

CENTER FOR AFRICAN STUDIES

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

NEWSLETTER: SPRING 2010, VOLUME XV

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*Don't miss The Zimmerli's feature
of an artist from Africa!*

Lalla Essaydi: Les Femmes du Maroc

The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum
Voorhees Special Exhibition Galleries
January 30 - June 06, 2010



Lalla Essaydi, Les Femmes du Maroc # 38, 2006.
Chromogenic print mounted to aluminum, ed. 10, 60 x 48 inches
Lent by the Artist. Courtesy of
Edwynn Houk Gallery, New York, New York and
Howard Yezerski Gallery, Boston, Massachusetts.

For more information on Lalla Essaydi's exhibition
see page 26 of this issue.

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A DONATION TO CAS!

Checks should be made payable to the Rutgers University Foundation, with "Center for African Studies" indicated on the memo line. Please mail your check to CAS at the address on the back of this issue. For online donations please visit ruafrica.rutgers.edu. If you require additional information contact CAS: 732-445-6638.

Editor: Ousseina Alidou.....Content and Design: Renee DeLancey

Letter from Director, Ousseina Alidou

Peace, Health, Joy, and Fulfillment to All in 2010!

Another New Year of the 21st Century has arrived with many challenges still unresolved. These include global poverty across and within nations triggered by the wealthy nations' callous agenda of economic liberalization, continuing dictatorship in the global South and complicity of corrupt national elite, global warming and environmental degradation, global health pandemics, and transnational wars tied to politics of dispossession and violent religious fundamentalisms. The "borderless" spaces resulting from these conditions call for the rethinking of the relevance and current paradigms of Areas Studies especially in the processes of reimagining global peace and citizenship, equity, and sustainable human development.

The idea of control and/or destruction of world resources for the benefit of a few leaving the majority, especially the global youth, with no tangible hope for the future is simply not acceptable. When the future of the youth of any nation is mortgaged it transforms its irrelevance into an unpredictable discomfort, affecting both those who created their conditions and innocent bystanders. For better or for worse, the study of global transnationalism informs us that the offspring of the wealthy few from the global South, be they African, Middle Eastern, European or Asian, quickly lose their innocence about the distributive inequalities at the root of their privilege as they encounter the majority of their contemporaries –often from the homelands or from common histories – sucked into the bottom of labor markets in global centers of power and control of resources. This "encounter" represents a fertile ground for productive or tragic solidarity between the youth of the world beyond class, ethnicity, or national origin. The reality is that youth transnational citizenship, even among those who come from wealthy, educated backgrounds, is not sensitive to national borders since belonging to them offers them no real future.

In analyzing the core of the 21st century youth disillusionment with "borders," we can see that it would be extremely narrow to understand the production of youth violence simply in terms of religious co-optation. In fact, I would suggest that such analyses refuses to deal with the heart of the matter which is distributive justice and the quest for sustainable peace and human development for all. What happens in the mind of the youth when they see nations' water privatized, minerals (lithium, diamond, gold, bauxite, etc.) and oil extracted even as millions continue to be killed by warlords, youth illiteracy becoming the status quo, toxic waste dumped in poor people's backyards, agricultural communal land privatized, and pastoral corridors blocked as people are turned into squatters and permanent refugees?

The interdisciplinary focus of Area Studies makes the field uniquely placed to provide multidimensional analyses of these dynamics and counter-dynamics of the world of the youth. In the process it can provide nuanced understanding that would aid in galvanizing various forces and constituencies towards a more peaceful and just order. But to fulfill this mission more adequately, the boundaries of the "area" need to be shattered and re-conceptualized to include a range of global and globalized immigrant youth communities and networks throughout the world. Necessarily, this would mean problematizing the question of identity, of what it means to be African, Middle Easterner, Asian, or East European. In other words, if Area Studies is to continue to be relevant, it must allow the unfolding global reality to guide its theoretical and methodological orientations in new ways. African Studies will continue to respond to our understanding of the destructive forces unleashed by post-Cold War globalization and the resulting need for sustainable peace in the world.

Peace,



Ousseina D. Alidou

Crossroads: Migration, Language, and Literature in Africa **A Symposium** By Ousseina Alidou

In 2008, Rutgers University took a pioneering step in establishing the Department of African, Middle Eastern, and South Asian Languages and Literatures (AMESALL). The move was partly in recognition of the fact that the peoples of Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, in particular, have had historical exchanges that stretch back to antiquity, long before the encounter between Africa and the West. Later new forces of globalization, both colonial and postcolonial, generated new networks of interaction and conversation between the civilizations of these three regions, giving additional momentum to the process of linguistic and cultural cross-fertilization that has been unfolding over the centuries, and which is now being reconstituted and reconfigured in immigrant spaces in the USA, Europe, and in other parts of our global village. The curriculum of AMESALL is partly designed to capture the dynamic of this civilizational interchange in all its linguistic and literary complexity.

It is in support of this vision of AMESALL that CAS is organizing a symposium entitled, “Crossroads: Language, Literature, and Migration in Africa,” scheduled to take place February 25-27, 2010. The symposium is designed to foster trans-disciplinary understanding of the complex interplay between language, literature, and migration, and of the varied patterns of language and literary movement, formation, and practice arising from contemporary and historical migration within, to, and from Africa. Since antiquity Africa has been a locus of linguistic, literary and cultural interchange with communities from around the world. The advent of European colonialism on the continent and the impact of more recent articulations of globalization have added to both the scope and complexity of these cultural interconnections. These interactions have often involved human migration, a process that has profound sociolinguistic and literary consequences for the recipient society, the society of origin, and the migrants themselves. Uprooted from familiar sociolinguistic contexts, migrants may find themselves reconstituted as ethno-linguistic minorities elsewhere, seeking to inscribe themselves in the new “host” communities — which are themselves often transformed by the arrival of the immigrants — through new linguistic, literary, and cultural practices. At times, however, the migration has been primarily textual, facilitated by scholarly exchanges, translation, and religious conversion. This two day symposium will be concerned with both these dimensions of migration and its relationship to language and literature in global Africa.

The symposium will be preceded by a public presentation by Ngugi wa Thiong’o, the internationally acclaimed writer and director of the International Center for Translation and Writing at the University of California, Irvine, and an art exhibition by the Moroccan artist, Lalla Essaydi at the Zimmerli Art Museum. The keynote address of the symposium will be delivered by Brinkley Messick, Professor and Chair of the Department of Anthropology at Columbia University. Other speakers will include Hailu Habtu (University of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), Girmai Negash (Ohio University), Loren Kruger (University of Chicago), Cecile Vigoroux (Simon Fraser University, Canada), Savita Nair (Furman University), Amardeep Singh (University of Lehigh), Hagar Salamon (the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel), Beverley Mack (University of Kansas), Chouki El Hamel (Arizona State University), Fallou Ngom (Boston University), Nicholas Faraclas (University of Puerto Rico), and Abdulaziz Lodhi (Uppsala University, Sweden).

The symposium is sponsored by CAS; AMESALL; the Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum; the Office of the Executive Dean, School of Arts and Sciences; the Office of Undergraduate Education; the Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs; and the Transliterations Project.

For more information on the symposium visit: ruafrica.rutgers.edu/events/crossroads_desc.html

FACULTY AND STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Gabriella Carolini: How Housing Loses Out Amidst Reforms in Maputo, Mozambique

Mozambique is a low-income country receiving much international counsel in reforming public administration and development planning. There are, however, reasons to question how reforms targeting fiscal responsibility and decentralization are impacting vulnerable urban communities. Mozambicans still mostly reside in rural areas, but the urban population is growing, and in the capital of Maputo, this growth is accompanied by an increasing poverty level – a unique trend in Mozambique. In my presentation for the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy's Colloquium Series, I explored how the two aforementioned branches of reforms interact in Maputo, what public investment priorities emerge in their wake, and what outcome their implementation has on the delivery of basic needs, especially for vulnerable communities in the Maputo urban periphery. *Gabriella Carolini is an Assistant Professor of Urban Planning*

Samah Selim Explores Literature and Modernity in the Arab World

As a scholar of modern Arabic literature and cultural history, my research interests cover a wide range of areas and disciplines that converge on what the British Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm has called “the long 19th century”. In general, my work attempts to excavate and critique some of the dominant ideas that shape the way scholars understand and think about concepts like “literature” and “modernity” in the Arab world and beyond. I am especially interested in theories and histories of narrative and modern fiction (the novel in particular) and I am currently working on a book about the fascinating ways in which Arab writers appropriated, adapted, and re-wrote 19th century French and English popular fiction during the period known as the *Nahdah* (the modern Arab renaissance) in colonial Egypt around the turn of the 20th century. Though my published work largely focuses on Egypt, many of the issues and problems it raises are also relevant to the postcolonial languages and literatures of Africa and Asia, and as such I'm very proud to be part of the new and exciting Department of African, Middle Eastern, and South Asian Languages and Literatures at Rutgers, where I have the wonderful opportunity to explore with students the shared histories, literary and otherwise, of these rich, diverse and dynamic regions. *Samah Selim is an Assistant Professor of modern Arabic and Middle Eastern literatures.*



The Othering of Islam and Muslim Women in Africa

By Zakia Salime

Excerpts from my article:

Mobilizing Muslim Women: Multiple Voices, The Sharia and The State Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and The Middle East. (2008) 28(1):200-211

