

Sean Hanretta
Northwestern University
Department of History
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curriculum vitae

Employment:

Associate Professor, Northwestern University (2014-present)

Associate Professor, Stanford University (2011-2014)
Director, Center for African Studies at Stanford (2013-2014)
Visiting Assistant Professor, University of Florida (2010-2011)
Assistant Professor, Stanford University (2004-2011)
Visiting Lecturer, Dartmouth College (Jan-June 2004)
Visiting Assistant Professor, Colorado College (Sept-Dec 2003)
Teaching Assistant, University of Wisconsin-Madison (1996-2000, 2002)

Education:

Ph.D. (History, 2003) University of Wisconsin-Madison
M.A. (History, 1997) University of Wisconsin-Madison
B.A. (History, 1994) Colorado College

Peer-reviewed Publications:

Books

Islam and Social Change in French West Africa: History of an Emancipatory Community
(2009, Cambridge University Press)

Articles

“Kaffir’ Renner’s Conversion: Being Muslim in Public in Colonial Ghana,” *Past & Present* no. 210 (Feb., 2011), 187-220.

“To Never Shed Blood’: Yacouba Sylla, Félix Houphouët-Boigny and Islamic Modernization in Côte d’Ivoire,” *Journal of African History* 49:2 (2008), 281-304.

“Gender and Agency in the History of a West African Sufi Community: The Followers of Yacouba Sylla,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 50:2 (2008), 478-508.

“Muslim Histories, African Societies: the Venture of Islamic Studies in Africa,” *Journal of African History* 46 (2005), 479-492.

“Women, Marginality and the Zulu State: Women’s Institutions and Power in the Early Nineteenth Century,” *Journal of African History* 39 (1998), 389-415.

Book chapters

“Formal Care: Bureaucracy and Muslim Religious Identity in the Cold Coast/Ghana,” in *Religion, Media and Marginality in Modern Africa*, ed. Becker, Cabrita and

Rodet (Ohio University Press, forthcoming)

“The River of Salvation Flows through Africa: Blyden, Armattoe and the Redemption of the Culture Concept,” in *Indigenous Visions: Rediscovering the World of Franz Boas*, Isaiah Wilner and Ned Blackhawk, eds. (Yale UP, forthcoming)

“New Religious Movements,” in *Oxford Handbook of Modern African History*, ed. Parker and Reid (Oxford, 2013)

“Space and Conflict in the Elisabethville Mining Camps, 1923-1938,” in *A History of Prison and Confinement in Africa*. Florence Bernault, ed. (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003). [revised version of 1999 chapter below]

“Space in the Discourses on the Elisabethville Mining Camps: 1923 to 1938,” in *Enfermement, prison et châtiments en Afrique: du 19e siècle à nos jours*. Florence Bernault, ed. (Paris: Karthala, 1999)

Publications in preparation

Books:

Developing Love and Death: Ghanaian Muslim Weddings and Funerals in an Era of Reform

Making History in West Africa: Professionals and Publics in the Evolution of an Intellectual Project, 1922-1981

A History of West Africa, 1000 to the Present (co-author with Richard Roberts)

Articles:

“African Historians and African History, 1960-2000”

“Oral History and the Islamic Tradition”

“The Struggles of Muslim Youth in Ghana: Rituals as Flashpoints”

“Dying Muslim in Ghana”

Other

Publications:

“Islam and Postemancipation in French West Africa: Exploring the History of Yacouba Sylla,” *Items and Issues (Social Science Research Council)* 3:1-2 (2002), 16-18.

Grants

and Fellowships:

International Relations Undergraduate Summer Research Fund (\$5,600)

Stanford Humanities Lab: Animating the Archive Grant (\$5,000) (Declined)

Mellon-Stanford Humanities Center Seminar Grant (\$7,500)

Stanford Office of Technology Licensing Research Incentive Award (\$25,000)

VPUE Faculty Undergraduate Research Grants (2004-5: \$3,875, 2006-7: \$1,950)

Stanford IIS-Hewlett Foundation Research Award (\$3,100)

Carter G. Woodson Postdoctoral Fellowship (2003-2004) (Declined)

Annual FLAS Fellowship (2002-2003) University of Wisconsin

Social Science Research Council Dissertation Fellowship (2000-2001)

Fulbright-Hays Dissertation Fellowship (2000-2001)

University Fellowship (1996-2003) University of Wisconsin

Social Science Research Council Predissertation Fellowship (1998-1999)
Honorary MacArthur Fellow (1998-1999) University of Wisconsin
Vilas Fellowship (1997-1998) University of Wisconsin
Summer FLAS Fellowship (1997) University of Wisconsin
Mellon Fellowship in Humanistic Studies (1995-1996)

Courses

Taught:

Stanford University:

“Africa in an Age of Empires”; “African History through Literature and Film”;
“Nationalism, Pan-Africanism and Beyond”; “Africa in the Twentieth Century”;
“Worlds of Islam: Introduction to the Humanities”; “History without Documents”;
“African History before European Conquest”; “Islam in Africa”; “Intellectual and
Cultural History of Modern Africa”; “History of Death and Dying”; “Muslim
Modernities”; “Capitalism and Its Discontents”; “Approaches to History”

University of Florida:

“Africa to 1800”; “African Death: From Slavery to Genocide”; “France’s Empire”;
“Practicum in History: Non-traditional Sources”

Dartmouth College:

“Africa until 1800”; “Africa since 1800”; “Nationalism and Decolonization in Africa”;
“Religion in Africa and the African Diaspora”

Colorado College:

“African Religions in Historical Perspective”; “Africa and Europe until 1919”; “The
Emergence of Modern Africa”; “Africa and the Making of the Atlantic World”

University of Wisconsin:

“An Introduction to Africa (interdisciplinary, as instructor)”; “Islamic History from 500
to 1500” (as TA); “Africa from 1500 to 1870” (as TA); “Africa since 1870” (as TA)

Service:

Departmental (Stanford)

Ph.D. students advised: Keren Weitzberg (History, conferred 2013), Sipiwe Ndlovu
(MTL, conferred 2013)

Ph.D. students co-advised: Liz Thornberry (conferred 2011), Jessica Powers, Kendra
Tappin, Courtland Quinn, Lauren Jarvis (conferred 2012), Will McPherson,
Stephanie Hassell (conferred 2014), Erin Pettigrew (conferred 2014), Touma
Kunjo, Rebecca Wall, Stephanie Quinn (all History)

Ph.D. students secondary advisor and/or dissertation committee: Rachel Petrocelli
(History, conferred 2011), Emily Burrill (History, conferred 2007), Michelle
Bourbonniere (History, conferred 2013), Ariela Marcus-Sells (Religion), Rachael
Hill (History), Michelle Apotsos (Art History, conferred 2013)

Graduate training workshops (2005-2013)

Various departmental committees including Medieval Search Committee, Policy
Committee, Undergraduate Studies Committee, Graduate Studies Committee,

etc.

Advisor for History, Literature and Arts track

Departmental (Florida)

Graduate Professionalization Committee

Adjunct Oversight Committee

University (Florida)

Advisory Committee, Center for African Studies

Islam in Africa Working Group (Center for African Studies)

Advisory Committee, Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere

University (Stanford)

Director, Center for African Studies at Stanford (2013-2014)

Pre-major advisor (2013-2014)

Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies, Dean's Faculty Advisory Committee (2004-2011)

Center for African Studies (CAS) Steering Committee (2004-2013) (and chair curriculum committee, 2011-2012)

African and African American Studies Advisory Board (2012-2014)

Instructor (2010-2013) Freshman Seminar program ("African History through Literature and Film")

Member of the Steering Committee, Program in Modern Thought and Literature (2006-2013) (and central admissions committee, 2011-2012)

Affiliated Faculty member, Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity (2007-2014)

Application reviewer: Stanford Humanities Center external faculty fellowships (2006-2012)

RISCRE fellowship reviewer (2012)

Co-coordinator, Stanford Humanities Center Workshop on Empires and Cultures (2005-2006)

Search committee in Religious Studies (Islam) (2006-2007)

Instructor (2006, 2007) and Co-Coordinator (Spring 2007), Introduction to the Humanities Program Course, "Worlds of Islam"

Out-of-department graduate student orals committees: 2; outside chair of committees: 7

Professional

Editor, *Ghana Studies*, 2013-present

Advisory Editorial Board, *Journal of African History* (2010-present)

Manuscripts reviewed: Indiana University Press, Brill, Longman Publishers, Palgrave Macmillan, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, *The Canadian Journal of History*, *Africa Today*, *Journal of African History*

Books reviewed: *Journal of African History* (David Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History*, Cambridge, UK, 2004 and Nehemia Levtzion and Randall L. Pouwels, eds., *The History of Islam in Africa*, Athens, OH, 2000), *Africa Today* (Benjamin F. Soares, *Islam and the Prayer Economy*, Ann Arbor, 2005), *African Studies Review* (Benjamin F. Soares, ed., *Muslim-Christian Encounters in Africa*,

Leiden, 2006), *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (Ghislaine Lydon, *Saharan Trails*, Cambridge, UK, 2009), *Journal of African History* (Holger Wiess, *Accommodation and Revivalism: Muslims, the State and Society in Ghana from the Precolonial to the Postcolonial Era*, Helsinki, 2008).

