In this, the Spring of Change, Hope, and Progress, we at KASC have been busy, like so many Africanists across the world, playing ‘Six-Degrees-of-Separation-from-Barack-Obama’ (I have three routes to him, with two or three degrees of separation, if anyone is really playing). However, we have also had a lot of more tangible investment of time into other transnational and diasporic connectivities, thanks to our Fall seminar series, “Come To Africa and It is Here: African-Americans and Africa,” led by Shawn Alexander, and our November Workshop on African Diasporas and Development.

I’d like to thank Shawn, along with Randal Jelks, Liz MacGonagle, Kim Warren, John Higginson (UMass), and Jim Campbell (Stanford) for their presentations in the former, and Ben Page (University College London), Claire Mercer (London School of Economics), Ebenezer Obadare, Martin Okpareke (JVC), Ceaser Mulonzi (Park University), Emmanuel Birdling, and Shiferaw Assefa for their participation in the latter.

Moreover, I’d like to thank the great many faculty, students, staff, and friends of the center who attended these events for making them so lively and thought-provoking. We are busy finalizing a pre-proposal for KU Center for Research for potential, eventual submission to National Science Foundation for a major grant built from the themes of the seminar and workshop.

We are also working on a much smaller grant money-wise, but one with much more bureaucra-cy attached, for the Africa Initiative of USAID’s Higher Education for Development, to once again work with the University of Zambia.

We completed a grant in collaboration with the other two NRC’s at KU, for an exciting program of potential events coordinated by the College’s Center for Global and International Studies in conjunction with the School of Journalism, on the theme of “Islam and Muslims in Global Context,”
as a part of the Social Science Research Council’s Academia in the Public Sphere grants program. We are very grateful to Bill Tsutsui for his efforts to coordinate the planning, and to write the grant. That is not all for coordination between the area studies centers, though, for we are working with three other NRCs, the Center for Latin American Studies, Title VI National Resource Centers and our Center for International Business and Education Research on a “revolutionary” semester this Spring. African Studies will be represented in the four planned events through participation from myself, Reinhold Janzen (Washburn University), Jimmy Adegoke (UMKC), and other players to be named later. We will also have a set of three Ujamaa Brownbag talks, our MLK Day Holiday Reception, and our Spring African Studies Council meeting, to look forward a bit.

Our faculty affiliates have not only made a habit of attending Center events, but they have continued to be productive for and responsive to the Center despite the miserable budgetary universe in which we now reside at KU. With the NRC grant steadying our unit’s budgetary course, we have at least been able to be a part of some faculty development. KASC was again well represented at the African Studies Association in the Fall, with Shiferaw, Emmanuel, Jane, Ebenezer, Liz, Randal, myself, Hannah Britton, Majid Hannoun, Gitti Salami, Folabo Ajayi, Sarah Madden, Conor Brown, Mary Sundal, and alums like Walter Booya and Sarah Smiley all in attendance — and with most of these also attending our third annual mini-reception.

The KASC graduate student community continues to grow. We have a record number of research grant proposals pending for our grad students’ fieldwork in Africa at present. This Spring brings the 2nd year of the African Studies Graduate Certificate’s required graduate seminar, and we look forward to a new incoming class of students working for the MA in African and African-American Studies as of Fall 2009. I encourage all eligible graduate students to apply for our FLAS fellowships for Summer 2009 and for the academic year 2009-10. Foreign Language and Area Studies is a big boost to our advanced language courses, as our language offerings continue to expand (new for this Spring: Amharic) and improve (we were the only National Resource Center whose Kiswahili students took the pilot test of the National African Language Resource Center’s STAMP program for learning assessment — three cheers for Ashford Njogu!).

Our undergraduate students continue to amaze me with their commitment, activism, and enthusiasm. I encourage both to consider the possibilities for study abroad in Africa this coming Summer, particularly with our programs in Morocco, South Africa, or Zanzibar.

