

## Karen Tranberg Hansen retires

Karen Tranberg Hansen, a pathbreaking sociocultural anthropologist of continental Africa and a foremost economic and urban anthropologist, is retiring after a 30-year career at Northwestern.

An integral and valued member of the anthropology faculty,



she helped to establish the department as a leader in urban and Africanist anthropology while establishing herself as a popular teacher in both the department and the Program of African Studies.

Hansen received a PhD in anthropology from the University of Washington in 1979. For her dissertation she had studied associations, ethnicity, and class in

the context of Native Americans at work in Seattle; but her first love was southern Africa, and she redirected her research interests accordingly. After a brief period of teaching at the University of Minnesota, she joined the Northwestern anthropology faculty in 1982 as an assistant professor. She was tenured in 1989

and promoted to full professor in 1995.

During her career Hansen has examined aspects of economic production, consumption, and material culture in urban African societies. For more than 20 years she conducted meticulous field research in the same location—Lusaka,

Zambia—exploring the dynamics of work and the material life of people drawn into the urban center of one of the world's poorest economies.

Her book *Distant Companions: Servants and Employers in Zambia, 1900–1985* (Cornell University Press, 1989) was a pathbreaking historical ethnography of domestic servants in Lusaka—the most tangible but (at the time) least studied link between colonizers and their African workforce. Hansen's careful ethnography made the colonial household's omnipresent yet “invisible” workers visible, and in the process she reconfigured the anthropology of work in Africa. Two other books—*Keeping House in Lusaka* (Columbia University Press, 1997) and *African Encounters with Domesticity* (Rutgers University Press, 2002)—probed further into how Africans negotiate the worlds of modern employment and domesticity.

In *Salaula: The World of Secondhand Clothing and Zambia* (University of Chicago Press, 2000), Hansen subverted two dominant narratives about the secondhand clothing industry and the popularity of secondhand clothes among urban Zambians: the industry's depiction, on the one hand, as an artifact of charity, “recycling” the castoffs of the wealthy West; and, on the other, as the racket of intermediaries who collect the clothing from Western charities at no cost and sell it at profit in Africa. In fact, as *Salaula* showed, African consumers effectively refashion Western clothing styles, and their aspirations to be “modern” transform the transactional environments at every point.

While much of Hansen's research has emphasized the impact of globalization and economic change on vendors, traders, and other participants in the informal economy, more recently her work has explored how globalization is affecting Lusaka's young people and their chances of success. Her work on youth culture constitutes part of a collaborative interdisciplinary project—“Youth and the City”—with research ongoing at Lusaka, Hanoi, and Recife, Brazil. She synthesized

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## OPASA hosts spring colloquium on oral history and performance

A colloquium on May 11 will explore the art of staging oral history and the many possibilities it holds for research and teaching in the humanities and social sciences. Organized by the Oral History and Performance as Social Action Institute (OPASA) at Northwestern, the event will bring together graduate students from the Midwest to exchange ideas on topics that include the following:

- oral history, Africa, and the African diaspora
- oral history and activist practices
- performative and scholastic oral history methodologies
- oral history, nostalgia, and performance in relations to archival practices

Judith Hamera (performance studies, Texas A&M University) will present the opening keynote speech, and a practice-based workshop during the day will focus on the nature of the researcher's position in staging oral history. The colloquium will conclude with a performance of *Labor Rites*, a new work adapted and directed by D. Soyini Madison (performance studies and African American studies, Northwestern) and based on African American labor movement history and the oral histories of black labor activists in Chicago.

OPASA was formed in 2010–11 to serve as a resource for researchers who use oral history in examining the performatives of public dissent, social movements, and human rights activism in Africa and the black diaspora. Its goals are to foster acquisition of the skills required to conduct oral history interviews; to assist in the bringing of oral history interviews to public audiences via the screen or stage; and to encourage grant proposal writing for projects on oral history and performance as social action.

Given the research value of oral history—especially for scholars of Africa and the diaspora—and the general lack of formal courses on oral history research methodologies, the colloquium and the OPASA-sponsored workshops offered last fall meet an important need in the University community.

## Conference to explore “complex operations” in Africa

School of Education and Social Policy senior Mark Birhanu, in collaboration with the Program of African Studies, is organizing “Defense, Development, and Diplomacy: The Future of Complex Operations in Africa,” a May 18–19 conference at Northwestern that will bring together faculty, students, and practitioners to discuss complex operations in Africa.

