

New York African Studies Association Conference Abstracts 2009 Annual Meeting Hosted by Syracuse University

Abdul-Qadir, Yusuf (Syracuse University) Re-Examining Conflict and International Intervention in the Horn of Africa

With the fall of the Barre Regime in 1991, Somalia has been a state plagued by civil war. The last 17 years have seen a rise of political instability, seceding states (such as Somaliland and Puntland), long lasting border disputes (primarily with the neighboring state of Ethiopia), concerns of potential connections to Al-Qaeda as a state sponsoring and safe haven for terror, etc. In response, the international community has engaged in several campaigns of intervention throughout the years. Each, having failed at addressing concerns of an ever growing humanitarian crisis, sustainable security, claims of piracy and the fabrication of terrorism, economic instability, and legitimate forms of political governance, leads to the urgent (and necessary) re-examination of the history of conflict, the potential for a long lasting resolution, and the advent of vibrant democratic institutions in the Horn of Africa. It is when this is done, that we may be able to see through the lack of political will of the international community in addressing this crisis. And so rather than looking for solutions outward, the solutions to these 18 years of conflict must be discovered within Somalia, but must be supported by the international community with patience to permit longstanding stability over temporary and expedient "resolutions."

Agron, Carissa (Iona College) The Diaspora to Spanish America: Puerto Rico as a Case Study

This study provides a detailed examination of the African communities of Puerto Rico from 1820 to 1873. It utilizes both primary and secondary sources to consider the role played by both slaves and free blacks in the island's economy during this period. It also measures the degree to which developments in Puerto Rico both matched and deviated from the patterns identifiable in other Spanish possessions in the New World.

This paper will demonstrate that to some degree Puerto Rico followed the patterns identifiable in other territories'. It had the same administrative system, the same class structure, and came under the same influence of the Catholic Church. However, there was significant deviation from the patten identifiable elsewhere. These were due to the late development of commercial interests, the presence of an unusually high percentage of free blacks, and the massive immigration of Europeans starting the late 18th Century.

Aiwuyor, Wilson (Syracuse University) Towards a Socially Relevant Science and Technology Education in the Proposed United States of Africa: Examining the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences

The challenge of Africa's socio-economic transformation has defied many solutions, including foreign aid and assistance. According to the 2007 report of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (a program aimed at reducing problems such as poverty,

hunger, and diseases in the Third World), African countries have not made sufficient progress toward reducing extreme poverty. A UN report in 2005, *A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*, notes that in confronting the challenges of development, “no nation can now afford to be without access to credible, independent science and technology research capacity.” The New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), the development pillar of the African Union, pursues a continental policy framework to boost African countries’ science and technology capacity for socio-economic development. (In congruence with) Within the NEPAD framework, the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences has set out to overhaul Africa’s mathematics and science education.

Established in 2003 by a South African born Cambridge University physicist, Neil Turok, AIMS’s mission is to train world class scientists and researchers capable of solving Africa’s socio-economic problems. This Pan-African institution seeks to build its Cape Town prototype throughout Africa. Its newest center was opened in Abuja, Nigeria in 2008. World renowned theoretical Physicist, Stephen Hawking says AIMS “will bring Africa to a cutting edge of science.” AIMS’s viability to impact Africa’s socio-economic development deserves study. In my research, which is on-going, I will attempt to answer the following questions: how viable is AIMS to achieve the goal of overhauling science and technology education and research in Africa? What distinguishes AIMS from other science and technology development programs that had existed in Africa? How significantly can AIMS’s output impact socioeconomic transformation in Africa over the next 25 years?

Akonor, Kwame (Seton Hall University) African Economic Institutions

African Economic Institutions examines the history and structures of Africa’s three largest international economic organizations. This paper will give a critical analysis of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development. While the historical context of the creation of each organization is examined, the paper also pays close attention to the current activities and discourses within these institutions. The paper’s main point of departure is a critical analysis on the embrace of economic neoliberalism within these institutions and assesses the impacts that these policies will have on these organizations and the citizens that they seek to serve.

Aladese, Oluwaseun (New Jersey Institute of Technology) The African Assignment: Utilizing Events as platforms for Creative Clusters

African Student groups on campuses promote the socio-cultural heritage of the African people and act as a unifying forum for African students. Like any other group, they are faced with limitations ranging from awareness and membership to participation, funding, and the execution of projects of optimal impact. With a vision of fulfilling the African Assignment, the CONNECT Network was formed by some college students in New Jersey in an attempt to address the aforementioned limitations. This paper outlines the objectives of the network, the means through which it hopes to achieve them, and the imperative for a movement of African youths in the Diaspora who are sincerely interested in addressing issues bordering

on African transformation in the 21st century. To this end, it describes the vision of 'The Reawakening' which was held to re-sensitize African students to their role in elevating the continent of Africa. It also details how events that followed from it have led to a collaborative representation of African students from colleges across New Jersey.

Using studies in creative collaboration and qualitative research in participant observation, the presentation recognizes the use of events as a most effective tool for developing creative and functional clusters of people. It also serves as a stimulus for conceptualizing the ways in which the events we hold can better serve as a avenue to gather people of like minds into an atmosphere that promotes the precepts of service, scholarship and creativity. Thus, the question we are faced with is, how do we convert these arenas where we convene into avenues that best explore our interests in various fields as well as our disciplines across the Sciences, Arts, Commerce. The presentation proposes some solutions and looks to the ideas and input of all present.

Anukware Adzima (Binghamton University) Encouraging Local Participation: The Role of Ghanaian Languages in the 2000 And 2008 General Elections

This paper asserts that the use of Ghanaian languages--Twi, Fante, Ewe, Ga/Adagme, Gonja, Dagarre/Waale, Dagbani, Nzema, etc.-- to encourage local/grassroot participation in recent general elections (2000-2008) in Ghana affected the results. Thanks to the intervention of media organizations, PVOs and NGOs, Ghanaians benefitted from and contributed to the general election debate and specific issues: Ghanaians followed the electioneering process on radio stations; they called into radio programs to state their views on issues affecting them; text messages about and audio recordings of candidates' campaign messages crisscrossed the length and breadth of the country via technology; public opinion polls and surveys were commissioned by the political parties, media organizations, NGOs and PVOs. The paper will analyze the impact of these indigenous Ghanaian languages in all these activities on the election results. The paper also draws on the ideas of John Dewey (1897), Emmanuel Gyimah-Boadi (1999), Beban Sammy Chumbow (2005), Y. Z. Ya'u (2006) and other scholars to state that it is time Ghanaian politicians distinguished despair from hope, aspiration from achievement, exploitation from justice, and war from peace when pursuing policies and strategies to solve the country's problems and develop it (Fidelis Akagha 1985). The paper advocates a more extensive use of Ghanaian languages in education (formal and informal), and in Ghanaian knowledge production and management. It argues that even if our policies are 'good', because Ghana is multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual, the privileged status of English and its exclusive use will exacerbate our problems. The implementation of our 'good' policies with English will continue to be difficult, time-consuming and will be at the expense of local cultures, thus reducing rural participation.

Asumah, Seth N. (SUNY Cortland) Islam, Rentier Nation States and Democracy in Africa

Islam and Islamization of the nation states in Africa present a challenge to the democratization process on the continent. Concomitant with religion, Islamist movements, terrorism, petroleum products, petrodollars, praetorianism, the state of the African economy, and the anthropomorphic nature of the nation states tend to ignite debates over

rentierism and the democratization process in predominantly Islamic nation states. In this presentation, Asumah would argue that contrary to the position of some Western observers that rentierism distorts the democratization process in nation building because it enhances hegemony maintenance by depoliticizing and pacifying the general populace through the provision of socio-economic programs, Islam combined with rentierism could produce reasonable stability for limited democracy to ensue in predominantly Islamic African nation states. Case studies from Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria and Libya will be used to support the conceptual framework for analysis.

