in Legon); the University of Cape Coast; the Tamale Institute for Cross-Cultural Studies; the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research at the University for Development Studies, Navrongo Campus; and the Navrongo Health Research Centre. Generous funding from the KASC and CLAS made the trip possible. While there, Glenn presented a paper at the biannual meeting of Leadership and Management Studies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Accra, Ghana, “Friendship and Gender in Cultural Context: Implications for Management in African Organizational Settings.” Present and former members of the Culture and Psychology Reasearch Group (CPRG, for which Glenn is director) traveled to conferences to present papers relevant to the KASC mission.


PATRICK O. ASINGO, Fulbright PhD Student in Political Science, In February, 2008, Asingo received the Weston Award administered by the Institute of International Education (IIE), New York, USA. He presented a paper: ‘The Post-election Conflict in Kenya and its Implications for Democracy in Africa’ at the Spring Semester KASC Ujamaa Brownbag Series. In April, 2008 he received the Walter Thomson Graduate Scholarship Award administered by Pi Sigma Gamma Chapter, Department of Political Science, University of Kansas. This summer he presented a paper: ‘The Genesis of Post-election Conflict in Kenya and its Implications for Democracy in Africa’ at the KASC 2008 Summer Teacher Institute. Asingo has a forthcoming publication, ‘Policy Salience and Voter Turnout’ in the Baker Journal, University of California, USA.

J. CHRISTOPHER BROWN, Associate Professor of Geography and the Environmental Studies Program, presented a paper entitled, “Energy, Development, and the Morals of Ethanol Production in Brazil” at the Brazilian Studies Association Conference in March. The paper presented a preliminary framework for understanding both material and ethical dimensions of Brazil’s rise as an energy producer with sugar cane ethanol. The spatial patterns of sugar cane production are highlighted in addition to the potential for sugar cane and ethanol production to reproduce unjust race and ethnic relations between Brazil’s landowning class and rural workers.

RYAN GOOD, Graduate Student in Geography, re-
ceived an Oswald grant from KASC and spent July 2008 completing a research project on community-based development and women’s health issues in Mwanza, Tanzania. In April, he presented a paper titled “Poverty, Place, and Political Development in Postcolonial Kenya” to the Association of American Geographers national conference in Boston.


HILARY HUNGERFORD, FLAS Fellow, African Studies and PhD Student, Department of Geography, Hilary received several awards at the end of last semester; the Outstanding Thesis Award from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for her thesis on “Onitsha Market Literature and Sense of Place.” She also won the Howard Baumgartel Peace and Justice Award from CLAS. With this award she traveled to Niger in June and July to do pre-dissertation research on urban water issues.


MARY MBA, PhD in the Department of French and Italian received the University of Kansas International Students’ Scholarship Award in the spring.

GARTH MYERS, Professor of Geography and African & African American Studies, traveled to Tanzania, with NRC funding, to build relationships with several Tanzanian universities, as noted in the Note from the Director. On the trip, Myers also had the opportunity to observe the Tanzania parliament in session in Dodoma and, thanks to his friend, Hon. Parmukh Singh Hoogan, MP for Kikwajuni constituency in Zanzibar, the Speaker announced Myers’ name as being among the visitors. It must have been his time for parliaments, because in Dar es Salaam Myers had the pleasure of staying with Walter and Frida Bgoya, who treated him to a dinner with visiting Burundian member of the East African Parliament - at a Chinese restaurant, of course. Along with Shiferaw Assefa, Myers visited Dar’s prize Ethiopian restaurant, Addis in Dar, which Assefa judged as more than acceptably authentic. Earlier in the Spring, Myers presented the same paper three times - to the African Studies Center colloquium at Kansas State, the Geography department at Texas A+M, and the annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers in Boston - and it was subsequently published in Urban Geography. The best part of that is that the hard copy of the journal (yes, they still exist) chose one of Myers’ photographs for the cover shot. He says he won’t quit his day job, but it does mark quite a departure in his trajectory as a photographer. He also published a piece in Geography Compass,
and the chapter Francis Owusu and Myers wrote for the textbook, Cities of the World, on “Cities of Sub-Saharan Africa,” just came out. This Fall he’ll be presenting papers at the Royal Geographical Society, MAAAS, and ASA meetings.

ASHFORD NJOGU, Lecturer African & African American Studies, attended the African Language Teachers Association conference focusing on very important areas of foreign language teaching such as: standards, integration of language and culture in teaching, and use of technology in the classroom and assessment. In Tanzania, together with Garth and Muhajir, Njogu helped to create linkages with the Zanzibar State University and Zanzibar University that will strengthen an already dynamic Swahili summer study abroad program in Tanzania/Zanzibar for summer 2009. Njogu also benefited from summer travels in Kenya and Tanzania with purchases of Swahili books and other materials, which will enhance and strengthen KU Swahili courses.