As Birhanu writes in the conference program, “Africa can no longer be viewed in terms of isolation from the international community. Transnational forces—including organized crime, terrorism, refugee flows, and trafficking in drugs, arms, and human beings—have made Africa’s challenges the West’s challenges and vice versa.” These forces are the target of the so-called complex operations involving coordination between the US military and the US government’s civilian agencies overseas. They work together (in theory) to bolster civil society, promote infrastructure development, assist in providing social services, and help local governments assert control in conflict and postconflict situations.

The “Defense, Development, and Diplomacy” conference will have two main thrusts. The first will assess the place of complex operations within the larger US foreign policy agenda, considering the ethical, logistical, and tactical challenges of deploying complex operations in Africa. The other will focus on African perspectives on recent shifts in American foreign policy and the impact of these shifts on complex operations.

## Books in African languages added to online catalog

The Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies has more than 20,000 books in African languages. The only means of access to these books has been a card catalog and a bibliography published by the Program of African Studies in the early 2000s.

But now the African language book collection is becoming accessible in NUcat, Northwestern's online library catalog ([nucat.library.northwestern.edu](http://nucat.library.northwestern.edu)), and the cataloged books are being

shelved in the stacks by call number. The collection will circulate both locally and through interlibrary loan.

David Bade's *Books in African Languages in the Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies, Northwestern University: A Catalog*, published in three volumes in the PAS Working Paper Series, won the African Studies Association's Conover-Porter Award for excellence in bibliography and reference works in 2002. Books in the bibliography form the core of the first African language books to be cataloged in NUcat, and more titles are being added continually.

Visit [www.library.northwestern.edu/libraries-collections/evanston-campus/africana-collection/collections](http://www.library.northwestern.edu/libraries-collections/evanston-campus/africana-collection/collections) or e-mail [africana@northwestern.edu](mailto:africana@northwestern.edu) for more information.



The Herskovits Library's books by Ngugi wa Thiong'o in Kikuyu or Swahili, for example, are now cataloged in NUcat and may be found on open shelves alongside his works in English.

## Grants offered for faculty research

The purpose of PAS Faculty Research Grants is to encourage and support faculty research and creative endeavors. Grants are meant to supplement funding from department and other University resources; in the future, they may be used to develop external funding proposals.

Grants of up to \$4,000 will be awarded for a maximum period of one year, with any unused funds reverting to the general research fund. Recipients are expected to disseminate the results of their work via publication in refereed outlets or through a medium appropriate to the work.

Funds may be used for research and scholarly projects, instructional impact projects, or professional development activities. They may defray the costs of salaries and benefits for students, technicians, and other nonfaculty project personnel and the costs of project-related supplies and equipment, photocopying, postage, and other miscellaneous costs. Funds may not be used for faculty salaries, consultants' fees, office equipment or computers, or travel that is not directly related to the project.

Full-time Northwestern faculty are eligible to apply. Junior (pretenure) faculty receive preference, and only one grant proposal per applicant per academic year is permitted. Proposals are due May 1.

## Longtime ISITA collaborator named Buffett Visiting Professor

Scott Reese, a historian of Islam in Africa and the western Indian Ocean, will deepen his longtime association with ISITA during spring quarter, when he is at Northwestern as the Roberta Buffett Visiting Professor of International Studies.

Reese, an associate professor of history at Northern Arizona University, has a particular interest in comparative history that breaks down many of the current regional and geographic categories. His research emphases are comparative Sufism, modern Muslim discourses of reform, and the construction of world systems in fact and in imagination since 1500.

As Buffett Visiting Professor, Reese is teaching Revolution and Reform in Islam, an upper-division undergraduate seminar in the Department of Religious Studies. He delivered an April 18 talk at PAS titled “An Innocent Amusement: Tambura, Sufism, and the Public Spiritual Sphere in 20th-Century Aden.” His Buffett Lecture on May 21 is titled “A Leading Muslim of Aden: Personal Trajectories, Imperial Networks, and the Construction of Community in Britain’s Indian Ocean Empire.”



Reese has been closely involved with ISITA since its founding in 2001. He attended the first ISITA colloquium organized with Ford Foundation funding

and edited the resulting volume of papers, published as *The Transmission of Learning in Islamic Africa* (Brill, 2004). He serves on the editorial board of *Islamic Africa*, a collaborative journal of ISITA and Northwestern University Press. For the past year Reese has worked with ISITA to develop funding to collaborate with the Centre for Contemporary Islam at the University of Cape Town on research about global networks of Islamic knowledge.