Baldwin, Neil (SUNY Cortland) BRICS and Competition in Africa

The acronym BRICS stands for the alliance between Brazil, Russia, India, China and recently South Africa. The BRICS theory alludes to the possibility that a new world order will seize power over trade relations, energy reserves and dominant in military strength. By 2050, the BRICS theory assumes world power will be shifted from America to the comrades of the BRICS alliance. It is very important in regards to the transformation and reconstruction of Africa to understand the amount of influence BRIC has over Africa and what plans BRIC has developed to shape Africa into an energy outlet to fuel the BRIC allies. I would like to present a paper based on the influence of BRIC within the boundaries of Africa. With nonrenewable fuel sources being depleted and as people from around the world become more aware of the energy crisis it becomes critical to understand the intentions that BRIC has for its African allies. What development's can BRIC provide its African allies? How will political ideologies in Africa change? What position of power will South Africa have in the future for African affairs and relations with its BRIC members? Will Africa truly benefit from its relations with BRIC or will there be consequences?

Balkaran, Stephen (Central Connecticut University) China and the Scramble for Africa: Colonialism in the 21st Century

The story of exploitation in Africa is nothing new, in fact it can be traced back to the dawn of time, Colonialism and Post Colonialism have shaped and will continue shape Africa's socio-economic climate. In the 21st century just as the 20th century Africa has continued to be in the hands of economic exploitation at the hands of the world powers. This paper attempts to analyze China's role in Africa, can free trade and globalization undermine democracy and justice for Africans?

Barabin, Alexandria (Syracuse University) Representations of Blackness in the Canadian Multicultural State

Canada is a complex geo-political space defined by two European settlements and is further problematized by its proximity to a porous United States border, its policy on multiculturalism and its growing migrant population. Just as complex are the racial, social and cultural identities of Black people in Canada. Primarily seen as recent migrants from the Caribbean, Black people in Canada are commonly asked "Where are you from, from?" as though their history in Canada is only contemporary and does not span the course of hundreds of years, nor could their presence be connected to their citizenship as Canadians.

Even in a country where multiculturalism is written into the governmental policies, Blackness is seen as a homogeneous, static, and foreign "other." They are also "othered" or invisible in Afro-Diasporic discourse. Canada, and as a result the Black people there, is overlooked, under-examined, and canonized in the literature as a U.S. Black historical metaphor for freedom.

So how then is Blackness navigated or negotiated in Canada? So little is known about the contemporary lives of Canadians from around the African Diaspora or how, if at all, those different cultures (re)form representations of Blackness in Canada. The literature reflects a focus on historical establishments and interventions, which are crucial, but lack an analysis on how those histories are impacting the status of the people and the culture today. This research will examine how Black artists appropriate their racial and cultural identity in a multicultural landscape in Toronto, one of the largest urban cities housing a significant Black/African Canadian population. Additionally, Canada is not regularly discussed as a site of cultural engagement in the literature on the African Diaspora. This research also seeks to add to the discourse on global blackness, using Toronto, Canada as a racialized, interstitial, geo-political space. This will attempt to expand the narratives of peoples of African descent in the Americas, and analyze Black cultural productions in Canada as well as its relationship to identity in the Diaspora.

Bekerie, Ayele (Cornell University) How a Christian King of Ethiopia Saved Islam: Towards a Model of Interfaith Relations

Archival documents state that the first followers of the Prophet Mohammed avoided religious persecution in Mecca by fleeing to Ethiopia in the seventh century AD. At the court of an Ethiopian king in Aksum, they made a plea for sanctuary. The king granted them one. While in Ethiopia, they were permitted to freely practice their religion. Some even say that they managed to build one of the earliest Mosques in the vicinity of Aksum in Ethiopia. The purpose of this paper is to reflect on the relevance and implications of the king's gesture to the believers of Islam, particularly in the context of religious tolerance and reciprocity. It also reflects on the history of the Ethiopian Tewahedo Orthodox Church.

Bernal, Indira Sanchez (El Colegio de Mexico) Democracy in Morocco: A Grassroots View

Morocco is a country which mixes different cultural influences: geographically it is located in the African continent, it also has an Arabian and Muslim culture because of the Arab conquest, it has an amazing heritage, and it has a French and Spanish influence by the effect of the colonization. Nowadays the social and political structure is a reflex of these mixed cultures. Over the years the Moroccan State has been structured like a centralist State, supported by a monarchical regime –Moroccan salafism and sherifiane heritage. On the top of the system is the King, who is helped by a traditional administration, called *Makhzen* – conformed by Ulamas, notables, traders and family of the King – an omnipresent and not institutionalized organization, which helped the King to control the local and rural space, through the Islamic religion. At the end of the colonial power and, as a consequence of the European and American influence, the Moroccan Monarchy settled up several institutions

such as ministries, elections and political parties. However these institutions have been used by the Monarchy to empower its political influence and not to have a political division of power, where the Moroccan people can participate of their government.

Far from the arguments which adhere to the idea that political parties can open the way to a liberalization of the political system, this proposal supports the argument that paradoxically, the survival and stability of the Moroccan monarchy highly depends of the empowerment of the political parties. In fact, this is the reason why other sorts of political organization are developing in Morocco out of the party system in order to counterweigh the monarchy and empower the Moroccan people, mainly if we think that the Moroccan political system is a monarchy that defines itself like constitutionalist, muslim and democratic, but in the practice it has absolutists (or even patrimonialists) tendencies. In sum, this essay pretends to analyze how the euro-american discourse about the democracy has influenced the political structure of the Moroccan regime obscuring/excluding other forms of political organization and participation mainly based on muslim political thought different from the classic political parties theories.

Binoy, Parvathy (Syracuse University) Exploring the unevenness of the 'non-interference': Beijing in 21st century Africa

This presentation will delve into the non-interference policy in China's trade, diplomacy and relations with countries across Africa and discuss the debate of ethics, militarism and democracy that is raging as a result. Taking the discussion beyond that of Sudan, Zimbabwe and Angola which have recieved much media attention in this debate, my presentation will discuss case studies in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia, Zambia and South Africa where the geographies of "non-intereference" are very uneven and contextual to state, legal and economic factors, along with the lanscape of civil society mobilization. Finally, the presentation will make recommendations for alternative frameworks, understandings that could inform the debate/dialogue surrounding China's rising presence in continent.

Botchway, Karl (City University of New York) and Jamee Moudud (Sarah Lawrence) - Examining the Prospect for a New Developmental State in Africa

Beginning in the 1980s when the New Right became very powerful, it did so in the wake of the most major worldwide economic crisis since the Great Depression. For adherents of the New Right their basic claim was that interventionist state policies in the quarter of a century following World War II were responsible for that crisis. Today's world exhibits major symptoms of another worldwide crisis in which a large number of people confront the multi-pronged menace of unemployment, starvation, and environmental destruction. Isn't it ironical, since this crisis should not be happening given that neo-liberalism has been the conventional wisdom for almost a quarter of a century? The failings of neo-liberal economic policies have revived yet again questions about the role of the state in development and more specifically, the search for a developmental state. A number of important dissenting neoclassical authors such as Joseph Stiglitz, Dani Rodrik, and Paul Krugman can be added to the list of scholars calling for state intervention. For these scholars, however, it is important

to note that the thrust of their policy proposals does not imply a rejection of the neoclassical paradigm. Perhaps, Rodrik sums up their position best when he states that: Adopting this approach does not mean abandoning mainstream economics - far from it. Neo-liberalism is to neo-classical economics as astrology is to astronomy. In both cases, it takes a lot of blind faith to go from one to the other. Critics of neoliberalism should not oppose mainstream economics - only its misuse.

It is possible to read Rodrik as being too sanguine in his assessment of neoclassical theory. As most neo-classical economists are bound to argue, the case for interventionist policies in the neoclassical paradigm can only be made in the presence of what are called market imperfections or market failure. This notion of market imperfections or market failure was the core neoclassical argument for state intervention in the immediate postwar period. In this paper we argue that the underpinning argument about imperfect markets is deeply problematic theoretically, empirically and historically. As we will show, rooting state interventionist policies in this type of micro-foundation produces an internal contradiction that, ironically, can only be resolved by advocating *laissez faire!* In this paper we want to situate the discussion of the developmental state in the context of Africa because it is the region of the world that has been marginalized the most under neo-liberalism and is therefore in greatest need of a new development strategy.¹ However, it is our hope that the core arguments can be applied to other parts of the developing world. The paper has four main goals. First, we argue that a more dispassionate appraisal needs to be made of the state-led developmental strategy of the pre-IMF period in order to gauge its strengths and weaknesses. Second, we argue that a discussion of new forms of state interventionist strategies has to be based on a very different theory of competition rooted in the tradition of classical political economy, especially Marx, and Sir Roy Harrod. Third, we challenge the "impossibility thesis" which essentially takes the view that efficient developmental states à la East Asia cannot be produced elsewhere in the developing world, notably Africa. Finally, we argue that the new developmental state must be anchored within a robust civil society that sees the social, economic and political needs of the people as the basis of political power.

