

Fallou Ngom, PhD
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EDUCATION

- 2002 PhD, French Linguistics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- 1997 MA, French (with emphasis on linguistics), University of Montana
- 1996 Maîtrise, Grammar and Linguistics, Gaston Berger University, Senegal
- 1994 Licence, Grammar and Linguistics, Gaston Berger University, Senegal

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2017- Professor of Anthropology, Boston University
- 2017-20 Director, African Studies Center, Boston University
- 2008-17 Tenured Associate Professor of Anthropology and Director of the African Language Program, Boston University
- 2007-08 Fulbright Lecturing & Research Scholar, Gaston Berger University
- 2007-08 Tenured Associate Professor of French and Linguistics, Western Washington University (on leave)
- 2002-07 Assistant Professor of French and Linguistics, Western Washington University

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

- Islam in Africa and Ajami Studies
- African Muslims in the Americas
- African Linguistics and Sociolinguistics
- Interactions between Islam and African Traditional Religions

PUBLICATIONS

Beyond Rituals: The African Sufi Odyssey of Shaykh Ibra Faal (book in progress).

Single-authored Books

- 2025 *Beyond African Orality: The 'Ajamī Poetry of Sēriñ Mbay Jaxate* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press).
- 2016 *Muslims Beyond the Arab World: The Odyssey of 'Ajamī and the Murīdiyya* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press).
Winner of the 2017 Melville J. Herskovits Prize for the best book in African studies.
- 2006 *Lexical Borrowings as Sociolinguistic Variables in Saint-Louis, Senegal* (Munich, Germany: Lincom Europa Academic Publishers).
- 2003 *Wolof—Languages of the World: Materials, No. 333* (Munich, Germany: Lincom Europa Academic Publishers).
- 2000 *Phonetic and Phonological Description of Mandinkakan as Spoken in Ziguinchor* (Munich, Germany: Lincom Europa Academic Publishers).

Edited Books and Journal Issues

- 2025 *Music as Cultural Text: Performance Traditions in West Africa and its Diasporas*, edited by Babacar Mbaye, Fallou Ngom, Khadimou Rassoul Thiam, and Alioune Willane (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan).
- 2023 “Ajami Literacies of Africa: Volume I,” edited with Daivi Rodima-Taylor, David Robinson, and Rebecca Shereikis. Special issue, *Islamic Africa*, Volume 14, No. 2.
- 2023 “Ajamī Literacies of West Africa: Volume II,” edited with Daivi Rodima-Taylor, David Robinson, and Rebecca Shereikis. Special issue, *Islamic Africa*, Volume 15, No. 1.
- 2023 “Travelling Islam: The Circulation of Ideas in Africa,” edited with Annachiara Raia, Mayke Kaag, and Maarten Kossmann. Special issue, *Islamic Africa*, Volume 14, No. 1.
- 2020 *The Palgrave Handbook of Islam in Africa*, edited with Mustapha H. Kurfi and Toyin Falola (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan). *This volume of over 700 pages that I led is the most recent comprehensive study of Islam in Africa.*
- 2017 “Ajamization of Islam in Africa,” edited with Mustapha H. Kurfi. Special issue, *Islamic Africa*, Volume 8, No. 1-2.

- 2010 *Facts, Fiction, and African Creative Imaginations*, edited with Toyin Falola (New York, NY: Routledge).
- 2009 *Oral and Written Expressions of African Cultures*, edited with Toyin Falola (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press).