Let me end with a note of thanks to our Center staff for their hard work. Our new student assistants, Cindy Martinez and Hilary Cook-Borg,
It has been one semester since I joined the team at KASC. I have greatly enjoyed working with everyone. Attending the seminar series, brownbags and special presentations and conferences has been very interesting. Not only have I learned a lot from each of the presenters, but I have also valued my interaction with Africanists across KU, the region, and our guests from abroad. In collaboration with other Area Studies Centers, we have lined up a range of interesting programming this coming semester and I look forward to seeing you! We are also looking forward to your participation next fall during our African Trade and Development Conference; the Eisenhower International Law Society and the Economics Department, African Consulates, and Business Entrepreneurs, who do business in Africa, will also be invited to participate. After all the logistics are finalized, we shall be sending out a call for papers. We encourage faculty and graduate students to consider participating.

We shall keep in touch by sending out updates periodically. You are also welcome to stop by the Center anytime. For our graduate and undergraduate students who are looking for a forum to present their research or to share their experiences on travel abroad to Africa, we would be glad to organize a brownbag session next Fall. Please contact me for further details.

Email: irungu@ku.edu
785-864-1064

A WORD FROM THE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

JANE IRUNGU

On November 19th, KASC hosted a special seminar featuring Professor Rob O’Donoghue from the Environmental Education and Sustainability Unit, Rhodes University, South Africa. Rob’s presentation, very interesting and well attended, was entitled: “Beyond a Preoccupation with Awareness and Values for Change-orientated Social Learning in a Living World of Eco-cultural Diversity at risk”
Revolution in Film Series

The Revolution Film Series, a prelude to an exciting upcoming revolution semester featured *Daresalam* (2000), directed by Issa Serge Coelo. We followed the changes in the lives and the relationship of two boyhood friends in a small Central African village, as they came of age under a post-colonial government that levied crippling taxes and legally robbed local farmers of their meager crops and transformed them from boys into men, from farmers into soldiers, and from villagers into revolutionaries.

The other film featured *Lumumba* (2000), directed by Raoul Peck. The struggle for independence is the central issue in this film about Patrice Lumumba, the first Prime minister of the Democratic Republic of Congo. It chronicles the movement for independence from Belgium, and the struggles that Lumumba went through to maintain stability following independence. Both films are available on DVD and can be purchased or borrowed from local public libraries or from our Ermal Garinger Resource Center at KU.

The “Ha” Man

*FRANCOIS LE ROUX*

We were fortunate to host one of the world’s most innovative cellists, Francois LeRoux, The Ha! Man from South Africa. In addition to performing at Woodruff Auditorium, KASC organized, for Francois, a clinic at South Junior High School in Lawrence—it was a blast!

African Studies Seminar Series

This is a thematic series exploring Africa related issues with presentations by local, regional and international expert scholars. In the fall, the seminars, held in collaboration with the Langston Hughes Center were directed by Shawn Alexander, Assistant Professor in African and African American Studies.

The series explored different topics under the theme “Come to Africa and it is Here!” The presentations featuring Africanists and African Americanists from KU and throughout the country, investigated the following questions:

How have African Americans viewed Africa? What has been the interaction of African-Americans with the continent since emancipation in the United States? Are there any similarities to the way post-emancipation America and colonial Africa related to the attempts of Africans and African Americans struggling for their social and political rights?