Bounou , Latifa (SUNY Oneonta) Urban Place and Space: Democracy and Environmental Justice in Two North African Films

"El-Banat Dol/These Girls" (Egypt, 2006) and "Ali Zaoua: Prince of the Streets," (Morocco, 2000) Homeless children and child labor are two contemporary urban problems in Africa which filmmakers are now highlighting as failures of environmental justice in Arab countries. The conundrum is that homeless children when speaking for themselves invoke autonomy and their own agency in arguing for "their space" and their self-constructed "families" and "communities" in the streets. This paper probes issues of economic and environmental justice for children as explored by two filmmakers: Tahani Rached and Nabil Ayouch, and examines whether there are democratic alternatives rather than defining "street kids" as social problems.

Campbell, Horace (Syracuse University) The Ethics and Enterprise of Studying Africa

To camouflage the multi-billion dollar enterprise of looting Africa , there is a continuous need to disguise the reality that Africa is a net creditor to the advanced capitalist countries (termed donors in neo-liberal parlance). For this reason and to perpetuate the myths of 'stages of growth' and 'modernization' some of those who study Africa have reproduced a steady ream of monographs, films, documentaries, books, and editorials on "failed and collapsed states." Failed states theories reinforce the old association of Africa with "poverty, ignorance and disease." Neo-liberal writers dominate the subcontracting industry on 'failed states' and 'resource wars.' Under the neo-liberal paradigm, the ethics of making profits come before human life. Despite the evidence of the plunder and destruction inside of Africa, the study of Africa by those ensconced in the academy continues to trumpet the neo-conservative ideas of the rationality of the market and the superiority of the western modes of organizing life. The reawakening of African philosophical traditions by scholars and practitioners in Africa continue to be one antidote to the ideas of racial inferiority and superiority. It is now the era of reparative justice and this era requires new studies on the institutions and organizations that loot and plunder Africa.

Chaulia, Sreram and Horace Campbell (Syracuse University) Unequal Equals: China and Angolan Reconstruction.

No Abstract:

Erickson, Emily (Syracuse University) Biological warfare and western links to Wouter Basson (Dr. Death)

No Abstract

Etefa, Tsega (Colgate University) Indigenous Governance and State Intervention: Parallels in western Ethiopia and Darfur

In March 2008, unprecedented interethnic conflict between two neighborly and friendly groups, the Oromo and Gumuz, in western Ethiopia erupted. The Oromo constitute the largest single group in the Horn, while the Gumuz live in Ethiopia and the Sudan. The violence may partly be attributed to the recurring famine and food shortage in the whole country. But significant clashes over land never happened as the two groups have maintained a history of peaceful coexistence and cooperation since at least the eighteenth century. Disputes over land ownership and wells between farmers and pastoralists in Darfur had historically been common but they were exacerbated by droughts, desertification and famine. Since the 1980s, inter-ethnic conflicts in Darfur had gained momentum culminating in the rebel attacks on government positions in 2003. The local people, both in Darfur and western Ethiopia, have developed their own indigenous governance and dispute settlement mechanisms. They were able to settle their conflicts through community councils led by elders and villages chiefs. These mechanisms began to be ineffective due to the proliferation of weapons and state intervention. *"In the 1980s, the complaint of most Darfurians was ...that the government in Khartoum was not treating them as full citizens of the*

Sudanese state" (Flint and de Waal, 2008: 14). The present paper is an attempt to look into ethnic relations, indigenous governance and state intervention comparing Western Ethiopia with Darfur.

Felima, Crystal Andrea (Cornell University) The (ill)Legitimacy of African-Centered Scholarship and its Intellectuals: Questioning the Validity of the Critics and their Opposition

While the articulation of African-centered perspective, epistemology, and scholarship have caused great commotion and discourse in academia, scholars of Africana Studies continuously defend their assertions to authenticate it as valid, legitimate scholarship. This paper highlights various critics that systematically deconstruct African-centered scholarship with the use of several strategies: (1) utilize of negative words and characteristics to minimize scholarship; (2) misuse of terminology to undermine the foundation of scholarship; and (3) unfairly assess to compare scholarship to other types of scholarship. These strategies produce non-constructive and unwarranted assessments of African-centered scholarship. The main goal of this paper is not to critique the critics, but to assess the fairness of their opposition and to examine their claims towards the (*ill*) legitimacy and authenticity of African-centered scholarship and its intellectuals. This paper asserts that intellectuals of Africana Studies have a major impact in academia today. Their work serves a vital purpose in which it challenges traditional ideology, methodology, and epistemology. These scholars locate their experiences to challenge traditional forms of construction, promote an alternative reality to the 'norm', and introduce a different intellectual and personal utilization. In essence, African-centered scholarship re-examines, challenges, and deconstructs Western imagination of African peoples, while serving as an assertion to challenge centuries of hegemonic ideology constructed for the purposes of suppressing the voice of the powerless. Since Eurocentricity, in its approach, does not seek to uncover or express anything African-centered that can be used as agency for African peoples, it cannot take the position of being critical of scholarship that does. African-centered scholarship deserves its own space for critique.

Freeman, Morgan B. (Syracuse University) Western Food aid as imperialism in Africa

Since African countries began to free themselves from the colonial rule after 1950s, Western countries knew they could not completely let go of their previous investments, which were their once colonized African countries. The western countries that comprise the EU, knew they could not fully let go of their control on the continent of Africa. To maintain their control the EU began pouring money into once colonized African countries. They did this in the form of aid. The European Union, along with the United States is funneling money into Africa, but only to help with issues they believe are important. They aid comes in the form of money, food, and health care, and medications. This aid is given, not because these Western countries want to help, but because they normally have a surplus of food and medications. The food that is given away as aid takes away from the local farmers and markets in African because the Western aid, is cheaper to buy, taking the money back out of the continent. This discussion will go in to detail on how western countries abuse aid

and how it leads to disinvestments in African countries. This discussion will also discuss what happens when there is an abundance of aid given to various African countries.

Gocking, Roger (Mercy College) China's Building Projects in Ghana: The Bui Hydroelectric Dam

Within the last decade there has been an explosive increase in Chinese involvement in African countries. It has generated a sometimes heated debate over whether this represents a new form of colonialism. A great deal of this Chinese activity is centered on the construction of infrastructure projects. In no small way the domestic building boom that has produced the Manhattanized skylines of Shanghai and Beijing as well as the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River and the Hangzhou Bay Bridge, has been exported overseas to the African continent. Ghana is a particularly good example of how large scale and diverse these projects can be. No longer are they sponsored by the Chinese government itself as, for example, was the case of the Tanzam Railroad in Tanzania and Zambia in the 1970s. Instead, a number of Chinese construction companies are now competing with other multinational corporations and locally owned Ghanaian companies for projects as varied as new highways to large hydroelectric dams. This presentation will deal most of all with the \$622 million, Bui Hydroelectric Dam that the Chinese company, Sinohydro, is currently building on the Black Volta River in western Ghana. Apart from discussing some of the technical questions involved in this construction, the presentation will also look at the environmental and social issues the project has raised.