Reese’s first book, *Renewers of the Age: Holy Men and Social Discourse in Colonial Benaadir* (Brill, 2008), explored the Islamic social history of the Horn of Africa and the role of religious discourse as social discourse in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It examined how Muslim religious scholars used ideas of religious reform to help fellow believers cope with encroaching European imperial rule. Reese’s current research broadens this interest in the role of Muslim religious discourse in mediating the social consequences of empire. Focusing on the British settlement of Aden in present-day Yemen, it explores how Muslims across the British empire fashioned community through the commonality of faith.

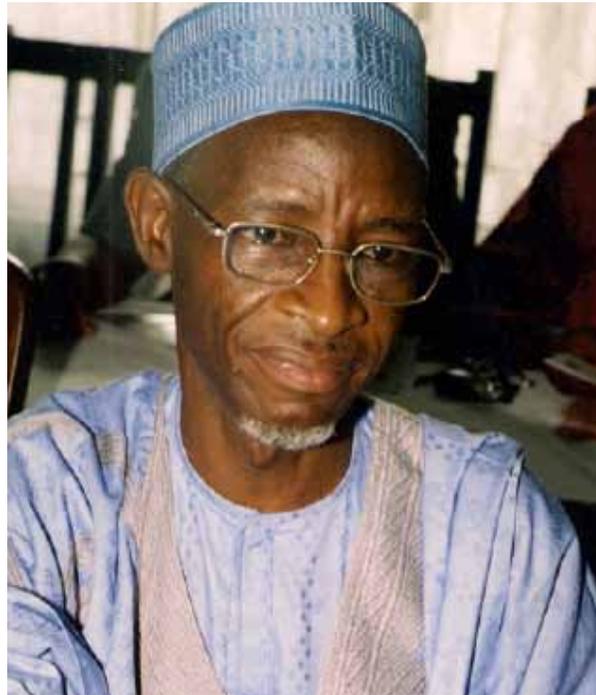
In addition to insights into the social impact of empire on day-to-day lives, Reese’s latest work also expands the boundaries of area studies. It demonstrates the dynamic nature of interactions across what academics often treat as impermeable boundaries in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia. The webs and networks created by empire facilitated and intensified the interregional connections between Muslims that predated European colonialism. The elaborate and rapid networks of empire created in the 19th century led to a more horizontally integrated and intellectually engaged global community of Muslims by the 20th.

While working on a second monograph tentatively titled *Imperial Muslims: Islam, Community, and Authority in the Imperial Indian Ocean 1839–1937*, Reese has also published a number of scholarly articles based on his latest research. The most recent is “Salafi Transformations: Aden and the Changing Voices of Religious Reform in the Interwar Indian Ocean,” which appeared in the winter 2012 issue of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*.

## ISITA hosts visit by Fulfulde and Hausa poetry expert

This spring ISITA welcomes Mallam Mohammed Bashir Abubakar from Yola, Nigeria, for a three-week visit starting April 23. A poet and scholar, Abubakar is dedicated to preserving the oral and written traditions of poetry in Fulfulde, his native language. He offered presentations on these rich traditions at events on April 25 and 30.

Bashir Abubakar grew up in a prominent family of Islamic scholars in northeastern Nigeria's Adamawa State. He began his religious training at age 5, learning the tenets of Islam and recitation of the Qur'an. In the Islamic learning tradition known in Fulfulde as *jangirde jawleeji*, he later studied classical Islamic law texts, Qur'anic exegesis, theology, and Arabic language and literature. He also took interest in Fulfulde poetry, composing and collecting poems in both Fulfulde and Hausa, including popular songs and verses written in the 19th century. He studied accounting at Ahmadu Bello University from 1974 to 1977 and trained as an Islamic banker at the Faisal Islamic Bank of Kibris. He currently serves as bursar of Adamawa State University, chair of the University of Adamawa mosque committee, and deputy chief imam of the University Juma'at Mosque.



Mallam Mohammed Bashir Abubakar (left) and a sample Fulfulde Ajami manuscript from his collection (below)

Bashir Abubakar's recitations of Fulfulde poems have been recorded and issued on CD, and those related to Islam have been broadcast on radio stations in northern Nigeria. Recitations of his Hausa poems have been heard on the BBC's Hausa Service. He has served as poet laureate at several public events in Nigeria's Adamawa State, including the 2003 golden jubilee of Adamawa's traditional ruler (an emir), an international conference held for its bicentennial in 2009, and the installation of the new emir in 2010.

He is coauthor of *Fulfulde Poems*, an anthology sponsored by the Organization of the Bicentenary of the Sokoto Caliphate c. 1804–2004. Published in 2004, the anthology has been translated into English and French.