The series started with Shawn examining *An “Army of Christ:” T. McCants Steward and his Quest to Create a “Negro Nationality,”* while Liz MacGonagle & Kim Warren from KU’s Department of History gave a gripping presentation on slavery, its history and a contemporary connection under the title “From the Door of No Return to the Door of Return: Legacies of Slavery in West Africa.” The theme of slavery and its place in contemporary life in Africa and America was enhanced by Randal Jelks presentation “By the Coast of Elmina: Africans & African Americans and the Problem of Slavery.” Pro. John Higginson of the University of Massachusetts and Pro, James T. Campbell of Stanford University were guest speakers for the fall seminar series and their presentations attracted a sizeable number of faculty, staff and students from across disciplines.
The Kansas African Studies’ outreach activities for the fall semester went well. We had a great range of interesting activities. We started with the KASC presence at the Black Leadership Symposium on October 23rd, 2008; at the Kansas Union, sponsored by the University of Kansas. This program is designed to recognize high academic-achievement for African American students and provide tools for leadership and college preparation. The featured speaker for the symposium was Dr. Anthony Moore, Assistant to the President for Diversity & Cultural Competency & Professor of Education, Mid-American Nazarene University. Many students stopped by the KASC table to learn about Africa and what KASC does. This was followed by KASC attendance at the annual Kansas Council for the Social Studies conference Monday, October 27, 2008 at the Kansas Historical Society Complex and Kansas Museum of History in Topeka, Kansas. This year’s theme, “Kansas Social Studies: Contexts, Perspectives, and Practices,” attracted a number of high-quality presenters and vendors. My favorite presentation at this conference; if not the best, was presented by KU International Outreach Coordinator Tatyana Wilds: Teaching World Cultures through Art and Literature: Art, Politics, and Revolution – The Russian Avant-Garde Art and Literature. It was very interesting.

In addition, KASC co-sponsored an event with Oxfam America; a speaking tour that brought together two women who are leading the fight against climate change. This was held on the 6th of November, 2008 at the Kansas City, Missouri, public library. Ms Voré Gana Seck, the speaker from Senegal, and Executive Director of Green Senegal and president of the international NGO coalition CONGAD, highlighted the common ground between Senegal and the Gulf Coast of which the U.S. suffered the terrible flood. Sharon Hanshaw, executive director of Coastal Women for Change and one of Oxfam’s Sisters on the Planet, spoke about her personal losses from Hurricane Katrina, as well as the storm’s lasting effects on her home town of Biloxi, Mississippi.

Last but not least, Shiferaw Assefa, African and African Diaspora Studies Librarian, Loraine J. Haricombe, the Dean, Kansas University Libraries, and myself went to South Junior High in Lawrence on November 18th, 2008 and talked to the students about Africa. Shiferaw Assefa and I went back for a second visit on November 21st. During the two visits, we reached well over 150 students. The most recent visit to school was on December 5, 2008 by Shiferaw Assefa to Shawnee Heights Middle School at Topeka on behalf of KASC. He reported that there were 35 students in attendance. Our thanks to all who supported KASC Outreach this last semester!!
This was a one day conference, that attracted more than 80 faculty, staff and students. Examined the issues facing those of the African Diaspora in the US, Europe and around the world. We were fortunate to have Dr. Claire Mercer, (pictured on the top right), of the London School of Economics and Dr. Ben Page, University College London. Dr. Mercer presented a paper entitled "Distinctive Developments: Diaspora associations in Cameroon, Tanzania and Britain" while Dr. Page investigated "What Factors Shape the Character of Associational Life? Examples from the History of Hometown Associations in Cameroon and Tanzania 1916-2000." Other presenters included Ebenezer Obadare of KU’s Department of Sociology who examined "Transnational Resource Flow and the Paradoxes of Belonging: Rethinking Transnationalism, Remittances, State and Citizenship in Africa." The afternoon session was an exciting roundtable discussion with the Leaders of African Diaspora organizations and African immigrants in the US talking about their challenges, their successes, the mission of their social networks, and how academia and the social organizations can work together on social, research and development issues. Panelists for this session included: Martin Okpareke - Refugee Employment and Training Manager, Jewish Vocational Services, David C. Rine - Mission Staff, Sudan Sunrise and Professor Emeritus at George Mason University, Ceaser Mulonzi - Public Relations Officer, Organization of Kenyans in Kansas City plus KU staff Emmanuel Birdling and Shiferaw Assefa.

Ebenezer Obadare, Professor of Sociology at KU speaking at the Conference.