Hickey, Kevin (Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences) Derek Walcott's Soaring Swifts and Cosmopolitan Geographies

My paper focuses on Walcott's use of "sea swifts" (a colloquial name for terns—*Sterninae* subfamily) in the poem *Omeros* and how this symbol works to dismantle the geographies of separation and division that have traditionally grounded identities and racial hierarchies in Western thought. My paper quickly unpacks ideas of geography and identity expressed by Johann Gottfried Herder, Immanuel Kant, and G.W.F. Hegel (ideas I presume most of my audience will already be familiar with). I then discuss the multiple references and subtexts of sea swifts in *Omeros*: globally migrating bird, the "x" of the Christian cross, the "x" of the colonizer's axe, an ornithological metaphor that in Walcott's poem both stitches and sews, the "turn" homophonically expressed in "tern" that transforms this word into a synonym for "trope," and the expression of spirituality and freedom that has long been associated with birds. Additionally, the colloquial "sea swift" connects this bird with Walcott's use of the sea as metaphor for interconnecting, protean identities as developed, for instance, in the poems *Another Life* and "The Sea Is History" as well as in *Omeros*. I use Walcott's sea swifts as a focal thread to analyze and interpret *Omeros* as part of Walcott's larger oeuvre, an oeuvre that works to critique and revise traditional spatial conceptions of the Caribbean as "merely" an extension of Africa.

Hill, Rebecca. (Syracuse University) The role of western NGO's and imperialism in Africa

The abbreviation NGO stands for nongovernmental organization, and when applied to the organizations in existence in lieu of their funding sources and the purpose they serve, this becomes a controversial definition. Most western NGOs receive direct funding from governmental organizations, which provide stringent stipulations as to how the money is spent. Whether or not an NGO was formed by a specific government, it will inevitably serve the priorities of that government when it accepts external funding in the forms of grants and allocations. This discussion will focus on the role of western NGOs in various African countries and the imperialist function they have served, resulting in dependence on foreign aid in many instances. The more frequently the West portrays Africa as desperate for foreign aid and assistance, the more difficult it becomes for African nations to obtain the true partnership and investment they desire for development.

Hull, Richard (New York University) Agricultural Transformations and Sustainable Peace

Unfortunately, far too little is said in the Western media of the dramatic advances underway in several African countries in food production and nutrition. Africa continues to be portrayed as a chronic basket case destined to sink into deeper poverty and violence. These negative assessments have contributed not only to afro-pessimism but have served as a disincentive to capital investment in sustainable development. While the American mass media presents a doomsday scenario of malnutrition and starvation, spurred on by global warming and deforestation, Africans at the grassroots level in key countries are achieving stunning breakthroughs in agricultural technologies that hold promise for meeting the looming challenge of climatic change. This paper identifies and critically examines several crucial innovations and explains how they have the potential to return Africans to food self-sufficiency and sustainable levels of nutrition. The paper will also briefly outline how these advances can provide powerful new paradigms for achieving more peaceful conditions and political stability. Ironically, the recent collapse of many icons of Western capitalism could pave the way for structural transformations to occur in the developing world especially in Africa. This paper argues that those transformations are already quietly underway but have not been fully revealed to the wider public.

Isike, Chris (Syracuse University) Feminizing the Peace Process in Africa: A Comparative Analysis of Women, Politics and Peace-Building in KwaZulu-Natal and the Niger-Delta

As everywhere else in the world, women in Africa, in spite of their majority stake in the population of most countries, assume a minority status as they are socially, economically and politically excluded from the formal sectors of the public space. They remain 'traditionally' confined to the private domain of motherhood. The masculinisation of the public space is, for instance, reflected in the marginalization of women in the post-conflict reconstruction and governance processes of their communities despite the positions they often assume during and after conflict, not only as the most vulnerable victims of conflict, but also as traditional

agents of peace. Indeed, it is in recognition of the reality of women's victimhood in conflict and the potentiality of their agency as peacemakers, that the United Nations Security Council, in 2000, passed the landmark Resolution 1325, which mandates all member-states of the United Nations to ensure a critical mass representation of women in all aspects of their national life, both in pre and post-conflict situations. However, beyond this clarion call for more women's inclusivity in these formal decision-making processes, do women really make a qualitative difference? If indeed women approach peace negotiations differently from men, at what critical point will more women in politics enhance peace-building in Africa? And in the light of the *critical mass vs. critical act* debate, what formal and informal factors inhibit their political participation, effective political representation and, *ipso facto*, their contributions to sustainable peace and progress in the continent?

This paper hopes to relate to these questions by focusing on the lived experiences of over 200 rural and urban-based women in the face of political and "taxi rank" violence in KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, and on-going armed and social conflict in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria. X-raying into the emerging character and patterns of women's engagement with violence and conflict situations in these areas, it will argue that African women remain critical to peace-building efforts in the continent, not just because of their numbers, but because of the value they can, and some in cases, do bring to the table. The paper will also utilize John Lederach's Moral Imagination as a theoretical model for feminizing the peace process in Africa, as it's relational attributes which, according to him, are central to peace-building, are part of the African feminist ethic of peace that were truncated by western imperialism and it's attendant adversarial culture. Consequently, we will argue for the reinvention of African feminism within an African cultural prism; one where our women will proudly see their femininity as the basis of their political participation, and use it as an instrument of the much needed transformative politics for progress in Africa.

Johnson, Remy (Syracuse University) Defacing "white-face": Imperial Impersonation in the Americas

This essay examines "imperial impersonation" throughout the Americas during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The War of Pacific in Chile and the Parsley Massacre provide examples of racialized modes of modernization that resulted in the killing, displacement, "othering", and marginalization of groups "non white", which was determined according to European conceptualization of race. In their quest to occupy the seat of power vacated by Europeans, imperial elites reenact many of the crimes committed during chattel slavery and colonialism. Therefore, imperial impersonators are viewed as the "regional representatives" of former colonizing nations as they emulate the practices, act in the interest of, and maintain European racial hierarchies in their countries. Such an analysis reveals that local and global oppressive forces are interlinked and cannot be viewed independent of each other (Sassens, 1998). I will analyze how imperial impersonation develops in relationship to the imperial elite's claim to "whiteness" and how that affects marginalized populations, what it means to economic globalization, and ways to combat it.

Johnston-Anumonwo, Ibipo (SUNY Cortland) Gender and Reconstruction in Africa: Beyond Oppressive Globalization.

No abstract

Kapasula, Jessie K. (SUNY Binghamton) Carving Female Personhood from Glocalising Neo-colonial and Patriarchal Memory: Representation of Feminist Agency in Transnational fiction of Adichie and Danikat.

In Africa and the Diaspora, there is an undeniable increased popularity and consumption of fiction from transnational feminist writers. Fiction by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Nigeria) and Edwidge Danticat (Haiti) both of whom currently live in the US, is getting a lot of international recognition, making it into syllabi of many disciplines. In this paper, I am interested in interrogating how these writers use fictional characters to represent the agency of women of their home countries, from their new locations. Using Ndambuki's definition of agency (2003) and Marshal (2000), I argue that whilst both writers use memory to re-member the ravaged personhood of their fiction women, they differ in the way they accomplish this task. Adichie (2003, 2006) glocalises colonialism and neo-colonialism; exposing indigenous and colonial patriarchies. She also shows that Biafra was a male imagination that was steeped in the usual patriarchal politics of nation as McClintock (1997) and Chadya (2003) have eloquently argued. Amidst all these setbacks, Adichie's fictional characters carve independent and self defined personhoods. The position that Adichie takes in the language debate between Ngugi and Achebe radicalizes the agency she carves for her female characters, constructing radical feminists that fight patriarchy and strive for a decolonized Africa and Nigeria. Danticat's narratives (1998, 1998) illustrate the importance of cultural memory and role that location plays in carving a female personhood. Even though she also uses travel as a tool to narrate the agency of the fictional women, her focus on the commodification of Haitian women's labor, genders the agency of the fictional characters, giving her a more socialist feminist/existential phenomenological portrayal of feminist agency. Danticat's fictional characters illustrate the agency that lies at the intersection of race and class, at horizontal and vertical levels. In view of the negative stereotypes that populate the discourse on women of Africa and its Diaspora, scholarship on the work of these authors, especially on their feminist agency, has high epistemological value, especially here in North America.

LaFevers, Cory J. (Syracuse University) Maracatu: Cultural Representations of Blackness in Recife, Brazil

My research explores the relationship between maracatu de nação (an Afro-Brazilian carnival procession) and black consciousness movements in Recife. Additionally, the research investigates the effects of maracatu's commercialization on the cultural representations of blackness in Recife. This work contributes to a greater understanding of the African Diaspora in Latin America and specifically focuses on a region (Pernambuco) that has been under represented in the scholarly discourse. This research is significant because it provides much needed insights into the relationship between Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions and black social movements. It allows for a better understanding of the gap

between accepting Afro-Brazilian heritage and the assertion of a black consciousness within Brazil's system of racial democracy. The work further explores the dynamics and consequences of state involvement in Afro-Latin cultural practices, including the valorization of specific sites of Afro-Latin folkloric cultural production.