This paragraph takes on some of the debates that we had during the Institute for Research on Women's roundtable discussion entitled, “Gender and Islam in Africa” on the importance of historicizing Islam and Islamic practices and emphasizing Muslim women's agency. The orientalist tradition set the frame for understanding Muslim women through a lens that viewed Islam as backward and inherently oppressive for women. Traces of the victimization of Muslim women are not only the privilege of mainstream Western feminism. They have also made intrusions into the writings of leading figures of black feminist thought such as Anna Julia Cooper. Cooper views the “world of Islam” as inherently backward and different from the “civilized” world of Christianity. In the case of the African continent, Islam has been viewed as an external incursion by Arabs that disturbed and even destroyed preexisting egalitarian gender relations. For instance, Mangari Mwai explains the “total domination” of male over female Swahili communities as a result of “Islamic teaching” and “culture” and as an outcome of women's exclusion from Islamic education and scholarship. Nevertheless, Mwai also looks at the juxtaposition of patriarchal strategies emanating from the “Swahili culture” to “that of Arabs” and the way both have subjugated women and hindered their access to what the author calls “Islamic education” and public activities. Whether these studies focus on Islam, Arabic influence, or the more powerful

genital mutilation, the end result is a representation of Muslim women in African communities as “the double other,” for being both Africans and Muslims. This perception of Islam as a static set of rules, practices, and beliefs is shared by most studies that focus on the modes of oppression instead of on women’s agency. Even when agency is perceived, it is limited to the symbolic spots opened in the domain of “Islamic arts”, “rituals and performances” including zaar, and various rites of passage. Hence, even for some African scholars, there is a tendency to treat Africa as a field for anthropological curiosity and to view Muslim communities as a privileged terrain for the othering of Muslim women. The problem with these approaches is that they confuse Islam as a religion, which evidently carries its own gender regimes of power and control, with the political use of Islam and the constant reinvention of religion for the interests of particular social groups. What is needed are studies that examine the historical conditions under which a certain type of Islamic interpretation has evolved in some communities in Africa and how these communities have been using or challenging these interpretations in relation to certain historical contingencies and social environments.

Yoruba Language Study at Rutgers By Moses Mabayoje

The Yoruba proverb, “*Ka rin ka po, yiye ni o n yeni,*” means, “The more the merrier.” This is the present situation with Yoruba language classes at Rutgers. Twenty-two students, including Yoruba heritage learners and students from other nationalities, are studying the language both at elementary and intermediate levels. This renewed interest could be attributed to the realization that there are advantages in becoming speakers of Yoruba. The heritage students see this as an opportunity to gain proficiency in their parents’ language. There are study abroad opportunities and stipends available for them as African language scholars. More importantly, they see usefulness in the acquisition of language both as potential researchers and as jobseekers needing an edge in applying for the job opportunities that await them in America and in other parts of the world. *Moses Mabayoje teaches Yoruba for the AMESALL Department.*

Explore Africa’s Presence in Harlem with OMSI’s Cheryl Wilson

For more than a decade, Cheryl Wilson, Associate Director of the Office of Multicultural Student Involvement, has brought innovative programming to Rutgers that has explored many of the countries and cultures throughout the African diaspora. As the Director of the Douglass Global Village’s Africana House for seven years, Wilson developed syllabi, events, and trips that exposed her class to the diversity within the diaspora. “Working for the university’s Department of Student Life has enabled me to take that a step further and reach an even larger population of students,” Wilson shared. “I’m grateful for the continued support of the faculty and staff of the Center for African Studies; they’ve been very instrumental in the success of my programs over the years.”

Wilson is excited about the many new initiatives she has developed this year for the “ ‘Jersey Roots, Global Reach’ Multicultural Travel Series.” One of these initiatives is a first-ever educational trip entitled, “Exploring Africa’s Presence in Harlem” during Black History Month in February. “I want to take students on a tour of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, shopping at the African marketplace at the Malcolm Shabazz Harlem Market on 116th Street, and end with a late lunch at the popular Senegalese spot, the Africa Restaurant. For those with a sweet tooth, we can even stop by the famous Black-owned Make My Cake Bakery and Café!”

The bus trip to Harlem is planned for Saturday, February 20th. Tickets are \$20 for students and \$30 for staff and guests, which includes round-trip transportation, museum admission, and lunch, but excludes shopping and dessert. Wilson encourages attendees to bring extra money for shopping and sweet tooth indulgences. *For more information about the trip or for a copy of the brochure listing all of the programs sponsored by the Office of Multicultural Student Involvement for 2009-2010, contact Cheryl Wilson: wilson77@echo.rutgers.edu.*

UNDERGRADUATE HIGHLIGHTS

Project Hope for Africa By Judyth Nsababera

Nsababera (center) and Ambassadors of Hope, Germiston South Africa



“When young people tell a story...their peers listen.” I started Project Hope for Africa (PHA) with this African proverb in mind. Our youth in Africa are considered the future of our continent but the problem is that they are dying before they can even contribute to the growth of Africa. PHA is a youth centric organization whose mission is to achieve sustainable solutions to the complex social problems facing youth in Africa resulting from the HIV pandemic. Investing in youth collaboration, leadership, and entrepreneurship today will benefit not only this, but future genera-

tions in Africa, and the world. In 2003 I became increasingly involved in the health and welfare of young people in Africa and since then I have made it my mission to enrich their lives and enhance the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual well-being of youth in Africa.

PHA has offices in the following six sub-Saharan African countries: South Africa, Rwanda, Uganda, Ghana, Nigeria, and Botswana, and our goal is to establish youth centers in twenty countries, covering the whole of eastern and southern Africa, by 2012. We currently run projects to help rehabilitate and stop the spread of HIV/AIDS in prisons. This project is extremely challenging and must be addressed from both a heterosexual and a homosexual perspective in prisons. Homosexuality in many African countries is punishable by either death sentence or lifetime imprisonment. Teaching HIV/AIDS prevention in prisons has helped governments to be more accepting of individuals and has allowed for infected prisoners to receive better treatment and medication. Our prison program allows us to educate prisoners who in turn educate their peers when they are released.

Project Hope for Africa supplements the diet of those who are on anti-retro viral drugs in an effort to render the treatment more effective. PHA has formed a coalition of young positives sharing their hopeful message that living with HIV/AIDS no longer has to be a death sentence; infected youth can lead productive and successful lives. In villages and communities around Africa, Project Hope for Africa works with families that are headed by orphans to help them develop the capacity to overcome the effects of poverty and create a new future for themselves as well as their siblings in their care. Our programs also encourage a primary school education for all children, life skills training, and reproductive health education with an emphasis on HIV/AIDS. We believe that when the youth themselves are the initiators in resolving the problems affecting their lives, and results are sustainable, they will then have the tools necessary to succeed far into the future. When stories are shared everyone learns; we hope to educate each other and, in a unified way, continue to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Project Hope currently seeks summer 2010 volunteers to help educate our youth in Africa. Please visit projecthopeforafrica.org or email me at judyth@projecthopeforafrica.org for information on how you can support PHA's initiatives and on volunteering. We are currently accepting volunteer applications . *Judyth Nsababera is a public health undergraduate.*

Maricarmen Sanchez Writes from Ghana Study Abroad

I will start by telling you that I have not yet been homesick! I have made lots of Ghanaian friends who have given me an authentic view of Ghanaian culture. Ghana is a beautiful place but the real source of its beauty is its people. Everyone is full of joy and hospitality is found everywhere. A common custom is to extend your right hand for a handshake; the use of the left hand is seen as a sign of disrespect. I spend most of my weekends at the beach, traveling, or going to festivals. Ghana has so many traditions, and interesting and historical places to visit. During the evenings the weather cools down and people enjoy the outdoor breeze. I'm from the Caribbean; the food here is a lot like our home cooked food. The local dishes consist of rice, yams, cassava, chicken, and fish. The University of Ghana's academic system is very different from Rutgers, but I'm so grateful for the international student staff who are always available to answer any questions or concerns. I am taking six courses including a traditional dance class, which I am really enjoying! I have been able to manage my classes and also do volunteer work with some of the organizations on campus. Some of the other students studying abroad are from countries such as Norway, China, France, and Germany. Many of us have bonded over this amazing experience! I definitely would recommend Ghana for anyone who wants to study abroad. *Maricarmen Sanchez is an undergraduate majoring in Labor Studies and Employment Relations.*

Twese Update from Gilbert Bonsu, President

Twese hosted three successful fall programs: the Annual Pride Banquet; Culture Shock, a mixer collaboration among the four major African American cultural groups on campus (Twese, the West Indian Student Organization, the Haitian Association, and the Black Student Union); and Danceversity, a dance showcase whose proceeds were donated to the Robert Wood Johnson AIDS Program. Thank you to everyone who supported our programs! Twese will remain focused in the spring on fostering a family-like environment with our members and on educating the Rutgers community about Africa. Two major programs planned for the spring are a forum discussion about prejudice among Africans, Caribbean, and African Americans, and Twese's 19th Annual Fashion Show. Twese will co-sponsor many more programs with Residence Life, the United Black Council, and other groups. Our community service project is the collection of school supplies for Ghanaian schools; Twese encourages education and service in Africa. We also strongly encourage Rutgers students to learn about African cultures through the study of African languages, such as Twi and Yoruba, and other Africa-related classes like African Folklore (see ruafrica.rutgers.edu for a listing of courses on Africa offered each semester). We welcome you to join us at our general body meetings held each Wednesday at 8pm in the Paul Robeson Cultural Center on Busch campus. Hotep (Peace). *Gilbert Bonsu is a public health major.*

Awo Dede Mankatah's Summer 2009 Internship

I had the pleasure of interning with Roseann Marone, the program coordinator of the Robert Wood Johnson AIDS Program at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJAP UMDNJ-RWJMS) and program advisor for UMDNJ's Infectious Disease Center. The internship's aim was to help build a rapport between UMDNJ-RWJMS and Ghanaian medical students through the understanding of HIV/AIDS, its treatment, and deviant sexual behaviors. I researched HIV prevalence rates and treatment in Ghana, the cultural barriers, and the availability of HIV test kits. My final research product was a fourteen page paper ranging from Ghana's national insurance initiative to the availability of appropriate healthcare for those infected with HIV/AIDS. I created a pamphlet about the Human Papilloma Virus, a common sexually transmitted disease that is rampant both in the U.S. and in third world countries, and included vivid pictures for self diagnosis. I also created posters about safe sex practices and the importance of condom use to aid in the prevention of HIV. Finally, I ended my internship by helping Roseann produce toiletry goodie bags for her trip with the International Health Care Volunteers (IHCV) as a token of well wishes from the IHCV members to patients in Ghanaian hospitals. Medical school is my next mission, after I receive my public health degree. Ultimately I plan to work with the U.N. for quality healthcare in Ghana.