Refereed Articles

- 2024 “Ahmadu Bamba,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*, January 30: 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.013.336>.
- 2023 “Introduction: ‘Ajami Literacies of Africa: The Hausa, Fula, Mandinka, and Wolof Traditions,” by Fallou Ngom, Daivi Rodima-Taylor, and David Robinson, in *Islamic Africa*, Volume 14, No. 2: 119-143.
- 2023 “The Geographic Spaces of ‘Ajami in West Africa,” by Karen Barton and Fallou Ngom, in *Islamic Africa*, Volume 14, No. 2: 144-161.
- 2023 “Introduction to Travelling Islam,” by Annachiara Raia, Fallou Ngom, Mayke Kaag, and Maarten Kossmann, in *Islamic Africa*, Volume 14, No. 1: 1-4.
- 2019 “Beyond African Orality: Digital Preservation of Mandinka ‘Ajami archives of Casamance,” by Fallou Ngom and Eleni Castro, in *History Compass*:1-16.
- 2017 “Introduction,” by Fallou Ngom and Mustapha Kurfi, in “‘Ajamization of Islam in Africa,” Special issue, *Islamic Africa*, Volume 8, No.1-2: 1-12.
- 2017 “West African Manuscripts in Arabic and African Languages and Digital Preservation,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopedias: African History*: 1-28. <https://www.bu.edu/pardeeschool/files/2017/10/Oxford-Research-Encyclopedia-article.pdf>.
- 2010 “Ajami Scripts in the Senegalese Speech Community,” in *Journal of Arabic & Islamic Studies*, Volume 10, No. 1: 1-23.
- 2010 “Taboo-Racism: The Mouride Perspective on Arabism,” in *Arena Journal*, Volume 33-34: 236-253.
- 2009 “Ahmadu Bamba’s Pedagogy and the Development of Ajami Literature,” in *African Studies Review*, Volume 52, No. 1: 99-124.
- 2006 “Loanwords in the Senegalese Speech Community: Their Linguistic Features and Sociolinguistic Significance,” in *Language, Communication, and Information*, Volume 1: 103-113.

- 2005 “Les implications sociolinguistiques des emprunts du wolof au français,” in *Safara: Revue Internationale de Langues, Littératures et Cultures*, Volume 4: 147-164.
- 2004 “Ethnic Identity and Linguistic Hybridization in Senegal,” in *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, Issue 170: 95-111.
- 2004 “Guidelines for the Use of Language Analysis in Relation to Questions of National Origin in Refugee Cases,” with Diana Eades et al., in *International Journal of Speech, Language and the Law*, Volume 11, No. 2: 261-266.
- 2003 “The Social Status of Arabic, French and English in the Senegalese Speech Community,” in *Language Variation and Change*, Volume 15: 351-368.
- 2002 “Linguistic Resistance in the Murid Community in Senegal,” in *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, Volume 23, No. 3: 214-226.
- 2002 “Linguistic Borrowing as Evidence of the Social History of the Senegalese Speech Community,” in *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, Volume 158: 37-51.
- 2002 “Les variables sociolinguistiques dans le journal satirique sénégalais: Le cafard libéré,” in *Journal of the American Association of Teachers of French*, Volume 75, No. 5: 914-924.
- 2000 “Sociolinguistic Motivations of Lexical Borrowings in Senegal,” in *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences*, Volume 30, No. 2: 159-172.
- 1999 “Sociolinguistic Profile of the Senegalese Speech Community,” in *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences*, Volume 29, No. 1: 131-146.

Book Chapters

- 2025 “Introduction: Urbatext and African Music Scholarship,” in *Music as Cultural Text: Performance Traditions in West Africa and its Diasporas*, edited by Babacar Mbaye, Fallou Ngom, Khadimou Rassoul Thiam, and Alioune Willane (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan).
- 2024 “African Language Archives and the Decolonization of African Studies,” in Special Issue, *Regards Croisés: Langues, Cultures, et Enseignement au Sénégal*, edited by Anna Marie Diagne and Adjaratou Oumar Sall, *Mémoires de l’Institut Fondamental d’Afrique Noire*, No. 95: 177–195.
- 2020 “Introduction,” in *The Palgrave Handbook of Islam in Africa*, edited by Fallou Ngom, Mustapha H. Kurfi, and Toyin Falola (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan), 1-15.