Lugardo, Marco Reyes (Universidad Popular Autonoma) The International Criminal Court and the Big Man Politics Re-adoption in the DRC: From “one plus four” Formula to “one above all” Viewed from Below

This paper aims to explaining that concepts of international and universalistic justice promoted by instances such as the ICC can produce several paradoxes in African political systems: a) they can undermine political opposition force and roots; b) they can increase the Big Man Syndrome so underestimated by international institutions promoting democracy. In other words, it can be said as an hypothesis that the current Congolese government is adopting/adapting concepts of international justice in order to eliminate political oppositions within the political system. Getting rid of the opposition increases the international accountability of Congolese government and simultaneously promotes the Joseph Kabila's image as the supreme Congolese Big Man. Is the Congolese politics heading towards the “Museveni's syndrome”: no counterweight in Parliaments and constitutional amendments to long live into presidency or just heading into a formula of one president above all?

Marah, John K. (SUNY Brockport) Chiweizu, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, and Okot p'Bitek: Expressions on Contemporary Africa

In Chinweizu's seminal essay, “Towards a Liberated African culture,” Okot p'Bitek's popular Song of Lawino & Song of Ocol, and Hirsi Ali's The Caged Virgin: an Emancipation Proclamation for Women and Islam, we are invited to insightful criticisms of contemporary African cultures from Africa-centric and feminist perspectives. This paper examines the major themes in Chinweizu, Okot p'Bitek and Ali, and appreciates the roles of African verbal artists and town criers in their determination to point fingers at social wrongs and wrong doers, even as they exhort their leaders, immediate audiences, and the populace at large. It will be shown that these verbal artists are sensitive, sensible, and are committed to the socio-cultural advancement of African people in the twenty-first century

Martin, William G. - African Studies and Academic Tourism: What Past, What Future?”

No Abstract:

Minghas, Daniel (Universidad Agostinho Neto) Education and Reconstruction in Angola

Angola has been for many years at the bottom of Human Development Index of UNDP ranking. This picture is assigned to the lack of peace since the early days of the country

independence. However, after conquering peace in 2002, Angola launched a program of reconstruction. Education was also called for this endeavor. So, it is worth asking: What are the challenges placed upon education in this scenario?

Mũgo, Micere (Syracuse University) Progressive African Orature as Democratizing and Mobilizing Discourse: Generic focus on “Song” with special reference to Kenya.

This paper will explore the role that progressive African Orature has historically played as an art form in mobilizing the masses during liberation struggles, whether under colonialism or neo-colonialism. The focus will be on “Song” as a genre, with special reference to the Kenyan historical scene, while viewing it against a larger canvas of liberation and democratic struggles across the Pan African world. The point of departure will be a broad definition of what constitutes “Progressive African Orature,” identifying the ethics and aesthetics that invest it with agency to serve as a tool in “mobilizing discourse.” Focus will then turn to “Song” as a genre of rebellious and creative utterances, analyzing its use of collective memory, historical narrative, satire and in the imaginative envisioning of liberation in response to oppression and silencing. The special place of women as popular Orature artists specializing in this particular genre especially within the context of “horizontal societies” will be highlighted.

As indicated, Kenya will be the particular site of reference going back to the 1920s and 1930s when mass struggles against colonial settler occupation organized cultural uprisings as tools of protest, using “Song” and other orature-based forms of rebellious utterance in self-assertion. It will be argued that similar movements characterized the era of imperialist wars, but more so the Mau Mau liberation struggles when the use of “Song” as a tool of rebellion, democratization and mobilization reached its height. This period will provide a natural point of comparison with other sites of anti-colonial struggles in the rest of Africa and beyond. The paper will finally look at the neo-colonial era during which “Song” has been used by the masses to interrogate and denounce dictatorship, as well as abuse of human rights, while naming alternatives. In concluding, the paper will argue that the intellectual and activist roles played by progressive African Orature as an art form in advocating and mobilizing for democratic change should receive greater recognition than is the case at the moment. For this to happen, many scholars - especially those outside the arts - will need to liberate themselves from disciplinary chauvinism while the political elites will have to abandon Orature’s exploitation and adulteration. Above all, Orature artists will have to firmly reject the abuse of Orature for condoning “backward moments” along the challenging path of democratic change.

Mwakisha, Jemimah (SUNY Binghamton) Crossroads: Translocated Locations

In the midst of the global technological highway - Internet, media and cell phone -, youth in Kenya are right in the middle of the global pathway and a lifestyle far-removed from their own realities. From music, dress, Internet messaging, habits, lifestyle and knowledge they are as much exposed to what sells in the West as those who live there. Many still buy the idea that anything from the West is better and trendier. But, at what cost? What are their realities? Do they have the tools and mindset to process the messages they encounter

actively (not passively)? Are they alienated and living between cultures? My paper will interrogate the transitional (crossroad) process and space at which young people located far away from the realities of the West find themselves 'located in living rooms and realities of the unreachable West'. It will question their mindset, self-awareness, their tools of operation and exchange, and how remaining in the local-cum-global pathway, shapes who they really are.

Mwambari, David (Syracuse University) The Bloody Lyrics: Simoni Bikindi's music and the making of Rwanda's Genocide Ideology (1990-1994)

An ideology is an organized collection of ideas. The word ideology was coined by Count Antoine Destutt de Tracy in the late 18th century to define a "science of ideas" An ideology can be thought of as a comprehensive vision, or a set of ideas proposed by the dominant class of a society to all members of this society. The main purpose behind an ideology is to offer change in society through a normative thought process. Ideologies tend to be abstract thoughts applied to reality and, thus, make this concept unique to politics. Ideologies are very common in the world of politics.[1] Genocide, on the other hand is an extermination or destruction of the other who has been part of a whole but is now being separated and targeted as an enemy (and man's gut reaction to the enemy, as we have learnt through history, is to eliminate the enemy). The Rwandan genocide was carried and influenced by an ideology of hatred spread through radio and music. This paper seeks to analyze how one's man music Bikindi Simoni contributed to the massacre of millions in a few days.

Nagel, Mechthild (SUNY Cortland) Beyond the Carceral: A Comparative View at (Criminal) Justice in Mali and South Africa

This paper attempts a cross-cultural study of penal customs and perspectives in Mali and South Africa. It seeks to highlight what much criminologist literature has passed over, namely, that that Africa is producing some of the most innovative alternatives to incarceration (Stern 2001; Adeyemi 1994;Ibokwe 1998; Penal Reform International 2000; PRI 1997). What has been quite completely neglected is that African ex-prisoners could contribute much to the debate of transforming criminal justice.

Most books about ex-prisoners (especially political prisoners) focus solely on the microscopic perspective of the affected person (e.g. coping with trauma or feelings of revenge); however, it is important to explore the person's¹ macroscopic and philosophical perspective: How does one reconcile cultural and criminal justice ideologies (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 2004)? To that end, some of the following questions will be explored: In what ways have prison conditions changed since the end of apartheid and military dictatorships and in what ways have they remained the same? To what extent did imprisoned intellectuals¹ own political imprisonment gives them a sense of self-worth and will to survive whether they experienced detention in isolation or on Robben Island? What happens to former convicts and freedom fighters who take on the mantle of power (cf. Asumah 2007)? In what ways do social institutions, especially those that enforce social control, have to change to contribute to more equitable justice mechanisms? Which, if any, traditional, precolonial practices (such as ritual cleansing of guilt) ought to be revived to

bring about genuine peacemaking at all levels of society? What role might the Obama administration, the AU, EU, UN and regional institutions play in shaping institutions of justice?