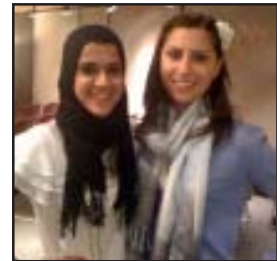
Ciara Ablauf Highly Recommends the CAS Minor in African Area Studies

The CAS minor in African area studies is a wonderful program that I am privileged to have experienced. This multifaceted program offers many intriguing courses on Africa in many different departments and faculty who are eager to share their Africanist knowledge and experiences. The CAS minor appealed to me for many reasons. As a double major in history and political science I wanted to cover new and interesting ground in my academic experience, in a subject that would help to broaden both my historical and cultural perspectives. The minor's course offerings include so many choices, such as pre-colonial African history and cultural courses on African folklore and literature. Most importantly, the minor enabled me to study the less commonly taught African language, Yoruba. Learning Yoruba has been a delightful discovery for me. This minor has introduced me to a new, non-western world that I have not experienced in any other history course. The CAS professors are dedicated to the success of their students. These courses that I've taken for the minor have given me an excellent basis for my other history and cultural courses and have paved the way for new opportunities and career possibilities. Pursue the CAS minor in African area studies; studying Africa will fascinate you!

Thoughts on An African Movie and Dialogue: "Umm Kulthum: A Voice Like Egypt"

By Hoda Abdolrazek and Mervette Jebara

Umm Kulthum, considered by many to be the the voice of all Arab countries, sang songs that were composed from Arabic poems that spoke to all Arabs, regardless of nationality and social class. Umm Kulthum was a political influence as well. When her music was banned from Egyptian radio by the musicians guild for singing to King Farouk, the soon to be president Gammal Abd Al Nasser made sure she was promptly restored to the radio before the Egyptian public could organize and protest. Over four million people attended her 1974 funeral, making it one of the largest funerals in history. As we are both of Arab decent, Umm Kulthum's music has been commonplace in our homes and her life was weaved into our upbringing. We viewed firsthand how she inspired both the young and the elderly generations with the lyrics that she sang so beautifully and pronounced so exquisitely. We propose that Umm Kulthum is viewed as the mother and founder of Arab music as we know it today. *Hoda Abdolrazek (pictured left) is a pre-business undergraduate; Mervette Jebara is an undergraduate majoring in psychology and middle eastern studies.*



African Involvement in World War II By Raj Krishnan

During World War II, the French and the English relied heavily on their African colonies for economic and militaristic resources. This crucial participation propelled the allies to victory, one that may not have been achieved had it not been for the Africans. This sadly has not received its due recognition. In March 2008, Rutgers University hosted "Reevaluating Africa and World War II," a conference which brought together scholars from across the globe to present papers that addressed their underappreciated contribution. As an extension of this conference, African historians from Cornell, Rutgers, Columbia, and Ohio State decided to publish two volumes on the topic. The first is a text of primary sources on Africa and World War II for use in the undergraduate classroom, and the second is an anthology of articles about the war and Africa for use by specialists. My project is to locate, collect, and catalogue various images of Africa and the Africans engaged in the war effort for use in the two volumes. These images hail from many different sources. Some are from large commercial collections such as Getty Images; others are from archival sources such as England's Imperial War Museum and even more images come from private collections, newspapers and other such publications. The database also includes the significance, the owner, and the historical context of each of the images. This is just the beginning for in order to fully comprehend the effects of the unheralded African involvement, more research on the non-digitalized archives of photographs, maps, and newspaper articles must be done. *Raj Krishnan is an undergraduate Aresty researcher majoring in economics. For more information on the Aresty Research Center for Undergraduates visit aresty.rutgers.edu.*

RU WAR By George Castigli

Rutgers University World Affairs Review (WAR) was founded in 2005 and premiered its first volume in 2006. It was conceived as an undergraduate journal, but it is also engaged in a larger political and pedagogic project. WAR is an undergraduate academic organization at Rutgers University with the mission of publishing an annual research-based journal of international relations composed of original interdisciplinary analysis submitted by Rutgers undergraduates along with innovative work by Rutgers faculty. No less than a publication, however, WAR is committed towards engaging the Rutgers community in active ways that move outside of narrow disciplinary boundaries. It is an attempt to chart a new intellectual dialogue that would bring different ideas to pertinent global issues. Encouraged with overwhelmingly positive responses from faculty and undergraduates alike, we are actively engaging with different academic departments in order to bring together these different discourses to shed light on significant global issues that otherwise may not have received such attention. In marking its first five years of publication World Affairs Review anticipates focusing on Africa in the international community in 2010, as well as hosting campus events throughout the year that are designed to raise awareness to this important yet neglected continent.

In projects such as these, World Affairs Review fosters an interdisciplinary perspective and a commitment to positive political and cultural scrutiny. The publication has two main goals: first, to reward serious analytical and theory-generating research in the fields of political science, history, economics, sociology, law, and regional studies; and second, to foster a more informed and mature discussion among undergraduates of the effects of important events, both historic and current, on the relationship between actors in the international community and how these developments affect democratic governance. By promoting constructive forms of research and debate within the diverse Rutgers community, World Affairs Review aspires to contribute in important ways to a worldwide pursuit of global peace and prosperity.

In every issue of World Affairs Review, readers will find fascinating research papers written by their undergraduate peers featured side-by-side with the work of prestigious professors at Rutgers University. Each of these articles are, in their own way, original contributions to the way we perceive the world and how we come to terms with an ever complicated market of ideas. In addition to publishing articles, WAR staff members conduct interviews with recognized experts in various fields including Dr. Eric Davis and Dr. Roy Licklider of the Political Science department, Dr. Yana Rodgers of the Women's and Gender Studies department, as well as policy makers including, most recently, Congressman Dan Burton. All told, World Affairs Review engages a formidable scholarly literature in international relations and crafts it tastefully into a journal that engages both professionals and the general public in a thoughtful manner.

And perhaps just as importantly World Affairs Review is also active in the University community hosting panel discussions and debates that touch upon these very themes of global security and interdependence. In the past, WAR staff have hosted forums that deal with topics as varied as human rights, security policy in Iraq and Afghanistan, piracy in Somalia, and, for the future, discussions on the crisis in Darfur that will feature Rutgers political theorist Stephen Eric Bronner and his experiences as a travelling intellectual spokesman for peace. In these ways and more the World Affairs Review is engaged in a distinctly public enterprise to confront ethical and planetary imperatives and bring them to the surface of broader civic consciousness.

The World Affairs Review would like to invite professors and undergraduates alike to assist us in these efforts as we prepare our special journal issue on Africa. You may contact us at general@ruwar.org with questions or comments. And you may also wish to visit us on the web at ruwar.org which has further information regarding the journal as well as links to our past issues. *George Castigli is a political science and english major, and the RU WAR 2009-2010 Editor and Officer.*

GRADUATE HIGHLIGHTS

Lincoln Addison Researches Gender Relations on a South African Farm

Greetings to all! I presently live on a large-scale tomato farm along the Limpopo River in South Africa. I stay with Zimbabwean migrant workers in a hostel block in the farm compound. I work with them in the fields, picking tomatoes and loading crates on trucks. As an inhabitant of the compound, I also participate in various social activities, such as soccer games and church services (this photo is of me and some farm workers dancing at a church service on the farm.) My research focuses on gender relations, especially the types



of relationships men and women establish with each other. These range from a sort of cash-and-carry prostitution to more established temporary marriages and, rarely, “proper” permanent marriage. How do men and women construct meaning and negotiate their status in these farm relationships? I will continue to live and conduct research on the farm until August 2010, when I will return to Rutgers to “write up” my doctoral anthropology dissertation.

Jesse Bucher’s Doctoral History Research Investigates Steven Biko’s Death



Monument to Steve Biko located outside of his former residence in Ginsberg Township, King William’s Town, South Africa. Photo taken by Jesse Bucher

My presentation at the Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis, entitled, “Nakedness and the Reconstruction of Steve Biko’s Death,” examined how a variety of commentators in South Africa have composed histories of Steve Biko’s death in detention. Biko, the political and intellectual leader of the Black Consciousness movement, died in September of 1977 after receiving fatal head injuries during an interrogation session carried out by the apartheid government’s security police. The paper argued that the particular ways in which elements of Biko’s torture and death were analyzed created space to sustain a broader critique of apartheid’s power and systems of subjugation. In particular I looked at how a variety of commentators - members of the apartheid state, political activists, lawyers, theologians, and biographers - made sense of the fact that Biko was kept forcibly naked during the course of his detention. These commentators have made arguments with the evidence of Biko’s nakedness over the last thirty years in ways that also reflected the shifting political history of South Africa. The presentation was based on the fourth chapter of my dissertation entitled “The Body of Steve Biko in South African History,” which I will defend at the University of Minnesota in spring 2010.