A SAMPLE PAGE OF FULFULDE AJAMI MANUSCRIPT FROM THE COLLECTION OF MALLAM BASHIR ABUBAKAR YOLA, ADAMAWA STATE OF NIGERIA

## Community news

**Abhit Bhandari**, an undergraduate majoring in African studies and political science, has received a Princeton in Africa fellowship. The PiAf program matches young leaders with service opportunities through fellowships with organizations in many fields—from public health to conflict resolution. With his yearlong PiAf fellowship Bhandari will work for the United Nations World Food Program in Dakar, Senegal.

Alumna **Deidre Crumbley** is the author of *Saved and Sanctified: The Rise of a Storefront Church in Great Migration Philadelphia* (University Press of Florida, 2012). The book is Crumbley's ethnography of the female-founded storefront

church in which she was raised. While a PhD student at Northwestern, Crumbley studied gender and power in Africa and its diaspora, conducting anthropological field work among the Aladura in Nigeria. She is now an associate professor of Africana studies at North Carolina State University.

**Jonathon Glassman**, professor of history, received the 2011 Martin A. Klein Prize in African History from the American Historical Association for his book *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar* (Indiana University Press, 2011). The book had already received attention from Glassman's Northwestern and University of Chicago colleagues,

who convened a Red Lion Seminar at the Aberdeen Tap in West Town to discuss the book last fall. In March Glassman presented "Creole Identity and the Search for Nativist Authenticity in 20th-Century Zanzibar: The Limits of Cosmopolitanism" at a conference at Cambridge University.

Northwestern law professor **Juliet Sorensen** and four law students went to Bonga, Ethiopia, in March to conduct a site visit for the Northwestern Access to Health Project, an interdisciplinary partnership between the law school's Center for International Human Rights and the Feinberg School of Medicine's Center for Global Health.

**Arthur Stinchcombe**, professor of sociology emeritus, continues to add to his curriculum vitae. The retiree's latest addition is a paper titled "The South African Labor Market as an Incentive System for White Bilingualism."

History PhD student **Marlous Van Waijenburg** will attend the Cliometrics Conference at the University of Arizona in May to present "Structural Impediments to African Growth? New Evidence from Real Wages in British Africa, 1880–1965." In July she will travel to South Africa for the World Economic History Congress, where she will present "The Comparative Nature and Effects of Fiscal Policies in French and British Africa, 1880–1960." She plans to give two other papers at European venues in the fall.

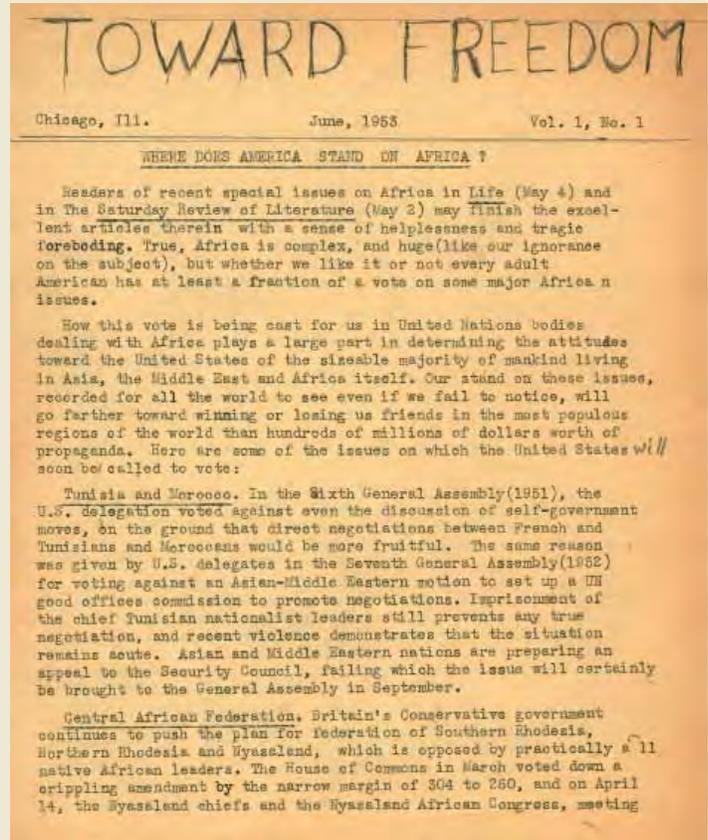
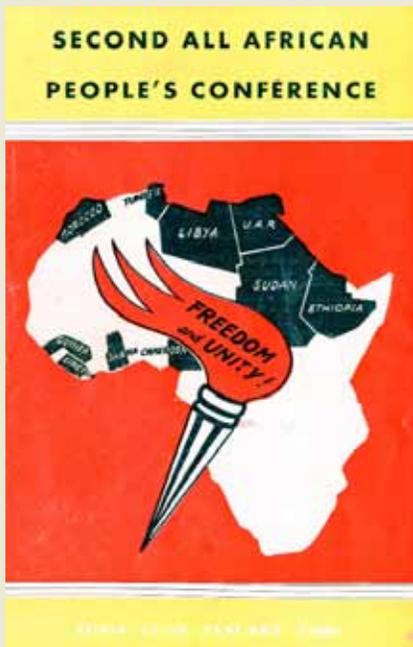
## Samia Nkrumah speaks in Evanston