- 2020 “Digital Archives for African Studies: Making Africa’s Written Heritage Visible,” in *Libraries and Archives in the Digital Age*, edited by Susan L. Mizruchi (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan), 83-107.
- 2018 “Ajami Literacies of West Africa,” in *Tracing Language Movement in Africa*, edited by Ericka A. Albaugh and Kathryn M. de Luna (New York, NY: Oxford University Press), 143-164.
- 2015 “Afterword,” in *African Asylum at a Crossroads: Activism, Expert Testimony, and Refugee Rights*, edited by Iris Berger, Benjamin Lawrence, Tricia Redeker Hepner, and Meredith Terretta (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press), 247-256.
- 2015 “Murid Ajami Sources of Knowledge: The Myth and the Reality,” in *From Dust to Digital: Ten Years of the Endangered Archives Programme*, edited by Maja Kominko (Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers), 119-164.
- 2013 “Sub-Saharan African Literature, ‘Ajami,’” by Fallou Ngom and Alex Zito, in *Encyclopaedia of Islam III*, edited by Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, and Everett Rowson (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill), 145-152.
- 2012 “Popular Culture in Senegal: Blending the Secular and the Religious,” in *Music, Performance and African Identities*, edited by Tyler Fleming and Toyin Falola (New York, NY: Routledge), 97-124.
- 2012 “Murid Identity and Wolof Ajami Literature in Senegal,” in *Development, Modernism and Modernity in Africa*, edited by Augustine Agwuele (New York, NY: Routledge), 62-78.
- 2008 “Forensic Language Analysis in Asylum Applications of African Refugees: Challenges and Promises,” in *Migrations and Creative Expressions in Africa and the African Diaspora*, edited by Niyi Afolabi, Toyin Falola, and Adesanya A. Adesanya (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press), 219-237.
- 2005 “Linguistic and Sociocultural Hybridization in Senegalese Urban Spaces,” in *Urbanization and African Cultures*, edited by Steve Salm and Toyin Falola (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press), 279-294.
- 2002 “Lexical Borrowings as Pathways to Senegal’s Past and Present,” in *Africanizing Knowledge: African Studies Across the Disciplines*, edited by Christian Jennings and Toyin Falola (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers), 125-147.

Selected Book Reviews, Encyclopedia Entries, and Other Writings

- 2024 “Digitising the Histories of Islamic West Africa,” by Fallou Ngom and Daivi Rodima Taylor, *Endangered Archives Blog*,

<https://blogs.bl.uk/endangeredarchives/2024/03/digitising-islamic-west-african-histories.html>.

- 2024 “Exploring African Ajami in the Era of Digital Humanities,” by Fallou Ngom and Daivi Rodima-Taylor, *Brill Blog*, <https://blog.brill.com/display/post/guest-post/abstract/exploring-african-ajami-in-the-era-of-digital-humanities.xml>.
- 2021 Mamadou Lo, *Un aspect de la poésie “wolofal” mouride: L’éducation morale et spirituelle de l’aspirant (al murid) dans la production de Sëriñ Mbay Jaxate* (Dakar: L’Harmattan Senegal, 2020), *Islamic Africa*: 1-4.
- 2020 “*Nàttoo di Kerkerani Awliyā-i*: Hardship is the Price of Sainthood: Excerpts from Muusaa Ka’s Ajami Poem, with Translation and Scholarly Context,” in *Bellingham Review*, Issue 80 (Spring): 104-109.
- 2018 Graziano Krätli and Ghislaine Lydon, eds, *The Trans-Saharan Book Trade: Manuscript Culture, Arabic Literacy, and Intellectual History in Muslim Africa* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2018): 335-355.
- 2015 “Remittances as Spiritual Investment: A Senegalese Perspective,” in *Perspectives in Financial Inclusion Series: African Diaspora and Remittances*, with Daivi Rodima-Taylor (Boston, MA: BU Center for Finance), 5-6.
- 2013 Updated version of “African Languages and Literatures: West Africa” (initially written by Mervyn Hiskett in 1994), in *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press).
- 2013 Anne Storch, *Secret Manipulations: Language and Context in Africa* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), in *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, Volume 17, No. 2: 247-250.
- 2012 “Le corpus wolof de la littérature mouride: Un océan de sagesse et de baraka pour l’humanité,” in *Actes du 1^{er} Colloque International du Grand Magal de Touba sur le Soufisme* (Dakar, Senegal): 172-185.
- 2011 “African Ajami Library-AAL,” in *BU African Studies Center Newsletter*, Issue 1 (2011): 6-11.
- 2009 “Sample Ajami Page of Sëriñ Muusaa Ka,” in *History of Peoples: Recasting the Past: The UNESCO Courier*, No. 8: 10.
- 2007 “Wolof,” in *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, Volume 4 (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill): 723-725.
- 2008 “My Visit to Timbuktu: The City of the 333 Saints,” in *West African Research Association Newsletter* (Fall): 13.