Nieves, Khalil - Fourth World War and the End of White Supremacy: Africana Studies Preparing Scholar/Activists for the Challenges of a New Era

African Studies needs to develop a core curriculum that cultivates scholar/activists with a clear understanding of our era of transition from western domination towards an uncharted and contested future. This era is characterized by “high turbulence, which... will continue... for perhaps another 20-50years. As... a new order will emerge out of the chaos.” (1) Although many people do not understand this, the US intelligence agencies acknowledge it in their recent report, Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World and realize that the US will lose its global dominance by 2025. African Studies should prepare scholar/activists to not only help understand this era, but more importantly to strengthen a global movement for a just and equitable future for all humanity. The core curriculum will be one years and will help students develop skills to work on local, state, national and international level. More importantly, students would work on a collaborative project with a global south organization and then live in that country during the summer semester implementing that project. An example of this would be working with women in South Africa on a project that confronts the gender digital divide. I have also developed a model of what this one-year core course would look like.

O’Mara, Kathleen (SUNT Oneonta) Words: Circumventing Silences surrounding sexual differences in Accra.

This paper looks at democratic practices in Ghana among marginalized groups that is; LGBT folk who have been silenced by legal and religious structures and their discourses of condemnation. Despite such homophobia, urban social networks have emerged to carve out spaces, create counter-discourses and begin informal social organizations as part of the process of resistance. Further, these mini-communities are domesticating their lived differences and opening spaces for inter-ethnic and inter-class coalitions. The activities and actions of these new communities will be examined as we consider their contributions to the creation of a culture of greater social change.

Orwa, Michael-Otieno (Syracuse University) EnGendering PEPFAR: Towards a Comprehensive Rights-Based Approach in U.S. HIV&AIDS Funding.

Funding for HIV/AIDS has increased significantly between 2000 and 2009, both in terms of the number of organizations, government agencies, foundations et cetera that are involved in this lucrative business, as well as the amount of resources available both collectively and within individual institutions, and whether for research or program purposes. This paper looks at one such program or plan, the Presidents Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) launched in 2003 by president Bush. In its inaugural budget, PEPFAR was allocated a groundbreaking US\$15 billion for a period of five years. It was then the single largest financial commitment by a country toward combating a single global health issue. While it

remains one of the isolated bright spots of the former president's legacies in Africa, PEPFAR generated controversy from its birthing, particularly rubbing the NGOs and activists the wrong way due to its conditionalities that bordered on religious fundamentalism. By the end of the first five year period, global health experts had also began to raise questions as to not only the lasting impact of HIV dominance of over broader health system needs, but even more importantly, there arose questions on the impact of specific conditions that undermine best public health practices. In 2008, PEPFAR II was reauthorized and expanded, yet pundits and activists continue to contest the extent to which PEPFAR has been and remains problematic in so far as women's rights are concerned. An assessment of the broader gendered implications of the Global Gag rule, the anti-prostitution and human trafficking oath as well as the special earmarks that restrict the amounts to be spent or beyond which certain programs cannot be funded.

Osei-Tutu, Brempong (Syracuse University) Remembering the Slave Trade in Atlantic West Africa

The Atlantic slave trade which led to the forceful removal of Africans from their ancestral homeland to the Americas is also the heritage that draws diaspora Africans to the mother continent. What memories and attitudes do homeland Africans and transplanted Africans bring to this historical experience? This paper, which is based on research in Ghana, explores how the memorialization of the Atlantic slave trade has played out between Ghanaians and African Americans. The paper demonstrates how the legacy of slavery complicates relations between homeland Africans and diaspora Africans in contrast to Pan-African images that essentialize unity, cooperation and togetherness.

Owusu, Phillip (Syracuse University) Iconographies of Akan Visual and Verbal Arts: Vehicles of Communication and Moral Education

"We do not speak to the wise person in plain language but in proverbs", so translates an Akan adage. The Akan people of Ghana in West Africa clothe their communication in symbolic representations mainly of some notable historical events or time-tested observations in nature. These symbolic represents are actively reinforced through proverbs and figurative art objects. The frequent use of these verbal and visual arts ensures familiarity with those events or values they represent which are also passed on from generation to generation. Drawing on some figurative brass objects of Adumasa, an Akan group of people, I analyze the proverbial renditions of those art objects as media of communication and socialization. I further attempt to elucidate on the dynamic utility of those art objects and assess their potentiality as tools for transformational education in Africa.

Panford, Steve (City University of New York) Elites and Transformational Development in Africa

This essay addresses some issues on the role of the elites in the developmental process with special emphasis on Africa with Ghana, a case study. It is a study with implications for the

future of Africa. Post-independence Africa has waxed and waned the past half century in the quest for socio-political and economic advancement of the continent. But despite fifty years of developmental efforts, one can suggest that it has not even been a zero sum growth, but rather a negative one. Most African countries with exception of a couple that are deemed successful have regressed in the socioeconomic transformation of their countries. My basic question is to identify the prime movers of change and transformation in society. Building on the works of some developmental theorists – From Marx, Weber, Frank, Amin, Soto, to Stiglitz – I intend to re-visit the crucial role of the elite in development.

By all accounts the elite in western and some emerging nations like South Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore have played critical roles in the transformation of their nations. The African elites have not been successfully transformative. Why? In this paper I begin by probing those who constitute the elite? How did they emerge? What circumstances or forces produced them? How do they see their roles in the developmental processes? What is their world view? Can they be transformational? Or, as Fanon suggested long ago his classic, *The Wretched of Earth*, parasitical? What are the prospects for success? The study is underpinned by an extensive review of literature of roles of elite in western and successful societies to achieve a comparative perspective. One would also analyze paradigms of successful elite roles. It will also be anchored in historical and longitudinal methodology, as well as comparative methods in the social sciences to achieve general propositions. The larger aim of this study is to engage in the developmental studies of Africa and contribute to the literature of elite and their roles in the development of Africa, with Ghana as a case study.

Paxe, Isaac (Universidad Agostino Neto) Peace Reconstruction and Reconciliation in Angola

No Abstract:

Jerry Persaud (SUNY New Paltz) Is China Necessary for Africa or Mandarins in New Clothes?

This paper will examine Chinese expansion, development, and investment in Africa. The main focus will be placed on the question of 'why' is China in Africa now, what is different from when it was there previously. Is the Chinese presence in the Caribbean an adequate analogy? Is there an interdependence mode in operation between Africa and China that is of strategic, humane and sustainable sense for both? These questions follow both an historical and contemporary examination into the political economy of civilizational discourses in the process of globalization.

Porter, Danielle (Cornell University) Language, Democracy, and Being: The Conflict of Multi-Lingualism in the DRC

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is an extreme example of a multiethnic and multilingual state. As such, the state faces a number of complex problems- the most serious of which is creating sovereignty whilst maintaining a supposed democratic environment.

The intersection of being and language has a profound influence on the construction and maintenance of democracy in the DRC. For Heidegger, the understanding of being begins with Dasein in his everyday state. When language is considered in relation to this, one can find a starting point to a discussion of sovereignty and stability in the Congo. In the multilingual state, the self is cast out of its everyday state into the violent world of language. More explicitly, there's a rejection of the most basic sense of self to make progress in one's everyday life. By transcending into another language, one separates the self from the authentic self while coming closer to the other he is attempting to make contact with. In *Humanism of the Other*, Levinas states that one cannot simply learn a language, there must be an orientation. In this case, the orientation is forced for the simple necessity of surviving in one's own state. The fact that this orientation is forced emphasizes the notion that the linguistic difference cannot be overcome. Because of this, the self cannot really see the other. Instead, he sees his own desires.

Agamben states that, "What hampers communication is communicability itself; humans are separated by what unites them." In the Congo, this separation coincides with forced linguistic cooptation. In a case like the Congo, what is the role or importance of the nation? Traditionally, nationalism separates the nation from the others. How does this occur in a state comprised of a multitude of selves and others? Language has the power to assert the self and understand being in its everyday state. The value of democracy is representation. How does democracy work when one does not feel like their authentic self (or their linguistically-based imagined community) is not represented? Similarly, when a state is forced to fall back on colonial languages, how does this affect the nation-state in terms of identity and representation in democracy? In the Congo "free and fair elections" become a place where everyone outside of their respective imagined communities metaphorically becomes a Homo Sacer. When that individual is failed by an election, his opposition literally becomes a collective Homo Sacer. Because of this, continuous political instability becomes the norm.