Makane Muhajir commenting after a talk with Diaspora Leaders.
KASC organized three brownbag sessions for the Fall semester. The first brownbag featured Geoff Knight “One Path to Africa.” Geoff’s presentation featured his relief work with an NGO in Tanzania. Visit www.wildorphans.org for more details.

The second brownbag was presented by Sarah Madden and Connor Brown-“African Immigrants in Italy: “The Land of Dreams.” They discussed experiences of Afro-Italians in Vicenza, Italy. Drawing from their recent research in the northeastern Italian town of Vicenza, the presentation focused on Afro-Italians and other transmigrants and the barriers they face in this “wealthy and industrious” area. Looking at different factors of the transmigrant or minority experience including race, language, documentation, and education level, we will discuss the politics of exclusion of “non-Italians” and the new communities formed by diverse groups of transmigrants in Italy.

The third brownbag featured Hannah Parkinson(in set), KU Student who studied abroad in South Africa during the summer of 2008. The two weeks she was there became a turning point in her life. After her return, she established Kansas Africa Relief, Inc, a non-profit organization. The goal of KAR is to provide financial assistance to existing South African community organizations, clinics, and networks as well as to increase public awareness of South Africa’s current social climate.

Hannah Parkinson is a senior at KU majoring in Psychology and Applied Behavioral Science with a minor in Women’s Studies.

Contact information: kansasafricarelief@gmail.com

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**UJAMAA BROWNBAG SESSIONS**

SWAHILI SUMMER 2009 STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM IN TANZANIA/ZANZIBAR

This will be a two week intensive study abroad course based in the city of Zanzibar’s historic stone town area which will also include field study of other parts of the city as well as several rural settings. Students will be required to enroll in one course: AAAS 320/520 – Language and Culture of Swahili Speaking Communities. Students will be in class most days alternating with sessions for field excursions to other parts of Zanzibar islands. In addition there will be guest lectures from prominent local scholars. The beginning of the course coincides with the famous Zanzibar International Film Festival, providing students with a lively and valuable opportunity to understand the multi-cultural, cosmopolitan, and globalized character of Zanzibar today. Students will be housed in a comfortable guest-house which will also serve as a classroom. From the guest-house, students can walk to dozens of affordable restaurants. Please visit http://www.studyabroad.ku.edu/~osa/programs/shortterm/zanzibar_tanzania.shtml

Program Dates: June 30th to July 16 2009
Application Deadline: March 1, 2009
Program Directors: Garth Myers [gmyers@ku.edu] and Ashford Njogu [anjogu@ku.edu]

Food at an open air market in Zanzibar
MY BOOK PURCHASE TRIP TO AFRICA

Shiferaw Assefa

Last summer, I took a trip to five African countries to purchase books for the KU Libraries with funding from the Kansas African Studies Center and the KU Libraries. The five countries I covered during this trip included Senegal, Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya, and Ethiopia. I also took advantage of my stopover in Johannesburg, South Africa to buy some books with the help of the sister of a KU student.

My first stop was in Senegal. There, I was able to buy books that were published by CODSERIA in 2008 at a very good discount and was also able to acquire a Wolof-English dictionary, reading materials for our Wolof students, and a considerable number of books on West African history and culture from one of the book stores in the city of Dakar-Claire Afrique. More importantly, I received a generous gift from the Department of Archives of Senegal that lists all of its publications of the documents it has possessed since the colonial period. This is particularly important to KU, due to the fact that Dakar used to house most of the French Colonial archival documents from most of French West Africa.

The next part of my trip took me to Mozambique. In Mozambique, I was able to purchase quite a number of books with the help of a Professor of History from that country who was introduced to me by KU History Professor Elizabeth MacGonagle. His local knowledge was extremely invaluable. The books purchased cover all areas of the Humanities and Social Sciences on Mozambique.