Jill Campaiola's Work: Moroccan Television Drama

Television connects Moroccans to the world, as they are able to watch programs coming from various places such as France - the former colonial power - , the wider Arab world, Turkey, and the United States. Through ethnographic fieldwork focusing on the most popular local and foreign TV series currently shown in Morocco, as well as producers and audiences, I explore how postcolonial identities in Morocco are negotiated and articulated vis-à-vis television drama. My project seeks to understand how individuals perceive these other cultures and their own through the lens of television drama and how television series can be used for the purpose of mental emigration. I analyze how these programs provide an opportunity for individuals to imagine what their lives would be like in other locations, prompting them to interrogate their own national culture in the process. *Jill G. Campaiola is a doctoral candidate in Media Studies in the School of Communication & Information. She is also a research assistant at the Center for Race & Ethnicity. Visit her webpage at: sites.google.com/site/jillcampaiola/*



Jill Campaiola at the African Film Festival of Khouribga (Morocco, July 2009) with film critic N. Kachti and film director D. Aoulad Syad

Sharon Czarnek Creates a Library in Niger, and More



Sharon Czarnek and Aboubacar (Tondi) Mahamane, Training Manager at Residence, Niamey, Niger

Imagine waking up every morning, outside, seeing the sunrise and hearing the familiar sounds of carts going by, roosters crowing, and women pounding the food for the day. This is how I wake up every day in Niger, West Africa. I live in a small rural village of approximately 2,000 people. I am in the Peace Corps and will be here for two years. However, unlike most Peace Corps volunteers, I am not a recent undergraduate. I am currently a registered student at Rutgers working on my MPA with a concentration in International Public Service and Development (IPSD). The students in the IPSD program (who are kindly referred to as the International or Peace Corps group) take an accelerated year long program at the Camden campus. The course work requires 32 credit hours including all basic MPA requirements and specialized classes in the international field with an internship in the community of Camden. It is a very rigorous program to say the least. The internship is coordinated with a class to try and maximize the experience of the student while simultaneously helping the community of Camden. While our classes don't have specific titles that allow us to study particular regions, it is completely possible to have a regional focus. The majority of the papers are on topics of your choice and can be modified to one's interests.

Students simultaneously apply for the Peace Corps and the Rutgers program. Shortly after school is over students depart for their Peace Corps assignment. The Masters International is a program between the Peace Corps and many universities across the nation to allow students to put their skills to practical use while enhancing the educational experience they will receive. Rutgers was the first university to participate in the Masters International Program! Our program is designed to have students complete all their classes before leaving, and then register for a nine hour class while abroad. They will successfully complete a local and international internship. While abroad, assignments and all communication with faculty are web-based.

My particular project that I will document is the creation of a library in our village. Just because I have one project that must be done for Rutgers that does not affect other projects that I am doing. Some of my other completed projects include AIDS outreach, participation in Global Hand Washing Day, radio emissions, an income generating activity using goats, technical trainings on Microsoft Office, and consulting for a consortium of community based groups who focus on youth. While bigger projects are seen as important, the most important work is the cultural exchange that takes place and helping to open people's minds to the idea of other concepts that they have never even considered.

The lessons I have learned about development have been invaluable. This is very important for development in Africa as people tend to refer to the continent in a general way. Very few make the distinction between South Africa, Ethiopia, Morocco, Benin, and Guinea while in fact there are a great many distinctions. Any one of the differences in social norms, linguistic identification, and ethnic distribution factors into development and daily life. Ignoring any of these important aspects can have large ramifications. I have been able to see good and bad examples of actions, programs, and values of NGOs (non-governmental organizations), international organizations, and government organizations that work in truly some of the poorest places on earth. Many people talk about "cultural differences" but use it more as a jargon term or key word without actually defining it. Here one can distinctly identify specific examples. One can examine the differences between work in theory and real life. Reality is a frequently used word in development: have realistic expectations. In Niger, I have been able to experience what reality is to them; how to redefine success; how to adapt; and the realization that change takes a very long time. While anyone can say this, it is a completely different person who can understand it.

Chaunetta Jones Discovers Why PLWA in South Africa Would Refuse Treatment

My dissertation investigates why people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWA) are refusing antiretroviral treatment (ART). Based on 14 months of field research in Grahamstown, South Africa, I argue that economic inequalities and structural barriers have created dire situations that often force PLWA to choose between economic security or health security. Within a context of high unemployment, many PLWA rely on government "disability grants" as their only source of income. Without a grant, most are left with no means to buy food and meet their basic needs. The terms of the disability grant, however, have created a particularly complex dilemma as patients have begun to refuse or modify their adherence to ART in order to maintain their "disability" status and continue to receive the grant. The quandary to choose economic or health security not only impacts the individual, but I argue that it becomes a collective negotiation, as grants often support the livelihoods of several family and community members. Although these "disability grants" are a well-intentioned state intervention, they have created unanticipated and adverse responses to HIV/AIDS treatment.



While in South Africa, I worked closely with many HIV/AIDS organizations in Grahamstown and was very involved in executing several community events and HIV/AIDS-related programs. It was challenging to deal with illness, trauma, and death on a daily basis, but I think the depth of my experiences will enhance my dissertation and offer new ways of theorizing how political and economic forces have real impacts on the health-seeking behaviors of people living with HIV/AIDS, particularly in resource-poor communities. *Chaunetta Jones is a doctoral candidate in cultural/medical anthropology. The Fulbright-IIE Fellowship Program has funded her fieldwork.*

David Kuranga's Focus on International Organizations: Wielders of Power in the Emerging International Order

The world has changed drastically over the past two decades. Today people all over the world have greater ability to move from one country to another without the need for visas or travel documents and in some cases even without passports. In addition the transfer of money and information across borders occurs more frequently today than ever before. International organizations comprised of sovereign nation-states as members are one of the major driving forces behind these trends. Yet in the study of modern international relations these organizations are not adequately recognized in global affairs. The scope of my study is to demonstrate how powerful international organizations are and how much influence they have in the world today. To do this I conducted a comparative study in West Africa, which has historically been the most unstable region on the African continent. The study demonstrates how the region since 2000 has seen relatively few instances of breakdown in constitutional order. This shift can be traced to the action of the Economic Community of West African States, a regional international organization, and the role it has played to break the cycle of instability in the region. The premise behind the study is that if these instruments can be found in one of the most unlikely places actively making a difference then it is likely that they have a similar or even greater impact in other regions throughout the world. Instead of leaving them on the periphery international relations should take this example as part of a growing body of evidence that recognizes the central role of international organizations in modern global affairs. *David Kuranga is a doctoral candidate in the department of political science.*



Mahriana Rofheart's Dissertation on Emigration in Senegalese Literature and Hip-Hop

For the past year or so, I have been working on my comparative literature dissertation entitled, "Don't Abandon 'Our Boat': Shifting Perceptions of Emigration in Contemporary Senegalese Literature and Song" and plan to defend in April 2010. The dissertation argues that today's Senegalese novelists and hip-hop artists ease the dislocations caused by migration through the articulation of affiliations and communities at both local and international levels. I explore novels by authors including Aminata Sow Fall, Ken Bugul, and Fatou Diome, and I also analyze hip-hop songs and videos from a number of artists including Daara J and Didier Awadi. Some of the novels I focus on in my dissertation are Ken Bugul's *Riwan ou le chemin de sable* (1999) and Fatou Diome's two novels *Le ventre de l'Atlantique* (2003) and *Kétala* (2006). In both the novels and hip-hop, returnees as well as potential emigrants are anchored in Senegalese communities, but they nonetheless maintain productive connections to Europe. These local and global affiliations are articulated formally in the novels and with Wolof and French song lyrics and images in hip-hop. Many of the works articulate a renegotiated relationship between Senegal and France that is made possible through overlapping communities and exchanges, as well as successful grassroots projects. As such, the contemporary works depart significantly from the migration narratives found in earlier canonical works from Senegal such as Chiekh Hamidou Kane's novel *L'aventure ambiguë* (1961) and Ousmane Sembene's film *La noire de...* (1966), where emigration is represented as tragic and return as difficult. The strategies evident in the more recent texts thus call for a revisionary understanding of contemporary migration narratives. I am currently supported by a Mellon Dissertation Fellowship from Rutgers, which has enabled me to focus exclusively on writing and revising during the academic year 2009-2010. I look forward to completing my dissertation this spring and thereafter beginning work on the development of a book manuscript.



Johanna Rossi Wagner's Research on Racial Hierarchies, Colonial Culture, and Minority Voices in Italy's Emerging Postcolonial Literature

My research looks at Postcolonial Literature in Italian written by women authors from the Horn of Africa, specifically from the former Italian colonies of Eritrea, Somalia and Ethiopia. The Italian colonial campaign involved East Africa for more than sixty years (1880-1941), but it has been relegated to the margins of Italian historiography due to closed archives and one-sided fascist rhetoric surrounding its happening. My project looks at the recently emerging work of these authors as both more accurate narratives of the colonized experience and forms of resistance to the perpetuated myth of Italy's "good colonialism." The works under investigation also map out strategies for community building and cultural celebration amidst the difficult realities of the African diaspora. *Johanna Rossi Wagner is a doctoral candidate in Italian.*



African Social Movements Fighting Against Unfair Trade Agreements with Europe

By Deborah Scott

Across sub-Saharan Africa, small-scale farmer organizations, non-governmental organizations, church groups and social movements have united to fight against unfair trade agreements with Europe.

Since the 1970s, the 77 states in the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific group (ACP) had preferential access to European markets based on their status as former European colonies. In 2002, the European Union began negotiations with the ACP states for Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). EPAs will essentially be Free Trade Agreements, requiring free trade between the EU and ACP countries, with no duties or quotas on substantially all trade between the regions. Thus, in order to continue enjoying duty-free access to Europe's markets, Africa has been told to open its own markets in return. In addition, the European Union has added issues that are completely outside of the World Trade Organization requirements for a free trade agreement, such as opening up government procurement practices, providing high level intellectual property rights protection, and liberalizing services.