Sho, Yutaka (Syracuse University) Re-visioning the Urban Terrain: Women Construct in Tokyo and Rwanda

In this paper I hope to learn from two organizations in two countries, and the spaces they impact. Seruka in Rwanda and Seikatsu Club Cooperative in Japan engage with different issues and with different audiences, yet these organizations share the belief that our lives are constructed within connected systems, and cannot be adequately addressed by compartmentalized professions. Seruka and Seikatsu Club also recognize and are driven by the responsibilities that arise from their immediate contexts, and are committed to change using their unique agencies. By studying the spatial impact of their work, I hope to demonstrate how alternative practices to conventional development could affect our built environment and foster equality. I will proceed to relate our own attempt at General Architecture Collaborative to show how spatial design could participate in this mode of operation.

Since its foundation in 1991, Seruka has focused its effort on the emancipation of women in Rwandan society. Seruka is active in many aspects of women's lives, such as education,

economy and justice, but what is of interest here is their work in the field of the built environment. After the 1994 genocide the Rwandan government reintroduced the villagization policy, or imidugudu, to counter the housing shortage for its ballooning population. Rwanda plans to house every 9 million of its citizens in planned villages. In accordance with this controversial policy, Seruka created a village of their own in 1997 for 80 of their constituents, the majority of them widows from the genocide era. We witnessed that though Seruka's village is modest in scale and technology compared to the government-initiated villages, it is more considerate of the needs of the residents, and therefore more effective and sustainable.

Both Seruka and Seikatsu Club address pressing issues in their communities, and their actors, working methods and solutions are deeply rooted in their locales. Arguably the most criticism that the conventional development agencies have received is the disregard to the type of work and its effectiveness that Seruka and Seikatsu Club have exhibited. But must these examples mean that the Western players have no role in the emancipation of underrepresented in the developing countries, because of our outsider status? General Architecture Collaborative is a newly founded design/advocacy firm based in the US. The members include architects, landscape architects, materials curator and an artist/community organizer. GAC has engaged Seruka to plan and design the new village for 100 homes equipped with clinics, job-training center and schools. We hope to explore our role in creating an equitable environment for Rwandan women with the tools of spatial design.

Simmons, Anita (Syracuse University) The Nip/Tuck of Female Genital Mutilation

Historically, women of African descent in the African Diaspora have had limited or no control of their sexuality. This can be attributed to the fact that we live in a racist, sexist, patriarchal society that attempts to define women of African descent solely on the basis of racist, sexist assumptions that has become naturalized throughout United States society and abroad. Western media in the United States has played a huge role in informing the world about African American women and women of African descent. United States media history has been notorious for dispensing negative portrayals of women of African descent through various mediums, whether it is film, video, or television series. United States media was highly responsible for creating and cementing the sexual stereotypes associated with women of African descent. From Hattie McDaniel in *Gone with the Wind* to Halle Berry in *Monster's Ball*, banking on stereotypes of black female sexuality has proved to be a successful, capitalist tool in the United States. The medical world in the United States has also attempted to provide a logical, rational, justification for the perpetuation of sexual stereotypes associated with African American women, but they have proven to be unsuccessful. Attempts by European American male scientists to explain African American women's sexuality has taken forms of primitivist discourse. Dissecting black women's genitalia and displaying them in world fairs attempted to provide the world with medical, scientific evidence that Black women were indeed primitive, sexual beings in relation to their own sacred white women. The displaying and dissecting of Sara Baartman's genitalia and derriere in Europe cemented the sexualities of all women of African descent.

This brings me to the hit television drama series, *Nip/Tuck*, one of my favorite dramas. The show is about two white male plastic surgeons that help various people from all walks of life feel better about themselves through the method of plastic surgery. In one particular episode called “Manya Mabika”, the doctors encounter an African woman from Somalia who has been a victim of female genital mutilation. I am interested in how this particular episode of *Nip/Tuck* portrays African female victims of female genital mutilation through the discourse of western media. I will use textual analysis to come to answer questions like “In what ways does *Nip/Tuck* use FGM as a larger issue to perpetuate notions of African female promiscuity and primitivism? What does the episode say about African women in the medical discourse? How does the episode further perpetuate myths of African female sexuality? How does the episode perpetuate “othering” in terms of the Western doctors and the Somali woman? How does the episode perpetuate previous racist, sexist, medical, primitivist discourses in relation to African women? Why is an African woman “used” in the episode instead of a Middle Eastern or Asian woman, who is also victims of FGM? What does this say about the West’s relation to African people, primarily women? How does *Nip/Tuck* seek to inform the world about the issue of FGM?

**Smith, Danielle and Chojoy Schroeder (Rochester Institute of Technology)
Remembrances of Voice, Migration and Identity**

Our world today demands an educated population that is able to compete globally, and yet, the educational needs of large numbers of American students are not being met. American educators must recognize the need to prepare knowledgeable students who can effectively compete as decision-makers in the global arena. As teachers, we must forge a way for our students to develop the essential tools that are necessary to become global citizens, with the ability to think critically, to read, write, listen, speak and foster responsible citizenship. For the 2008-2009 academic year, we have selected a theme of the use of language in reconstructing memory and identity, most particularly for colonized people who have been disinherited from their ancestry, their people and their land. For the colonized, memory has been erased and identity distorted, and the need to redefine selves against the external imposition of values is urgent. The work of constructing one’s identity and reimagining one’s person cannot be completed without calling on a collective memory of where we came from and of who we were. Neither can this work be completed without the use of language to give voice and body to the disinherited. We have conducted a comprehensive search of the literature in order to gain diverse reading material on the African Diaspora, and in order to present students with a juxtaposition of readings, including fiction, non-fiction, historical narratives and essays. The objectives of the learning circle include the celebration of Africa and Africans through the achievements of African writers over the past century; the stimulation of our students through debate, discussion, reading, criticism and analysis of African writing; and an increased awareness among community members of books and writings by African writers.

Sterling, Cheryl (New York University) Cosmopolitanism vs. Pan-Africanism in the works of Edward Wilmot Blyden

Kwame Appiah characterizes Edward Wilmot Blyden as the “Father of Pan-Africanism.” Yet, he implies a level of illegitimacy to Pan-African discourse because it is predicated on the concept of African unity or the oneness of Africa, which, when compared to the heterogeneity of the continent, creates a blatantly false representation. Appiah also denounces the racist perspective of early Pan-African thinkers like Blyden, without an attendant criticism of the dominant ideologies of the 19th century. Now Appiah advocates a cosmopolitanism that has its roots in Kantian ethics. Problematic. Yes. As Kant’s racism is a well known fact. I read Blyden’s discourse in dialectic tension with Appiah’s theoretical formulations on cosmopolitanism. I contend that through complex positionings marked by the racialism of the 19th century, Blyden envisioned a modality for empowerment of African peoples that generated the context of Pan-African ideology. Blyden produced an unparalleled intellectual discourse about West Africa. His texts, Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race and African Life and Customs, are seminal historical documents as they examine indigenous cultural practices and the changing modalities brought by Islam and Christianity. In them, he speaks of the African Personality, the socialist nature of African societies, and suggests an ‘Africa for Africans,’ all key Pan-African concepts. Blyden even presaged a West African Federation more than fifty years before its actuality. What I propose to do in this paper is to re-examine the work of Blyden, to situate him in the trajectory of the Pan-African movement. The argument is predicated on his discursive strategies in relation to West Africa and his personal agency as an advocate and agent of repatriation for blacks in the Western world. As Blyden seeks to debunk racial codes, we must ask, is he not then fighting for the universal humanity that Appiah so heartily advocates?

Tassew, Arkie (Syracuse University) Self-reliance and the future of wealth creation in Africa

In order to construct a blueprint for Africa’s future, we must not look to Western powers for their latest technology, Western political theory, or foreign aid. Instead, African leaders must focus intently on the history of the continent and subsequently identify and realize the strengths and the capabilities of the African peoples. In order to move forward, we need not try so futilely to catch up with the rest of the world rather we must work seriously on changing the mindset of African people all across the globe. While emphasis must be laid on ideas such as strong, unified communities, Africans must learn to embrace the differences and the diversity of the continent. Furthermore, leaders should address the creation of flexible gender roles and relations and also establish palaver justice systems. Finally, we must restore the confidence and the spirit of Africans in order to reinstate self-reliance and thus pave the way to the creation of wealth in Africa.