- 2007 Bathie Ngoye Thiam, *Le parricide* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2005), in *Journal of the American Association of Teachers of French*, Volume 80, No. 4: 958-959.
- 2005 "The Secular Use of Ajami Writings in Senegal," in *West African Research Association Newsletter* (Spring): 17-18.
- 2003 "Fulani," in *Encyclopedia of Twentieth-Century African History*, edited by Paul Tiyambe Zeleza and Dickson Eyoh (New York, NY: Routledge), 227-229.
- 2001 "Pulaar," in *Encyclopedia of the World's Languages: Past and Present*, edited by Carl Rubino (New York, NY: H.W. Wilson), 572-575.
- 1994 *A Glossary of Mandinka*, translated from English into French by Fallou Ngom, Ablaye Diakité, and Kéba Tounkara (Dakar, Senegal: UNICEF), 1-162.

SELECTED LECTURES AND CONFERENCES

- 2025 **(Invited lecture)**, "Ajami Studies: The New Frontier in the Study of Islam in Africa and Beyond," Global Humanities Now, Brandeis University, Nov 14.
- 2025 **(Distinguished lecture)**, "Ajami Manuscripts: New Sources of Knowledge for African and African Diaspora Studies," Annual Distinguished Scholar Lecture, Center for the Study of Africa and the African Diaspora, New York University, Nov 11.
- 2025 **(Invited lecture)**, "Ajami Sources: An Underexplored Aspect of Indigenous African Knowledge Systems," The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), October 1 [via Zoom].
- 2025 **(Invited lecture)**, "Ajami Writing Traditions of Africa: The Myth and the Reality," Anthropology Colloquium, Brown University, March 11.
- 2024 **(Keynote lecture)**, "Ajami Manuscripts and the Illusion of Illiteracy in Africa," African Studies Association Outreach Council, December 7 [via Zoom].
- 2024 **(Invited lecture)**, "Beyond African Orality: Sufi Poetry and Ethics-centered Islam," Islamic Studies Center, Duke University, October 10.
- 2024 **(Invited lecture)**, "Project RIA: Readers in Ajami and Companion Multimedia Website," by Fallou Ngom and Davi Rodima-Taylor, conference hosted by the US Department of Education, Washington DC, April 12.
- 2024 **(Invited lecture)**, "Ajami Archives and Knowledge Production about Africa," Program in African Studies & Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies (PIIRS), Princeton University, March 21.

- 2024 **(Invited panelist)**, “Languages and Archives in Knowledge Production about Africa,” Toyin Falola Interviews, March 3 [via Zoom].
- 2024 **(Invited panelist)**, “Le Programme des Archives en Péril de la British Library,” Webinar organized by the British Library, February 22 [via Zoom].
- 2023 **(Invited lecture)**, “Beyond Oral Sources: Ajami Manuscripts as New Mines of African Knowledge,” Sesquicentennial Lecture sponsored by the Department of History and the Marcus W. Orr Center for the Humanities, University of Memphis, November 9.
- 2023 **(Invited panelist)**, “*Omar*: Scholar Perspectives on the Writings of an Enslaved African,” sponsored by the Boston Lyric Opera and the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center, April 26.
- 2023 **(Invited lecture)**, “Manuscripts on Magic: Healing, Divination, and Protection Techniques in Wolof & Mandinka Manuscripts,” Digital Lecture Series, British Library, March 6 [via Zoom].
- 2023 **(Invited lecture)**, “Ajami Traditions of Africa,” sponsored by CAORC (Council of American Overseas Research Centers) and WARC (West African Research Center), Dakar, Senegal, January 13 [via Zoom].
- 2022 **(Keynote lecture)**, “Digital Archives of Muslim Africa: Making Africa’s Ajami Manuscripts Visible,” Digital Preservation of Religious Collections, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, June 30 [via Zoom].
- 2022 **(Keynote lecture)**, “African Languages as Pathways into African Knowledge Systems,” African Language Teachers Association Annual Conference, April 16 [via Zoom].
- 2021 **(Invited lecture)**, “L’importance des sources ajami dans l’étude de l’Afrique,” Unité de Recherche en Ingénierie Culturelle et en Anthropologie (URICA), Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegal, September 17 [via Zoom].
- 2021 **(Keynote lecture)**, “The Significance of Ajami Sources in the Study of Muslim Africa,” LUCIS keynotes, Leiden University, June 24 [via Zoom].
- 2021 **(Opening lecture)**, “Book Launch: The Palgrave Handbook of Islam in Africa,” Islamic Studies Center, Duke University, May 14 [via Zoom].
- 2021 **(Invited lecture)**, “Ajami Archives of Muslim Africa: Their Significance in African Studies,” Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought in Africa (ISITA), Northwestern University, May 5 [via Zoom].