African civil society groups have been fighting to have a voice in the negotiations from the beginning. Over the past seven years, they have faced a variety of challenges and pressures. Most of these groups recognize dangers in open trade with Europe and further liberalized economy – particularly for small-scale farmers, small and medium businesses, young industries, and groups which are already economically marginalized. While civil society groups generally agreed on the potential threats, they did not initially easily agree on strategies for response.

There were multiple choices in strategy. Groups could fight against any EPA at all (no free trade agreements with Europe), in which case they would also need to decide on whether to focus their energies on convincing Europe to create another trade possibility or for African countries to refuse to accept an EPA. Others felt that EPAs were inevitable, and that civil society would be most useful in trying to get the "best EPA possible." Additionally, most groups have to negotiate potential tensions with European NGOs, partners in the fight for fair trade as well as financiers of a great deal of African NGO's work. Sometimes funds are also coming directly from European government agencies.

After several years of internal strategic discussion, the majority of African civil society groups decided to jointly rally around a "Stop EPAs" message. In the process of deliberating together, the African Trade Network (ATN) was born, housed within the Third World Network's office in Accra, Ghana. Within the ATN context, groups come together regularly to report on their national work, share strategies, and develop policy analyses. Some groups have taken an "outside" approach, with a focus on public outreach and mobilization, press work, and external

pressures on both the African governments and European negotiators. Other groups have taken up an “inside” position, building relationships with government officials engaged in the negotiations, attending regional negotiations and public consultative sessions, but engaging in these processes with the primary aim of providing a continual critical perspective.

I lived and worked in Nairobi, Kenya from 2006-2008 as a policy advisor on food sovereignty and trade issues. Most of that time I worked with ACORD, a pan-African NGO headquartered in Nairobi and present in 17 sub-Saharan African countries. I was privileged to be part of the fight against unfair trade deals and towards an alternative vision of agriculture and development in Africa. ACORD continues to struggle with others in the African Trade Network and with partners in Europe, the Caribbean, and the Pacific to counter the message that “developing” countries need *more* economic liberalization.



The internal struggle of the Stop EPA movement to define itself has led to one of the strongest social movements on the continent. In working towards a Ph.D. in geography at Rutgers, I am continuing to engage with the issues of food sovereignty, social movements, and international trade. I am still developing my plans for dissertation research, but they will likely include an engagement either with the policy implications of food sovereignty or an examination of the pan-African fight to Stop EPAs.

Valerie Traore (left), Debby Scott (center), and Ruthpearl Ng'ang'a (right), who together formed ACORD's Pan-African Programme on Food Sovereignty.

Laura Ann Twagira Reports from Mali

Greetings from Bamako to the Center for African Studies. My research is off to a good start in the National Archives of Mali. I am finding that my project on women in the irrigated agricultural zone of the *Office du Niger* is of interest to many Malians because of its continuing importance nationally. In fact, the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family recently published a report (2001) on women's access to land at the Office and other national agricultural projects. It was only in 1996 that women had full access to the land distribution mechanisms of the *Office du Niger*. For rural women in all areas of Mali access to land has been a major economic concern, and I plan to examine this question and its history more closely in my interviews with women farmers.



Laura Ann (right) with good friend Nya in Kalake

My first week here I met with Professor Isaie Dougnon at the University of Bamako, who is a specialist of labor history in Mali. He shared his knowledge of the *Office du Niger* with me and shared several contacts for my field work, including a few local women's development agents. I plan to start my fieldwork in the *Office du Niger* Zone at the end of December. In addition to my working on my history dissertation research, I visited the small town of Kalake where I worked as a Peace Corps volunteer almost ten years ago. I plan to return again this year so that I can interview my *jatigy* (host) Sekou Diarra, who is an elderly hunter and specialist in local medicine. I will also interview several older women, including my *jatigymuso* (the wife of my host) about women's work, in particular agricultural production of products like shea butter.

Thanks again to the Center for supporting my participation in the Oral History Institute in Berkeley this past summer. It has already proven to be invaluable.

Building an African Studies Dissertation through Grants and Fellowships

By Teresa M. Delcorso

A dissertation represents years of intellectual development. As you cultivate your expertise in your research area, you will produce original research that will make an important contribution to your discipline and African studies. Securing external grants and fellowships will facilitate developing your research skills and bring recognition to your scholarly work. Additionally, grants and fellowships will allow you to secure the resources needed to research and write your dissertation along with the added benefit of providing practice in the craft of proposal writing, a skill that will serve you well throughout your career. For these reasons, I encourage graduate students to integrate the process of applying for funding into their graduate careers. This is a practice that is easy to employ because of the multiple funding opportunities available to you as graduate students who study Africa.

There are grants and fellowships that you can apply for at each stage of graduate study. The coursework that you take in your early years as a graduate student will help to develop your disciplinary and subject area expertise. In your first or second year of doctoral work, you may be able to apply for an Early Graduate Study Fellowship such as the National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship or the U.S. Department of Education's Jacob K. Javits Fellowship, to support your coursework and pre-dissertation research. Part of cultivating your expertise may be that you study a new language or learn special research skills such as how to take an oral history or how to run a sophisticated statistical analysis program. You may also need to spend time at your research site testing out research questions, refining your project and cultivating a research network. At this pre-dissertation stage, you may be able to apply for pre-dissertation grants and fellowships such as those offered by the Social Science Research Council, US Department of Education (FLAS) or the West African Research Association.

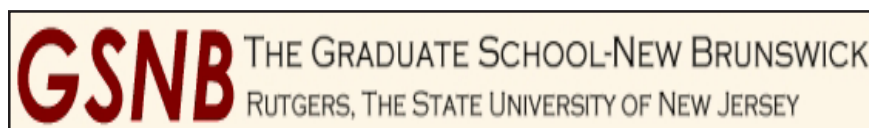
As you transition into the dissertation phase of your work, you will have many fellowship and grant options. Your work in African studies may require you to spend an extended amount of time in Africa, Europe or elsewhere in the U.S. to conduct your research. Some fellowships such as the Fulbrights will require that the applicant is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident. However, there are plenty of fellowships and grants that do not have citizenship requirements, such as ones offered by the Social Science Research Council and National Science Foundation. Finally, there are fellowships to support the writing of the dissertation from funders such as the American Association of University Women, the American Council of Learned Societies and the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, to name a few.

GradFund, the Resource Center for Graduate Student External Support, a service of the Graduate School-New Brunswick, is here to help you throughout your graduate career with your applications. We offer a number of electronic resources which you can access by visiting our website at <http://gradfund.rutgers.edu>. These resources include the GradFund Funder Database, a directory of over 4000 graduate student focused grants and fellowships. We offer individual appointments to help you to: plan for your funding applications, learn more about a funder, and review and critique proposal drafts. We also offer numerous proposal writing workshops and programs throughout the year. To learn more, simply visit our website or send an email to gradfund@rci.rutgers.edu.

In closing, I would like to share with you my four elements to strong grantsmanship: Good timing, good information, good communication and good feedback.

- *Good timing:* Applying for funding successfully requires that you begin to work on your application well in advance of the deadline. Many fellowship winners invest up to six months in the proposal writing process. The proposal development process requires time so you can cultivate your research idea, situate it in the literature of your field and seek feedback.
- *Good information:* You will write stronger applications when you have good information about your grant and fellowship options. The best place to learn about the world of grants and fellowships for graduate students is to visit the GradFund funder database. To solicit more in depth information about the fellowships and grants that you may be interested in applying to, contact the program officer who manages the competition; talk with faculty and fellow graduate students, and meet with the GradFund staff for guidance and information.
- *Good communication:* Good communication is essential both in how you write up your proposal for funding and by keeping your faculty mentors up to speed on your plans to apply for funding so that they are prepared to write letters of recommendation for you. Take advantage of our many proposal writing workshops, workgroups, and mentoring programs that we offer to help you learn how to communicate your research ideas clearly in a proposal.
- *Good feedback:* You won't want to do this alone. Be sure to solicit feedback from your faculty, fellow graduate students and the GradFund staff to write the strongest application possible.

No matter where you are in your graduate studies, it is never too late to start exploring your external funding options. As you embark on your fellowship and grant applications, you will learn how to present your ideas to interdisciplinary audiences as well as to expert and non-expert readers. Students who secure external funding for their work often reflect on how valuable the experience is; it helps them to communicate their ideas more clearly and bolsters their research by providing resources, flexibility, and opportunities to support their scholarly career. To get started on your grant and fellowship applications, send an email to gradfund@rci.rutgers.edu today. *Teresa M. Delcorso is the Assistant Dean for Graduate Student External Support at the Graduate School-New Brunswick, and the Director of GradFund at the Resource Center for Graduate Student External Support. For more information on the Graduate School-New Brunswick visit gsnb.rutgers.edu and on the Resource Center for Graduate Student External Support visit chaser.rutgers.edu/index.html.*



The African Studies Graduate Affiliates have invited Teresa Delcorso to speak at their workshop in spring 2010. Please check the CAS website at ruafrica.rutgers.edu for developments on the organizing of this program.

RUTGERS IN AFRICA

IGERT Grants at Rutgers Include Africa

Rutgers University, in partnership with Princeton University, has recently received a grant from the National Science Foundation for an Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship (IGERT) program entitled, "Nanotechnology for Clean Energy." This new program, led by Prof. Manish Chhowalla and worth approximately \$3M over five years, is an interdisciplinary graduate education, research, and training program focused on scientific, technical, and policy issues related to the development and implementation of sustainable and affordable clean energy generation and storage technologies. IGERT programs are designed to "meet the challenges of educating U.S. Ph.D. scientists and engineers who will pursue careers in research and education by establishing innovative new models for graduate education and training. IGERT programs transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries by facilitating diversity in student participation and preparation, and by contributing to a globally engaged science and engineering workforce.