Wambui, Betty (SUNY Oneonta) Conversations in the Age of “Democracy”

“Democracy” has become the new assumed socio-political “good” in Africa. In and out of “Africa”, it is now often taken for granted that not only must Africa must look West for a

model of socio-political negotiation but also that the West – “*ruria*”, “*ngambo*” – has found answers to the political ills that ail the continent. This paper takes a moment to revisit this claim. In a critical tone, it asks what it means to take “democracy seriously” in Africa. Further, it asks if assuming democracy shuts doors to alternative socio-political models on the continent and tentatively begins such investigation.

Wilson, Diane (New York City College of Technology) The Changing Forms of Architecture in Africa and the African Diaspora: Art Historian’s Perspective

This study in the form of a power point presentation with narration examines the history and contributions of Africans, Caribbeans and African American to the preservation of architecture from ancient to modern times. Architecture within Africa and the African diasporas is very diverse and reflects the various ethno-linguist traditions and histories. While we can point to some commonality, the study highlights the diverse nature of these architectural forms and their changing nature over time. The study also examines the influences of external contacts on African Architecture. Some the questions explored in the presentation examines the influence of Islam on the architectural forms of North Africa and other regions within Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, the study explores the interconnection or interface between the European colonial influences and local traditional idioms that created unique but traditional spaces with the architectural landscape in colonial Africa. Overall, this presentation is designed to provide an overview of the diverse styles of architecture from ancient to modern times.

Wodajo, Tsegaye (Bronx Community College) Pre-colonialism in African Literature

African literary theorists continue to debate the value of retrieving Africa’s past into contemporary African literature. There are those who insist that African writers must draw on their readings of myth and legend to forge an image of a perfect pre-colonial Africa; others suggest that African literature must reflect the past with all its shortcomings and imperfections; a few others believe that contemporary African novels must be forward looking and should care less about the continent’s pre-colonial realities. Drawing on the thoughts of several postcolonial theorists, including Frantz Fanon, Ngugi wa Thiongo, and Chinweizu, this paper seeks to explore each groups views on this issue.

Xu, Jianping (Syracuse University) Politics of Global Humanitarianism and its Local Enactments.

Through this interdisciplinary ethnographic study, in lenses of anthropology, sociology, history, political geography, philosophy, and cultural studies, I have sought to unravel the complex matrix of subject-producing discourses and power relations (Foucault 1977) as experienced by my research participants, officially identified as “Liberian refugees” resettled in a city in the U.S.. They are women with children (but not husband) accompanying them, for them to meet resettlement eligibility when they applied in Refugee camps. Upon arrival here, they are often placed into segregated neighborhoods and jobs, with limited assistance available in the Refugee Resettlement program

(administered mostly by charity groups, funded by federal government, and supported by state government). How these women negotiate their racialized/Africanized, gendered, and class (dis)placements in this “host country” is situated in the politics of [global] humanitarianism (Hydman 2000, Gökalp 2007, Steet 2000). Liberal discourses of “help” avoid a critical understanding of how Liberia’s history, its “civil wars,” and the refugee programs all evolved with certain U.S. interests and intervention involved (Moran 2006, Johnson 2004, Osaghae 1996, Gifford 1993, Beyan 1989, Firestone & Crowther 1926). The local enactments of “refugee resettlement” thus embody the contradiction between a universalistic humanist belief of “helping the refugees who are ‘just like us’” and the discriminating practices (by diverse persons and institutions) that actively produce subjects who are understood and treated as different (Pratt 2004, Ong 1996, Mountz 2004).

These multiple contradictory discourses – e.g., egalitarian liberal democratic ideals vs. discourses that stereotype and differentiate – provide opportunities for conscious critique (Pratt), as these women insightfully engaged themselves in. Their struggles also become more meaningful, when seen in the larger context of the U.S. as a country trying to deal with de-industrialization (capital flight to third-world countries to better exploit the labor, resources and markets there) and racial/class (re-)segregation in service-oriented jobs sharply divided into those “professional” and those “low-skilled.” Situated in this social-historically specific global/local dynamics, these women, having finally led themselves out of extreme physical violence in war-torn areas, are still subjected to various forms of physical, structural and symbolic violence (Bourdieu 2001) in their assisted resettlement (Elson 1983). Their “refugee” lives are constituted by multiple relations of power and their resistance therein, at intersectional performative sites of race, class, gender, nationality and religion (Bettie 2003, Wright 2006). Despite the best intentions and efforts of “help” agency workers, their resettlement is far from the rosy picture American media often celebrates, just as “development” projects in “3rd world” countries are often problematically embedded in global-local power relations.

The politics of humanitarianism I document here in the Liberian case is prevalent in first-world rhetoric concerning Africa and other third-world regions/countries. In 2004 Tony Blair launched the Commission for Africa, which was to help Africa integrate into the global economy. In its report we find, *‘If people are to feel safe about investing their money in a country they need to feel confident about a whole range of things ...’* (p77 cited in Gopal 2006: 94, Italics mine).” The “humanitarian” commission’s deep concern about (potential) investors’ needs/feelings only reminds us of an UN peace leader who explicitly identified the primary reason of peace-keeping in Liberia (or elsewhere): “because that’s what the investors are looking for.” Until we recognize and deal with the politics of humanitarianism at work globally/locally, further efforts at conflict resolution, refugee-helping, or development will be trapped in the discourse of help. We will not be able to come to terms with the complex historical and contemporary injustice we are all implicated in. It is time we understand the often-depoliticizing effect of individualistic “human rights” discourse when it is not coupled with a social-historical justice lens (Gökalp 2007). With the new Administration we certainly hope that its Africa policy will be better than the militarized Africom. However, if we are ever to go beyond “just end[ing] the war” toward “end[ing] the mindset that got us into war” (Obama

campaign words cited on **Obama and Africa** Symposium website), then we need to reflect on the (capitalist, racist, sexist) mindset (which has feminized, racialized and pillaged Africa and other places/peoples of color) before we can move toward ending poverty/conflicts in Africa, when these can be properly understood as the looting of Africa by the West and the co-opted local elites. It is troubling, however, to read Obama's chief policy advisor declaring that toward Africa "we must invest in our common humanity and, in this way, restore American leadership in the world," with its topmost agenda being "to accelerate Africa's integration into the global economy," echoing Blair's Commission's "mistaken belief" that African has not part of the global capitalism (**Obama and Africa** Symposium website)". It concerns us whether Obama's peace & development efforts will not become, once again, part of the same "moral empire" agenda (Gopal 2006).

Zongwe, Dunia Prince (Cornell University) Why it is so Difficult to Prosecute Rapists in Eastern Congo?

Sexual violence in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (eastern Congo) has been variously described as the world's worst, beyond the 'pale of any historical precedent'.² After two civil wars – breaking out in August 1996 and August 1998, and more than five million people dead, eastern Congo is reeling from the bloodiest humanitarian crisis since World War II. Armed groups, including rebels and members of the Congolese army, have used sexual violence as a weapon of war and as a pattern destroy the 'spirit, the will to live', and the life of the victims³, and to destabilize society. They violently raped tens of thousands of girls and women each year for the past ten years. Despite the introduction of forceful legislative amendments to reduce the violence, the scourge of rape still plagues eastern Congo. This paper is premised on the proposition that prosecution is paramount to the reduction of sexual offences. However, given that in practice the Congolese justice system only prosecutes the fewest and mildest of cases, this paper identifies and explains the obstacles to the successful and effective prosecution of sexual offenders in eastern Congo. Based on interviews conducted in eastern Congo with a cross-section of vocational and demographic groups within Congolese communities from May to August 2008, the paper reveals the magnitude of the many sociological, institutional, financial and legal factors which hinder the criminal prosecution of sexual violence. The paper submits that the successful prosecution of sexual offences in eastern Congo faces a myriad of daunting obstacles and necessitates an exceptionally lucky combination of a number of unlikely conditions. In order to overcome these obstacles, Congolese, regional and multilateral strategists must concentrate on the factor underlying the rapes, namely the insecurity that prevails in eastern Congo. Once the insecurity is address, the Congolese State will be in a much stronger position to successfully prosecute rapists in eastern Congo. Then, and only then, can women in eastern Congo hope for a solution to the unspeakable horrors they often suffer.