EBENEZER OBADARE, Assistant Professor of Sociology, presented a paper titled: “A Sacred Duty to Resist Tyranny? The Catholic Church, Civil Society, and the Struggle for Democracy in Nigeria.” A version of the paper has been accepted for publication in a forthcoming special edition of Nova Religio The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions under the theme of New, Emergent, or Alternative Expressions of African Christianity.

HASSAN SACHEDINA, KASC and Department of Geography Visiting Scholar, was awarded a PhD from the University of Oxford in June, 2008. His thesis entitled “Wildlife is Our Oil: Conservation, Livelihoods and NGOs in the Tarangire Ecosystem, Tanzania” explored the politics and economics of conservation in Tanzania and will shortly be available as a download on the African Environments Programme site at Oxford University.

PHIA SALTER, Graduate Student in Psychology, was awarded one of the KASC’s Oswald Family Foundation Grants for applied health and development research in Africa. She is looking forward to Winter Break when she will travel to Northern Ghana to conduct field research on the relationship between the rising influence of Pentecostal-Charismatic churches and beliefs about health and family needs.

LINDA TSEVI, Fulbright graduate student from Ghana, was among six Fulbright students who were selected for a presentation on the panel session entitled “Citizenship Engagement in the Political Process” at the Washington D.C. Fulbright Enrichment Seminar.

KATE WEAVER, Assistant Professor of Political Science, will have her book, “Hypocrisy Trap: The World Bank and the Poverty of Reform,” published by Princeton University Press this fall 2008. She was invited in November 2007 to speak at a workshop on the “Everyday Politics of International Organizations” in Copenhagen, Denmark, and in this forthcoming academic year has been invited by numerous institutions in the UK, Norway, Denmark, and Australia to speak about her book as well as “crisis and change in global economic governance.” She also received a grant from the American Philosophical Society to conduct, archive, and interview research at the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (which she completed in June-July this summer).
Fall 2008 Calendar of Events

Go to www.kasc.ku.edu for more event information

September 5, 3:30-5:00 p.m.
KASC Welcoming Reception
Food & refreshments!
Bailey Hall basement, Room 10

September 10, 11:30-1:00 p.m.
“One Path to Africa,”
Ujamaa Brownbag;
Geoff Knight, KU Alum
Alcove J, Kansas Union

October 9, 3:30-5 p.m.
African Studies Seminar Series;
Shawn Leigh Alexander, Prof. of African & African American Studies, KU
International Room, Kansas Union

October 15, 7:00 p.m.
“Francois LeRoux, The Ha!Man Innovative Cellist from South Africa”
Musical Performance
Woodruff Auditorium, Kansas Union

October 22, 11:30-1:00 p.m.
“African Immigrants in Italy,”
Ujamaa Brownbag;
Conor Brown & Sarah Madden, KU Students
Alcove J, Kansas Union

October 23, 3:30-5:00 p.m.
“Race, Politics and History: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Encyclopedia Africana Project,”
African Studies Seminar Series;
James T. Campbell, Stanford University
International Room, Kansas Union

October 30, 3:30-5:00 p.m.
“The Deeper Meaning of Common Sense: Collective Violence and White Agrarian Elites in the American South and South Africa 1900-1927,”
African Studies Seminar Series;
John Higginson, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
International Room, Kansas Union

November 6, 3:30-5:00 p.m.
African Studies Seminar Series;
Liz MacGonagle, Prof. of History, and Kim Warren, Prof. of History
International Room, Kansas Union

November 10, 3:30-5:00 p.m.
African Studies Seminar Series;
Deborah Dandridge, Spencer Research Library
International Room, Kansas Union

November 17 12:00-5:00 p.m.
“African Diasporas & Development” Workshop/Symposium;
Ebenezer Obadare, Prof. of Sociology, Ben Page, University College London, and Claire Mercer, London School of Economics
Room 109, Bailey Hall

November 19, 11:30-1:00 p.m.
“Kansas Africa Relief,”
Ujamaa Brownbag;
Hannah Parkinson, KU Student
Alcove J, Kansas Union

November 20, 3:30-5:00 p.m.
“By the Coast of Elmina: Africans & African Americans and the Problem of Slavery,”
African Studies Seminar Series;
Randal Jelks, Prof. of
International Room, Kansas Union

Check in with us about two exciting film showings this semester!
“Lumumba” (In French with English subtitles) and “Daresalam” (In Arabic and French with English subtitles).

Brownbag Sessions: 11:30-noon for socializing & eating; lecture
KANSAS AFRICAN STUDIES CENTER STAFF

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Faculty Associate Director: Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka
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