- 2021 **(Invited lecture)**, “African Ajami Sources: New Sources of Global and Humanistic Perspectives,” Translating Africa/Africa in Translation Symposium, Rutgers University, April 1 [via Zoom].
- 2020 **(Keynote lecture)**, “The Odyssey of Ajami,” Center for African Studies, SOAS Festival of Ideas, University of London, October 19 [via Zoom].
- 2020 **(Invited lecture)**, “Beyond African Oral Traditions: Ajami Sources as New Mines of African Knowledge,” Center for International Studies, Ohio University, February 25.
- 2020 **(Invited lecture)**, “Ajami Manuscripts and the Illusion of Illiteracy in Africa,” Faculty Development Seminar sponsored by CAORC (Council of American Overseas Research Centers) and WARC (West African Research Center), Dakar, Senegal, January 10 [via Zoom].
- 2019 **(Distinguished Lecture)**, “Beyond Orality: Non-Europhone Sources and African Studies in the 21st Century,” 62nd Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Boston, November 22.
- 2019 **(Invited lecture)**, “Beyond Oral Traditions: Lessons from Ajami Sources of Africa,” African Studies Center, Michigan State University, October 17.
- 2019 **(Invited lecture)**, “The New Field of Ajami Studies and the Transformation of African Studies,” National Autonomous University of Mexico, Mexico City, September 18.
- 2019 **(Invited lecture)**, “Nåttoo di Kerkeraani Awliyā-i: Hardship is the Price of Sainthood,” Colloque: Le contact entre colonisateurs européens et colonisés musulmans en Afrique de l’Ouest, Université de Nantes, France, June 26.
- 2019 **(Invited lecture)**, “Beyond African Orality: Ajami Traditions of Muslim Africa,” The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, Medford, MA, April 12.
- 2019 **(Invited lecture)**, “Beyond Orality: Ajami Sources of Knowledge in Muslim Africa,” Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT, April 4.
- 2019 **(Invited lecture)**, “Ajami Sources and African Studies in the 21st Century,” Association of African Studies Programs, Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, Washington, DC, March 29.
- 2019 **(Invited lecture)**, “The Odyssey of Ajami and the Muridiyya,” Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA, March 11.
- 2019 **(Invited lecture)**, “West African Ajami Traditions: Longue Durée and Local Innovations,” The Transregional Politics of Literary Language: Comparative

Work Across African and Asian Contexts, Harvard University, Boston, MA, February 21.

- 2019 **(Invited lecture)**, “Ajami Manuscripts and the Illusion of Illiteracy in Muslim Africa,” Faculty Development Seminar organized by the Council of American Overseas Research Centers and the West African Research Center, Dakar, Senegal, January 9.
- 2018 **(Panel Chair)**, “Islam in Africa: Sectarianism, Identity-making, and Local/Global Influences,” 61st Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Atlanta, December 1.
- 2018 **(Invited lecture)**, “Manuscripts of Muslim Africa: Their Writers, Forms, and Contents,” The British Library, London, October 1.
- 2018 **(Invited lecture)**, “Ajami Manuscripts as Major Sources of African Knowledge Systems,” Reason and Embodiment Conference, Universität Tübingen, September 28.
- 2018 **(Invited lecture)**, “African Sources of Knowledge in Ajami Script: The Case of the Muridiyya,” University of California, Los Angeles, May 16.
- 2018 **(Invited lecture)**, “Muslims Beyond the Arab World,” Comparative Approaches to the Literatures of Africa, the Middle East, and the Global South, New York University, May 7.
- 2018 **(Invited lecture)**, “The Meaning of Arts in the Muridiyya Sufi Order of Senegal,” Sufi Stories of West Africa: Senegal’s Muridiyya, University of Colorado, Boulder, April 12.
- 2018 **(Keynote lecture)**, “Non-Europhone Sources and Knowledge Production about Africa in the 21st Century,” Graduate Students in African Studies 8th Annual Symposium, Indiana University, March 24.
- 2018 **(Invited lecture)**, “African Odysseys: African Languages, Arabic Scripts, and Epic Poetry in West Africa,” Vernacular Islam Workshop, University of Michigan, March 6.
- 2018 **(Invited lecture)**, “The Odyssey of Ajami in Muslim Africa,” African Studies Center, University of Florida, Gainesville, March 2.
- 2018 **(Invited lecture)**, “Muslims beyond the Arab World: Language, Arts, and Music in Senegal,” Forum for Scholars and Publics, Duke University, January 30.
- 2017 **(Panel Chair)**, “Ajami Sources of Sub-Saharan Africa,” 60th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Chicago, IL, November 17.