The Nanotechnology for Clean Energy IGERT fellowship program emphasizes innovations in nanotechnology, and will involve participating IGERT Fellows in a dynamic educational exchange program between the U.S. and select African institutions. Professor Eric Garfunkel (Chair, chemistry and chemical biology) and Professor Wole Soboyejo (Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, Princeton) are developing exchange programs with schools and institutions in Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria, and Ethiopia. Garfunkel recently visited Ghana with CAS Director Ousseina Alidou and the School of Arts and Sciences Dean of International Programs, Joanna Regulska, to explore possibilities; he will visit Nigeria in December with Soboyejo. CAS members have been advising Professor Garfunkel and the IGERT program on the broader (non-science and engineering) aspects of graduate student training (culture, politics, economics, etc.).

This IGERT fellowship program acts as the educational "arm" of the Institute for Advanced Materials, Devices and Nanotechnology (IAMDN). The program includes a new interdisciplinary curriculum, *Nanotechnology for Clean Energy*, featuring novel courses in fundamental (nanoscale) materials science, physics, chemistry, and electrical engineering with specific applications to energy technology development.

A second NSF IGERT was awarded to Rutgers this year (Rutgers has the most IGERT programs in the U.S.) entitled, "Renewable and Sustainable Fuels." This IGERT focuses on biofuels and will involve international collaboration with Brazil, South Africa, and China. *Visit IGERT online nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=12759*

Update from the International Science and Education (ISE) Internship in Africa

International Science and Education-Africa (ISE-Africa) interns Andrew Glaser (senior, environmental policy, institutions and behavior & agricultural science, School of Environmental and Biological Sciences SEBS), Nicholas Greene (junior, agricultural science, SEBS) and Syed Abbas (senior, University College), returned from Africa on August 22 after completing the first part of their internship at the University of Ibadan (UI), Ibadan, Nigeria and the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute, Thika (KARI-Thika), Kenya. Abbas and Greene interned at UI while Glaser interned at KARI-Thika. The interns shared photos and the following statements regarding their experience in Africa:

- "Traveling to Africa to study tropical vegetables and grasses was one of the greatest experiences of my life. By working directly with farmers as well as researchers and scientists we received a comprehensive and thorough overview of the Nigerian agricultural system and how it affects the nation's people." - Nicholas Greene

- “During July and August, I interned at the Kenyan Agricultural Research Institute - National Horticulture Research Center in Thika, Kenya as part of the ISE program to study the Kenyan agricultural system, the challenges of tropical agriculture, food security, and the potential for African Traditional Leafy Vegetables.”

- Andrew Glaser

- “During my ISE internship in Nigeria I learned a great deal from visiting different farms, institutions, and cultural centers. This enabled me to look at things first hand and develop my opinion about the agricultural system in Nigeria. I consider this a huge opportunity to learn and develop my skills.” - Syed Abbas



Top photo: Andy Glaser (2nd from left) at a nightshade (*Solanum scabrum*) vegetable farm in Ruiru District, Kenya
 Bottom photo: Nicholas Greene (2nd from left) and Syed Abbas (3rd from left) in a sweet corn experimental farm, near Ibadan, Nigeria

The internship component of the ISE project addresses the goal of “*Strengthening the Global Competence of Students*” by expanding students’ international perspectives, knowledge, and skills through instructional and experiential learning. In the ISE program, students are introduced to agricultural systems in Africa, the Americas and Asia. The knowledge acquired will be used to advance (i) food crop diversification in the Mid-Atlantic to respond to changing demographics, (ii) research on new crops for biofuels to enhance alternate energy source development for the U.S. economy, and (iii) curriculum internationalization at SEBS. The ISE project entitled “*Agricultural competitiveness in New Jersey and the United States: new crop options*” is funded by USDA/CSREES and matched 100% by Rutgers’ New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. Michael Lawton (Biotech Center) is project director, while Albert Ayeni and James White (plant biology and pathology) and Gerben Zylstra (Biotech Center) co-direct.

The Kolunje Water and Sanitation Project

Engineers Without Borders (EWB) USA is a nonprofit organization, partnering with developing communities around the world, to implement sustainable engineering solutions that work toward improving the quality of life. These international projects are comprised of a team of students who work with university faculty, professional engineers and community members to assess the needs of communities and collaborate to construct sustainable systems that will eventually operate without external assistance. The Rutgers chapter of EWB (EWB-RU) has development projects in Thailand and Guatemala. Recently, EWB-RU has adopted a project in Kolunje, a village in the Maseno division of Kisumu, Kenya.

The Kolunje Water and Sanitation Project entails sinking a borehole in the community to provide a better source of clean water for the villagers. The villagers principally use wells, streams, ponds, springs, and rivers for their daily needs. However, the supply of water depends heavily on the seasons. During the dry seasons, households spend several hours per day obtaining water by walking to the nearest water source, which can be as far as 3 kilometers. Although volunteers from the community try to manage water sources closer to the village, challenges arise with respect to community capacity, organization, and a lack in the understanding of safe water use and sanitation. EWB-RU hopes to bring a steady source of clean water to this community.

The EWB-RU team is currently preparing its first assessment trip for January 2010. During their stay, the team plans on taking initial surveys of the site so that designs can be drafted for the implementation stage of the project. The team will also hold workshops with the community to teach the members about proper equipment maintenance and water sanitation practices. Over

12,000 villagers will benefit from the completion of this project. Through safe practice and cleaner water, there will be a considerable reduction in illness and death caused by exposure to unsafe water. Significant amounts of time will be saved with an easier accessibility to the water source, so members can focus more on endeavors such as farming, marketing, and education. Children, who often fetch water for their families, will especially benefit from the time saved and instead apply it to the free education system provided by the government. EWB-RU looks forward to learning about the rich culture and heritage that Kenya has to offer and to helping the people of the Kolunje achieve healthier and happier lives. *Prerana Pradhan, the author of this article, is an undergraduate student in biomedical engineering.*

The Center for International Social Work's Africa Focus

By Cari Taric

The Center for International Social Work (CISW) is a component of the Rutgers School of Social Work with a focus on promoting global citizenship and professional action for social work students and professionals. This work includes a microenterprise development project in Kenya, a research project focused on social work and the child welfare workforce in Africa, hosting visiting faculty from Lesotho, and coursework focused on international social work.

CISW recently partnered with Ecosandals.com to support the power of microenterprise development in Korogocho, Kenya. Ecosandals.com produces and sells eco-friendly sandals made by Kenyan sandal-makers, who are also shareholders of Ecosandals. One example of these shoes is the Akala sandal, which is based on sandals worn by Massai herdsman with used tires as soles. Ken Schultz, Rutgers School of Social Work lecturer, notes that Ecosandals.com highlights the opportunity that microenterprise development offers, "The sale of a pair of sandals anywhere in the world can provide the social safety net that is so lacking throughout East Africa. It can provide healthcare, shelter, food, and more. The Ecosandals.com project works to transform the social landscape in a very impoverished urban area in Kenya through private enterprise, with the sale of eco-friendly sandals locally and globally." All of the profits from the sale of sandals go directly back to the community business and the sandal-makers. In addition to supporting the sandal-makers through income Ecosandals.com offers educational opportunities to help ensure the long term success both individually and for the local community as a whole. Currently one master of social work graduate student intern is placed with Ecosandals.com; however, Ken expressed that there are diverse opportunities for individuals to learn and serve in the areas of fashion, marketing, microenterprise development, social entrepreneurship and education.



Rose Ivayo crafts the "patti" sandal



Rebecca Davis, Director of CISW, completed a research study on *Social Work and the Child Welfare Workforce in Africa*. The findings were presented at the U.S. Government Interagency Working Group focused on vulnerable children around the world. This report highlights the opportunities, framework, and challenges for the reemergence of the social work profession in various countries throughout Africa with a focus on the child welfare workforce. The study was a review of qualitative research in every country in Africa. CISW also hosted visiting faculty, Christopher Chitereka, from the department of social work, National University of Lesotho, Africa. Christopher is a past president of the Zimbabwe National Association of Social Workers where he was instrumental in passing social work regulation legislation, and is currently the Regional Representative for Southern Africa – Association of Schools of Social Work in Africa.

Additionally, CISW works to integrate opportunities to focus on social work from a global perspective through two Master's level social work courses. The International Social Work course explores international social work practice, past and present, and the application of social work to vulnerable groups within the global context of today. As a component of the course, students complete a country study. The majority of students focus their country study on one of the countries in Africa. The Social Work with Immigrants and Refugees course examines the ever-changing dimensions facing social workers who work with refugee and immigrant clients. CISW is working towards the creation of an additional course offering focused on undergraduate students. CISW's emerging relationships with CAS and other international organizations will continue to enrich the offerings made for both students and professionals. *Cari Taric is a social work student intern.*

Cultural Immersion Experiences in South Africa and Transformational Learning

Launched in the fall of 2001, the Rutgers Graduate School of Education's South Africa Initiative (SAI) bridges cultures, connects educators, and provides hope for learners and students from South Africa and the U.S. The program aims to improve the quality of the global community and provide access to knowledge, support, and resources that are critical to student achievement. Through lived experiences and distance learning technology, SAI facilitates a true exchange of information that contributes to the improvement of education on a global scale.



District 6 Museum, a living museum

The Rutgers Graduate School of Education offers a unique 3-credit summer experience in South Africa with direct exposure to its schools, communities and most importantly its people. Immersion through this culturally-focused service learning program provides the cultural lens by which diversity is experienced and transformational learning occurs. The immersion experience, July 15 - August 1, 2010, includes airfare, lodging, most meals and interactions with schools and indigenous communities in addition to opportunities to participate in the customs and daily routines of work, recreation, and socialization.