The next part of my trip took me to Tanzania. From Mozambique, I flew to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. I was met at the airport by Professor Garth Meyers and Makame Muhajar, a Ph.D. student in the Geography Department. I am very grateful to them as they were the ones who arranged my ground transportation and accommodations. All the books purchased in Tanzania were selected by the three of us. In addition to purchasing books and other materials for our Kiswahili language program, we were able to purchase the only book we were missing from the Shaaban Robert's collection acquired by our recently retired Africana Librarian Ken Lohrentz.

From Tanzania, my trip took me to Kenya. My stay in Kenya was short. However, I was able to buy a few books from the University of Nairobi bookstore since we usually get most of the books published in this country through our firm order from African Books Collective.

My final destination was Ethiopia. The intent of my travel to Ethiopia was to buy books and other materials for the teaching of our new upcoming Amharic Language class. I was able to acquire many materials for this effort.

In conclusion, my book purchase trip was successful in the sense that I was able to purchase books that wouldn't be available otherwise and that I also was able to get to know the people and the countries I have never traveled to. This helped me to get first hand information on the people and the countries I visited.

CONFERENCES

KASC was a co-sponsor of the 2008 Mid-America Alliance for African Studies conference held at the University of Missouri-St. Louis October 17-18, 2008. The theme of the conference was “Ties that Bind: Uniting Africans,” with a Keynote speech from Professor Toyin Falola, Frances Higginbotham Nalle Centennial Professorship in History at the University of Texas - Austin.

Be on the look out for MAAAS 2009...the announcement will be circulate soon

GARTH MYERS – Professor of Geography and AAAS and Director of KASC presented papers at the annual meetings of the Institute of British Geographers and Mid-America Alliance for African Studies in Fall 2008. He will also be presenting at the annual meeting in the Spring of 2009 for the Association of American Geographers. Garth also visited South Africa the first part of January to meet with colleagues at the University of Cape Town and our partners for the Summer Study Abroad program at Rhodes University. He hopes to be taking students to Grahamstown in June.

ELIZABETH MACGONAGLE – Associate Professor of History and AAAS -Liz presented a paper on “Conteining the Past in the Present: Identities in Ghana and the Diaspora 200 Years after the Abolition of the Slave Trade” at the African Studies Association of the United Kingdom annual meetings in September 2008. (The paper is part of a collaborative project on slavery and the Diaspora with Kim Warren in the History Dept.) Aside from attending the ASA-UK and ASA (US) meetings, this fall she devoted her sabbatical to a book project on history and heritage at several African sites of memory.

RYAN GIBB – graduate student in Political Science travelled to Uganda over the winter break to do preliminary field research for his dissertation and interviews with NGOs. He also attended the Southwestern Political Science Association meeting in Denver and the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago during the Fall semester. He gave talks on religious groups and East African Politics in Chicago and power relationships within Uganda at his talk in Denver. To support his research endeavours, Ryan has applied for the Fulbright IIE, Fulbright-Hays, the Social Science Research Council, and National Science Foundation for dissertation funding.

LINDA TSEVI – Graduate student and Fulbright Scholar from Ghana was awarded the 2008-2009 Achievement Scholarship by the University of Kansas, School of Education.

SHAWN ALEXANDER – Assistant Professor, AAAS, organized KASC’s Fall 2008 seminar series, “Come To Africa and It’s Here!” African Americans and Africa. He also presented a paper for the series entitled, “An Army of Christ: T. McCants Stewart and his quest to create a Negro Nationality.”

GLENN ADAMS – Associate Professor of Psychology is on leave during the 2008-2009 academic year, pursuing a fellowship at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. While there, he is working on a group project to articulate a cultural-psychological analysis of racism and oppression. He promises a report of his activities when he returns for Autumn semester, 2009.

Beverly Mack – Professor Mack presented a paper ‘American ‘Yan Taru’, A 19th Century Model for the 21st Century Muslimahs: How Historical Women’s Roles are Shaping Modern Islam’ for the KU Hall Center Gender Seminar series (30 Jan 2009), she also is presenting a paper at the Gender and Power in the Muslim World conference 6-7 March 2009 at the Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY. She will also speak for the Scholar’s Forum KC Rep production of Arabian Nights 14 Feb. 2009, and also attend the International Sufi Conference, Fez, Morocco in April 2009, as well.
The following is an abstract of his talk.