Conferences and workshops organized (selected): section chair for papers on religion (seven panels), African Studies Association Annual Meeting, 2006; organizer, “Rethinking the Islamic Library: African Archives, Scholars and the Public,” Stanford University, May 2007; “Globalizing Black Intellectual History,” Stanford University, spring 2010 (co-organizer); “Slavery, Social Justice and Islam in West Africa,” University of Florida, April 2011; Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies Workshop, “Beyond the Islamic Public Sphere in Africa,” April 2014; CAS Symposium, “Political Theory and Practice in the Central African Crises,” May 2014

External tenure reviews: Four (2010, 2013, 2014, 2014)

Papers Presented (selected):

- “The River of Salvation Runs Through Africa: Edward Blyden and the Culture Concept,” African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD, November 2013 (and Panel Chair and Discussant)
- “Formal Care: Religion and Written Genres in the Gold Coast/Ghana,” Religion, Media and Marginality in Africa since 1800, London, March 2013
- “Preaching and Burying: Modernism and Funeral Debates in the Gold Coast, 1908-1960,” African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, November 2011
- “Dying Muslim in Ghana: Death as an Intellectual and Social Practice in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries,” William Allen Brown Memorial Lecture, University of Wisconsin, April 2010
- “Marrying Muslim in Ghana (Gold Coast): Wedding Debates and Practices in an Era of Development and Reform,” African Studies Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, November 2009
- “The Struggles of Muslim Youth in Ghana: Rituals as Flashpoints,” conference on “Muslim Youth in Africa,” Northwestern University, Program in African Studies, April 2009
- “Sources on the Muslim Social History of the Gold Coast/Ghana,” Invited Seminar, Institute of African Studies, Legon, Ghana, February 2009
- ““Kaffir” Renner’s Conversion: Being Muslim and the Politics of Self-Invention in Ghana, 1923-1954,” conference on “Islam, Contested Authority, and the Making of Everyday Lives in Africa,” Indiana University, October 2007
- “Text De-Centered Research and the Guest House of African History,” Rethinking the Islamic Library: African Archives, Scholars and the Public, Stanford University, May 2007
- “Defining Muslim Communities in Colonial Gold Coast,” Historical Society of Ghana Annual Meeting, Accra, Ghana, August 2006
- “Ghostwriters in the Archives: French Colonial Knowledge and African Religious

Competition,” *Empire Lost: France and Its Worlds*, Stanford University, April 2006

“Islam and Emancipation in French West Africa: The Case of Yacouba Sylla,” Invited Seminar, University of Ghana at Legon, September 2005

“Explanation and Narration in the History of a West African Sufi Community: Gender and Agency among the Followers of Yacouba Sylla,” Faculty Seminar, Center for African Studies, Stanford University, May 2005

“Traditions, Oral Traditions, and the Traditional: Reflections on Categories of Sources and Interpretations,” Pre-Colonial African History in a Post-Colonial Age: University of Wisconsin African History Symposium, March 2005

“The Meaning of Freedom: Islam and the End of Slavery in West Africa,” Africa Table, Stanford University, February 2005

“Repaying the Gift of Work: Yacouba Sylla and the Moral Economy of Sufi Labor in the Ivory Coast,” African Studies Association Annual Meeting, October 2003

“Sufism and ‘Afro-pessimism’ in Ouologuem’s *Bound to Violence*,” Colloquium on Islam in African Literature, University of Wisconsin, November 1999

“The Uses of History and Literature in Contemporary South Africa,” Midwest Graduate Students African Studies Conference, February 1998

Other Panels

and Presentations (selected):

Organized film series, *Chris Marker and the World*, Fall 2013 (*Grin without a Cat*, *Letter from Siberia*, *Far from Vietnam*, *Sunless*, A.K.). Introduced and moderated *Grin without a Cat*.

Audience “talk back” with actors and director for Stanford Repertory Theater production of *An Inspector Calls*, 2014

Chair: “Missionaries in West Africa/Les Missionnaires en Afrique occidentale,” French Colonial Historical Society Annual Meeting, May 2009

“Oral History and Muslim Societies,” The Aga Khan Council of the U.S., Training Workshop on Ismaili-American History, Houston, November 2007

Invited Discussant: “Islam and the Postcolonial Public Sphere in West Africa,” African Studies Association Annual Meeting, October 2007

Other Education:

Intensive Arabic Program (Summer 1998) Middlebury College

Intensive Bambara Program (Summer 1997) University of California-Los Angeles

Intensive Latin Program (Summer 1994) University of Washington-Seattle

Language

Competencies:

French: excellent reading comprehension, conversational with errors

Arabic: good reading comprehension, conversational with many errors

Portuguese: good reading comprehension, beginning conversational

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Hausa: basic conversational
Bambara: basic conversational
Soninke: beginning conversational
Twi: beginning conversational

Affiliations:

American Historical Association
African Studies Association (and Ghana Studies Council)
Historical Society of Ghana