Immersion through culturally-focused service learning provides the cultural lens by which diversity is experienced. Through direct cross-cultural contact, this culturally-focused community-centered international immersion experience provides a means for participants to examine beliefs and assumptions about self and others through in-vivo experiences. Participants begin to challenge their thinking and judgments about self and others. Immersion into a different culture heightens an individual's personal racial and cultural awareness and encourages a process of examining thoughts, feelings, values, and behaviors that might be ignored or denied in a similar or familiar cultural context. South Africa provides the setting for experiencing the intersection of race, class, and culture within a unique socio-historical, socio-cultural, and socio-political context.

Participants are immersed into the culture and communities inclusive of indigenous environments and rural townships located in the Gauteng and Western Cape provinces of South Africa, including Pretoria, Johannesburg, Soweto, Cape Town, and Paarl. Participants attend workshops and seminars led by South African university faculty and educational leaders. Participants also engage in service learning in cultural communities designed to extend cultural awareness, knowledge and skills. Consistent with the goals of service learning, participants work with residents with HIV/AIDS and with high-risk families and youth through non-profit community-based organizations and also provide service in primary and secondary schools. Schools mirror society and are a means by which participants are able to experience issues of privilege and oppression as well to understand the cultural values reinforced within the society. *Applicants must hold at least a bachelor's degree. Teachers and educational leaders are welcome to apply. For more information contact Dr. Darren Clarke at dclarke@dceo.rutgers.edu or 732-932-7496 ext 8106.*

The South African Large Telescope's Many Research Applications for Astronomers

Rutgers is one of an international consortium of partners who own and operate the Southern African Large Telescope (SALT). The telescope is located in the semi-arid Karoo region of South Africa, about 400 km from Cape Town. With its 11-meter diameter primary mirror, SALT is the largest telescope in the Southern Hemisphere, and among the largest optical telescopes in the world. Rutgers astronomers Ted Williams and Jack Hughes are the university's representatives on SALT's governing boards, and will use the telescope to pursue their interests in the structure of galaxies and supernova explosions, respectively. Saurabh Jha and undergraduate student Joe Rodriguez have used the high-speed imaging camera on SALT to time the transits of exoplanets orbiting about Sun-like stars. Carlton Pryor plans to search for dark matter in the small satellite galaxies that swarm about the Milky Way. Eric Gawiser will use SALT to explore high redshift galaxies and clusters that map out the large scale structure of our universe. Andrew Baker will use SALT optical observations to complement his radio-wave observations of forming galaxies. Chuck Keeton will use the gravitational bending of light to probe the super-massive black holes in the cores of galaxies and quasars. SALT will provide the data for the Ph.D. thesis research programs of many of our graduate students, and our undergraduate students will get their first hands-on experience with astronomical observations from the telescope. SALT is currently completing an extensive technical upgrade of its optics and instrumentation, and is expected to resume routine scientific operations in the first quarter of 2010. Much more information is available online at salt.ac.za.



A view of the center of our Milky Way Galaxy over the SALT dome

FRIENDS OF AFRICA CONTRIBUTE

Health Care Forces Unite For a Medical Mission to Ghana

By Roseann Marone

The Bristol Myers-Squibb Pediatric Infectious Disease Center (BMS-PIDC) collaborated with the International Health Care Volunteers (IHCV) for a medical mission to Ghana. IHCV was established in 2001 by Dr. James Aiken and Dr. Charletta Ayers who are both University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (UMDNJ-RWJMS) physicians and faculty. Drs. Aiken and Ayers have dedicated their time and effort to provide health care to women and children in underserved populations specifically for gynecological, gynecological-oncological, uro-gynecological, and general surgery. Medical teams in 2009 provided care in Kumasi and Cape Coast, Ghana.

Roseann Marone, the program coordinator of the Robert Wood Johnson AIDS Program at the UMDNJ-RWJMS and program advisor for UMDNJ's Infectious Disease Center, provided HIV disease education to the nurses at the Cape Coast District Hospital in Cape Coast. Additional efforts on the trip included working with the IHCV pediatrician in providing pediatric care to patients at the Cape Coast District Hospital and in the small town, Mfoum. There was also a visit to an orphanage in Cape Coast. Information on the Human Papilloma Virus was developed for the doctors at the Korle-bu Medical Center in Accra by Awo Dede Mankatah, a Rutgers Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy summer intern. Awo Dede was instrumental in preparing background information on the health care needs in Ghana and in particular HIV programming in Ghana. She provided a wealth of helpful information from her personal and academic experiences in Ghana for the BMS-PIDC trip.

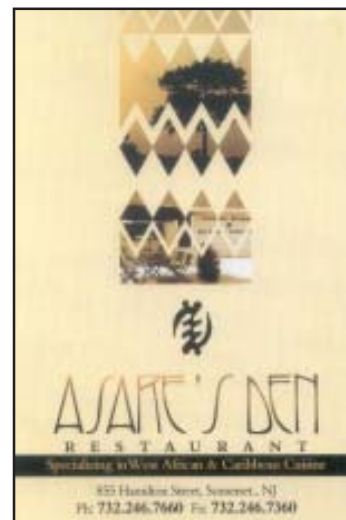
The BMS-PIDC intends to continue its partnership with the IHCV to help promote HIV disease education and HIV testing in Ghana and to improve the care of children.

Taste West African Fare at Asare's Den

By Carl Bampoe, Owner

My dream to one day open a restaurant that would cater to many different cultures came true when my wife and I opened Asare's Den Restaurant in July 2007 at 855 Hamilton Street in Somerset. My wife, Magalie Bampoe-Parry, and I are both alumni of Rutgers University. We reside in Somerset with our two children. Prior to owning and operating the restaurant, I was an elementary school teacher, then a middle school vice-principal.

We would love for you to visit Asare's Den for a sampling of our enticing menu and inviting atmosphere. Our multicultural West African, Caribbean, and soul food menu includes the following West African savory dishes: light soup, palmnut soup, and groundnut (peanut) soup; fufu (pounded plantain and cassava or yam); boiled yam, rice, and plantain served with different stews; omo tuo (mashed rice balls with groundnut soup); jollof rice; red-red (fried plantain and bean sauce); kenkey (boiled fermented corn dough) and fish; kelewele (deep fried and heavily spiced plantain); and shito (hot pepper sauce). For a comprehensive listing of our menu items please visit our website: asaresdenrestaurant.com. Our eclectic restaurant features art work, clothing, and beautiful doors from Ghana. The restaurant emanates a relaxed atmosphere in a well-lit space.



With the success of the restaurant (we thank Rutgers, CAS, and all of our patrons for their continued support) I am now on to my next endeavor at the West African Global Academy, a non-profit institution in Ghana, West Africa. WAGA will teach 200 students annually how to become effective leaders and entrepreneurs, and will encourage them to take advantage of the educational and economic tools and opportunities present in West Africa and in the world.



Three members of the Groupe Bogolan Kasobane, Segou, Mali
Photo: © Janet Goldner, 2005

employed by many contemporary artists throughout the world who use the materials at hand in their work. Their findings enabled them to read the significance of the cloths which were in danger of being lost due to the cultural disruption and erasure that resulted from colonialism.

Goldner first traveled to West Africa in 1973. Since her 1995 Fulbright, she has been to Mali every year to work on a wide variety of cultural projects including collaborating with the Groupe Bogolan Kasobane.

Artist and Scholar Janet Goldner Spoke at Rutgers: The Groupe Bogolan Kasobane from Mali

The Groupe Bogolan Kasobane is a group of six artists from Mali who have been working together since 1978. The members of the Groupe were concerned about perpetuating the culture of Mali. After having graduated from art school, they traveled throughout Mali to research the traditions and practices of *bogolan* (mud cloth). The Groupe's insistence on using local materials in their art and "elevating" materials associated with craft is a strategy

Fambul Tok – Community Healing in Sierra Leone

By John Caulker

On a cold and rainy evening, the Yengema community was preparing for their first reconciliation ceremony, the first of its kind, since the end of the 11-year brutal civil war in Sierra Leone. As the rains slowly ceased, the community and surrounding villages started walking briskly towards the bonfire.



Image credit: fambultok.org

With a level of uncertainty, one brave woman, Isata Brima, emerged from the community to illustrate her horrific past. She was gang raped by several rebels and in particular her neighbor, Nyuma Saffa. Before the war, Nyuma wanted to marry Isata, but she declined. The war became a perfect opportunity for Nyuma to seek revenge. One day, Nyuma returned to Yengema with the intentions of taking Isata away. Upon arriving, he found Isata had just given birth three days earlier. Isata appealed to the armed rebels for mercy, however, Nyuma was bent on inflicting pain on Isata for rejecting him years ago. Nyuma and the group proceeded in raping Isata and mutilating her three day old baby. After the horrendous incident, her husband came home to find his wife battered and baby killed. Enraged, he ran after the group but was fatally shot.

The reconciliation ceremony now required that Nyuma come face-to-face with his victim, Isata. Nyuma confirmed what had happened and apologized. He begged for forgiveness in front of the community.

The groundbreaking initiative, *Fambul Tok*, draws on Sierra Leone's "family talk" tradition of discussing and resolving issues within the security of a family circle. It is rooted in the understanding that reconciliation is a process and not a one-time event. *Fambul Tok* continuously consults with communities to ensure community participation and ownership of the program and to determine whether or not people are ready to reconcile.

Following the reconciliation ceremonies, *Fambul Tok* helps communities organize activities including radio listening clubs and soccer games, while in some villages, community members have started their own projects, such as community farms. Sierra Leone is, in many ways, a best-case scenario for reconciliation. The people have a strong urge to reconcile and make sacrifices for the sake of peace and social harmony. Isata and Nyuma's experience - and the experience of others like them - illustrates the ways that truth-telling and reconciliation lead to a unified social fabric.