Professor O’Donoghue’s talk enlightened the audience on the diversity and difference of the world, while illustrating the intersecting stories in our knowledge practices. He presented research on indigenous knowledge practices and the sciences in a South African context opening up some of the plural richness there is in our ways of experiencing and knowing things amidst many intersecting perspectives that engage us as we strive to learn better ways of living and working in a changing world. Examples of situated knowledge practices (Indigenous Knowledge) and the more explanation-orientated insights that are extended by scientific institutions (Western Science) were examined within a realist perspective.

The presentation was centered on African illustrations of changing knowledge practices that have accompanied modernity. Contrary to a common assumption of differences between Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science, the examples were used to explore how stories of purposeful co-engagement in change-orientated learning, open up a reflexive space for re-appropriating capability in a warming world. Some examples included:

- soured milk (amasi) to supermarket yogurt
- fermented porridge (amahewu) to sports drinks and sandwiches
- wild rooibos tea (an herbal infusion) to a biodiversity economy of products for health and beauty

In each case, socio-culturally marginalized knowledge practices were explored in stories of changing socio-ecological practice and emergent risk. Today most of us, especially women in Africa, have no wish to go back to the ways of old but see these as reflexive capital for a creative re-orientation amidst what we now know and the challenges of more equitably and sustainable livelihoods in a warming world. The presentation concluded with materials and an open model of process for what change-orientated social learning might look like.

This presentation was particularly interesting not only to environmental educators but all individuals interested in sustainability practices and orientations beyond the environmental awareness mantra that has dominated discourses of the last 30 years.

Professor O’Donoghue can be reached at r.odonoghue@ru.ac.za
**SPRING 2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

GO TO WWW.KASC.KU.EDU FOR MORE EVENT INFORMATION

January 20, 3:30-5:00 PM:
KASC Welcoming Reception
Food & refreshments!
Bailey Hall basement, Room 10

March 18-21
Title VI 50th Anniversary, Washington DC

June 9-19
**Teacher Summer Institute**
“Teaching About Africa: Methods and Strategies”

**Ujamaa Brownbags**
This semester we will feature our students who travelled abroad in 2008. They will present about their research and/or humanitarian missions abroad.

February 11, 11:30-1:00 PM:
**Traditional Music in Modern Senegal**
by Dylan Basset
Graduate Student and FLAS Fellow
Alcove K, Kansas Union

March 4, 11:30-1:00 PM:
**Kenyan Kinship: Make a Difference Abroad Starting in Lawrence**
by Shanxi Upsdell
KU Student
Alcove G, Kansas Union

April 22, 11:30-1:00 PM:
**Niamey, Niger: Water in a Sahelian City**
by Hilary Hungerford Graduate student and FLAS Fellow
Alcove G, Kansas Union

**African Studies Seminar Series**

**Revolution Semester**

February 27, 3:00-5:30 PM:
The Commons, Spooner Hall, KU

March 9  Gender Seminar
Venue and Time: TBD

April 16, 3:00-5:30 PM:
“Changing the World: Revolutionary Thinking about the Environment”
The Commons, Spooner Hall, KU

**Workshops**

February 28, 8:30-4:00 PM:
“Art, Music, and Revolution”
K-16 Workshop
Spencer Art Museum, Reception Room (Rm 307)

**African Studies Council, 3:30-5- pm, May 1st 2009, Bailey 109**

**KUADDE**
March 4, 7:00 PM:
KU Percussion Ensemble
Murphy Hall, Rm 130
Contact: Dylan Bassett

May 2, 1:00-4:00 PM:
2nd Annual Arts & Culture Festival
Spencer Museum of Art

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

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Associate Director: Jane Irungu
Faculty Associate Director: Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka
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