Samia Yaba Nkrumah, the only daughter of Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, came to Chicago in April to participate in the three-day 12th World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates. She included Northwestern in her visit, presenting a talk on "Ghana's Democracy and Economic Development" at the Hotel Orrington on April 26. The event was cosponsored by Northwestern's Buffett Center for International and Comparative Studies and the University of Chicago's Center for International Studies.

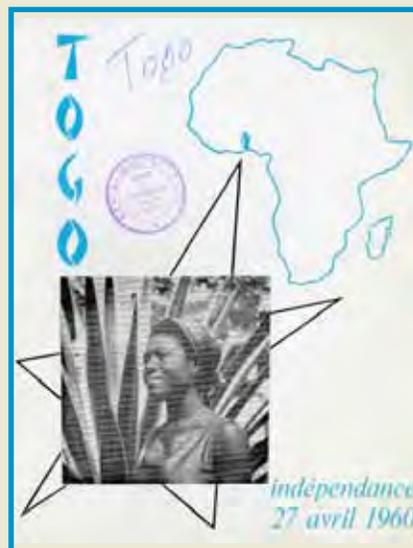
Samia Nkrumah became active in Ghanaian politics in the 1990s, following a long absence from Ghana in the decades since a 1966 coup d'état toppled her father's government. In the country's 2008 parliamentary election, she won the seat representing the Jomoro district (where her father had grown up), and in 2011 she became the first woman to chair a major political party in Ghana. She is a founding member of Africa Must Unite, an organization dedicated to improving life in Ghana and in Africa as a whole, with an emphasis on health care, the environment, schools and education, infrastructure, social justice, and women's empowerment.

# Items featured in exhibit recall social action, independence struggles of last century

Materials drawn from the papers of William Bross Lloyd Jr. and the newsletter he established in 1952, *Toward Freedom*, will be on display in the Melville J. Herskovits Library through the end of August. The exhibit features correspondence between Lloyd and several prominent figures from the 1940s through the 1960s, such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Hubert Humphrey, Associated Negro Press founder Claude Barnett, Kenyan statesman Tom Mboya, and American socialist Norman Thomas. Also on view are pamphlets and flyers from around the world that relate to independence movements and liberations struggles, including a few announcements for public events in Chicago.



Clockwise from above: Prototype and typescript for the first issue of *Toward Freedom*; page from a commemorative brochure of Togo's independence day, April 27, 1960; leaflet outlining the agenda for the Second All African People's Conference, Tunis, January 25-29, 1960



## Hansen retirement, *continued from front page*

the results of this work in a major edited volume, *Youth and the City in the Global South* (Indiana University Press, 2008).

Hansen has received great acclaim in anthropology and African studies. For her books she received the Conrad M. Arensberg Award from the Society for the Anthropology of Work (1997), the Anthony Leeds Prize from the Urban Anthropology Society (2001), and the Society for Economic Anthropology Book Award (2003). She has also garnered prestigious fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities (1997–98), the Rockefeller Foundation (1998), and the Woodrow Wilson Center (2005–06).

In her home department Hansen has had a profound impact on both undergraduate and graduate programs. Her courses at all levels are known for their challenging content, exposing students to current work in African studies and to economic and urban anthropology. She has offered an Africa-themed freshman seminar almost every year since the early 1990s. The 200-level course she created, Contemporary African Worlds, is a core requirement for the adjunct major in African studies and routinely attracts 50 to 80 students.

For years she taught two graduate core courses in economic anthropology and political anthropology, and over the span of her career nine of her students received their PhDs. Three of her senior graduate students will finish in the next two years.

Hansen has helped transform understandings of informal urban economies in Africa and the developing world, and her commitments to rigorous methodological training, careful field research, and excellent teaching have inspired students, faculty colleagues, and staff in PAS, anthropology, and other Northwestern departments and programs. We wish her a prosperous and rewarding adventure in retirement!

*Contributing to this article were Hansen's colleagues Helen Schwartzman, LaRay Denzer, Caroline Bledsoe, Robert Launay, and William Leonard.*

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