Developed by Forum of Conscience in partnership with the U.S. based foundation, Catalyst for Peace, *Fambul Tok* was launched in early 2008 as a pilot project in the Kailahun district, where the war started in 1991. The project is presently implemented in three districts: Kailahun, Moyamba, and Kono.

To learn more about Fambul Tok please visit fambultok.org. The following text below can be found on the website's homepage: What is Fambul Tok? Six years after the end of Sierra Leone's brutal civil war, there is still a need for sustainable peace throughout the country. Since the eleven-year-long war ended in 2002, an internationally designed Truth and Reconciliation Committee has come and gone, while the United Nations backed criminal court is about to wrap up its final deliberations on the handful of men deemed most responsible for fomenting the conflict. Despite millions of dollars spent on these proceedings, neither body has succeeded in fundamentally changing the daily lives of Sierra Leoneans who still grapple with the aftermath of war. Fambul Tok - Creole for "Family Talk" - is a new national initiative that addresses that need for change.

Ambrose James (Search for Common Ground, Sierra Leone) Visits Rutgers

Recently, Ambrose James, the Country Director for Search for Common Ground (SFCG) in Sierra Leone (pictured to the right; left Ambrose James, right Professor Allen Howard, history), visited Rutgers University. SFCG is an international conflict transformation organization that is dedicated to its mission of “transforming the way the world deals with conflict, away from adversarial approaches towards cooperative solutions.” As part of its effort to institutionalize “common ground” programming, which provides a forum for discussion from diverse perspectives in a problem-solving manner, SFCG in Sierra Leone helped establish the Independent Radio Network (IRN). Initially launched to support transparency and credibility during the 2002 elections, IRN has grown to become an association of 21 independent and community radio station partners. Since that time, IRN has built its reputation with objective, credible reporting and in surveys following the 2007-2008 national and local elections IRN was identified as the most trusted news network in the country. Working within an environment of regionalized and ethnically polarized political parties, a weak judiciary system and a non-performing civil service sector, SFCG has worked with IRN to train journalists and provide an environment for the sharing of best practices. It has created peer group standards in journalistic integrity and defended journalists from political pressures and harassment. Through IRN, the people of Sierra Leone are encouraged to openly discuss key issues facing the country, becoming more informed and active citizens. A brief video highlighting IRN and its work is available online at sfcg.org/programmes/sierra/programmes_sierra.html.



Sierra Leone’s ten-year war claimed 50,000 lives, left thousands mutilated, displaced over a million people, and turned more than 7,000 children into child soldiers. Since the end of the war in 2002 the country has struggled to rebuild and to heal. SFCG has been working in Sierra Leone since 2000 to strengthen the capacity of communities to participate in building a tolerant, inclusive society for sustainable peace. Along with projects like IRN, activities like radio programming, town hall meetings, trainings and exchange visits are all encouraging citizen engagement in the fragile recovery process. SFCG’s multi-media production studio, Talking Drum Studio (TDS), airs innovative radio programming on more than 27 stations around the country, and has listenership rates approaching 90%. In fact, according to an independent evaluation in 2004, “SFCG has nurtured a climate of trust between previously belligerent factions while promoting the inclusion and participation of the whole community in local decision-making. The intensive media coverage of the electoral process resulted in distinct surprises in the election results, with independent and women candidates emerging victorious in political party strongholds and male dominated cultures.”

As one example of this kind of peacebuilding, the TDS radio program *Troway di Gun* (or throw away the gun) aired while the disarmament and reintegration process was taking place in the country. *Troway di Gun* was hosted by two former combatants, one who served with the rebel Revolutionary United Front and the other who fought with the government-aligned Civil Defense Forces. Through the program, the two hosts talked about their experiences with: putting down their weapons and rejoining civilian life, the changes that they had to make individually and within their society as they did so, and encouraging other young men and women to do the same. Now more than seven years later, one of the hosts has gone on to be hired as the radio station manager in his home town, standing as a highly respected leader of his community and integrating the common ground principles he learned with SFCG into the community radio station that he runs.

In addition to Sierra Leone, SFCG works in 18 countries in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Eastern Europe. SFCG's programs are committed to contextualizing their approaches to best benefit the communities in which they work. Working with local staff, SFCG has a large toolbox from which to draw varied, culturally specific approaches to conflict resolution. Through these activities, SFCG strengthens capacity on the ground to implement long-term processes of change. Currently, SFCG implements projects such as using participatory theater to foster dialogue in divided communities, reinforcing capacity at local radio stations, conducting conflict resolution trainings and producing television and radio shows. Soap operas, spot messages and comedies promote collaborative approaches to problem solving through an engaging social activity that fosters open dialogue. In participatory theater, traveling troupes of actors present a scene of conflict relevant to the local situation and then ask the audience for feedback and ideas of the best approach to resolution. In addition to its work in Sierra Leone, SFCG has implemented elections projects in Burundi, the DRC, and Liberia, among others. More information is available about SFCG and its global programming on its website at sfcg.org.

Controlled Environment Agriculture for Sustainable Food Production in Africa

By Omobowale Mobolaji

I arrived at Rutgers University's department of environmental science on the 12th of October, 2009 after a long journey from the tropical climates of Southwestern Nigeria, West Africa. The sole purpose of my trip is to learn the basics of what is known as "Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA)" or "Greenhouse Engineering," from an institution that can provide reputable expertise in this field - Rutgers.



The need for the consumption of agricultural products is as old as mankind. The demand for these products has increased exponentially with the ever exploding human population. In Africa for instance, the inadequate supply of food has been a general problem which has inspired advances in the realms of science and technology. Nations like the U.S., Canada, and Israel have been able to exploit the endless possibilities of CEA among other farming practices in ensuring a balanced, sufficient, and year-round food supply.



Nigeria and indeed Africa, though blessed with numerous edible plants (fruits and vegetables in particular), experience seasonal variations which do not allow for adequate food supply. This is a problem that can be solved with the knowledge of greenhouse engineering. While irrigation solves the problem of water shortage during dry seasons and periods of drought, it can only do so for native crops in a particular locality. However, CEA makes it possible to grow both native crops as well as crops introduced from other climates under optimum growing conditions.



As important as this branch of engineering is to sustainable agriculture, experts in the field are generally few and far between in Sub-Saharan Africa. Even though CEA is being practiced in certain places in the region, such as in Kenya and in South Africa, it has remained an imported technology in the hands of foreign investors who tend to make money through agriculture in areas where labor can be employed rather cheaply.

With the ever increasing concern for environmental issues such as drought, erosion, and desertification, CEA may very well be the saving grace that provides a badly needed balanced diet to the African children of today and tomorrow.

Moroccan Artist Lalla Essaydi's Rutgers Exhibition

Les Femmes du Maroc

Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum

January 30 - June 06, 2010

Born in Morocco into a conservative Muslim family and educated in Europe and the United States, Lalla Essaydi is poised at the intersection of two cultures. She is one of several contemporary Islamic women artists whose subjects are informed by feminist perspectives and personal experience. Her work has garnered increasing acclaim in Europe and America; in 2011 she will be the subject of a mid-career survey at the North Carolina Museum of Art.

Lalla Essaydi: Les Femmes du Maroc comprises 17 large scale photographs selected from the artist's most recent series. The title of the series, *Les Femmes du Maroc*, is adapted from Eugene Delacroix's iconic painting, *Les Femmes d'Algers* of 1834. The painting by Delacroix, while based on his actual travels in North Africa, is a fictive vision of languorous women in an opulent harem. Paintings like these, which coincided with the nineteenth-century European occupation of much of the Arab world, fostered a view of the Middle East as a sensual paradise of sexually available women, rich colors and exotic tastes. Essaydi takes these Orientalist paintings of the nineteenth and early twentieth century as a point of departure for her own decolonializing enterprise. She drains the paintings of color, removes all male figures, drapes the women and all surfaces in white fabric, and sets everything within a shallow stage-like space. All visible surfaces-- backdrops, floor, drapery, skin-- are inscribed with Arabic calligraphy. These texts are subversive on several levels. In Islamic cultures calligraphy is a male art form, used primarily to transcribe the Q'uran and other sacred literature, however, in Essaydi's work, the texts-- musings on personal freedom, cultural and individual identity, memory and communication taken from her personal journals-- are applied with henna, a tradition associated with women. Her transformations of the original paintings reverberate with the historical past while revealing the colonial and gendered perspectives of historic and contemporary Orientalism.

A symposium related to the exhibition will take place on March 3, 2010 from 2 to 5 pm at the Zimmerli Art Museum. Featuring faculty from the University of Pennsylvania and Rutgers University, the symposium will address some of the issues that the photographs raise from a variety of perspectives.

This exhibition was organized by Nick Capasso, Senior Curator at the DeCordova Sculpture Park + Museum, Lincoln, Massachusetts, and is funded by a generous grant from the Lois and Richard England Foundation. At the Zimmerli support for this exhibition and related programs has been provided from an endowment fund established by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The exhibition at the Zimmerli is coordinated by Donna Gustafson, Liaison for the Mellon Program and Assistant Curator of American Art. The Zimmerli's operations, exhibitions, and programs are funded in part by Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/ Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts; Johnson & Johnson; and the donors, members, and friends of the museum. All photographs are lent by the artist, courtesy of the Edwynn Houk Gallery, New York, New York, and the Howard Yezerski Gallery, Boston, Massachusetts. Each work is a chromogenic print mounted on aluminum.



Les Femmes du Maroc: Moorish Woman, 2008.



Les Femmes du Maroc: Grande Odalisque, 2008.



Les Femmes du Maroc: #20, 2008.



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