- 2017 **(Invited lecture)**, “Ajami Digital Scholarship: Challenges and Opportunities,” Recording Lives: Libraries and Archives in the Digital Age, Boston University Center for the Humanities, October 6.
- 2017 **(Keynote lecture)**, “Language Analysis for the Determination of Origin (LADO): A New Subfield of Forensic Linguistics,” Education and Africa’s Transformation, Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria, July 3.
- 2017 **(Distinguished lecture)**, “Beyond ‘Europhone’ Sources: African Sources of Knowledge in Ajami and Indigenous Scripts,” Epistemology and Methodology: Seminar on Decoloniality, Faculty Distinguished Personality Lecture, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, June 30.
- 2017 **(Invited lecture)**, “African Languages in Knowledge Production about Africa in the 21st Century: Challenges and Opportunities,” Distinguished Lecture Series, Lagos State University, Nigeria, June 28.
- 2017 **(Invited lecture)**, “Forensic Linguistics and Asylum Seeking: Language Analysis for the Determination of Origin (LADO),” Rhodes College, April 26.
- 2017 **(Discussant)**, Professor Ousmane Kane’s book, *Beyond Timbuktu: An Intellectual History of Muslim Africa*, Harvard Divinity School, April 3.
- 2017 **(Keynote lecture)**, “Languages and Scripts as Pathways into African Epistemologies,” 17th Annual Africa Conference, University of Texas at Austin, April 1.
- 2017 **(Keynote lecture)**, “The African Library, the Europhone, and the Non-Europhone Intellectuals,” First Conference of the Northeast Consortium for Programs in African Languages, Columbia University, March 25.
- 2017 **(Invited lecture)**, “Ajami Sources of Knowledge: The Case of the Murdiyya Tradition,” sponsored by Yale University Library’s SCOPA group, Yale African Students Association, and Yale Muslim Students Association, February 23.
- 2017 **(Distinguished lecture)**, “Language Detectives: Forensic Linguistics in African Asylum Cases in Europe,” Schulze Speaker Series, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, January 17.
- 2016 “Intellectual Self-Deportation in Post-Colonial Africa,” 59th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Washington, DC, December 3.
- 2016 “Ajami Texts as Sources of African History,” 59th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Washington, DC, December 1.

- 2016 **(Keynote lecture)**, “Language Analysis in Asylum Cases and African Ajami Literatures,” Southeast African Languages and Literatures Forum Conference, Winston-Salem State University, North Carolina, September 30.
- 2016 **(Invited lecture)**, “Identifying, Collecting and Studying Ajami Manuscripts,” Ajami Workshop, Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures, Universität Hamburg, Germany, October 24-26.
- 2016 “Ajami Sources and Knowledge Production about Africa in the 21st Century,” Innovation, Transformation, and Sustainable Futures in Africa Conference organized by the American Anthropological Association, the African Studies Association, the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa , and the West African Research Center, Dakar, Senegal, June 2.
- 2016 “Visual Aesthetics of the Word in the Muridiyya,” Sacred Word: The Changing Meanings in Textual Cultures of Islamic Africa, Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought in Africa (ISITA), Northwestern University, April 21.
- 2015 “Ajami Literatures of East and West Africa Roundtable,” 58th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, San Diego, CA, November 20.
- 2015 “Agencies of Cultural Patrimony: Elites and Cultural Archives in Africa Roundtable,” 58th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, San Diego, CA.
- 2015 **(Invited lecture)**, “Emergent Frameworks in Language and Literature Studies Roundtable,” Beyond Medieval and Modern: Rethinking Global Paradigms of Political Economy and Culture, Sawyer Seminar, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Thursday, October 22.
- 2015 **(Invited lecture)**, “Ajami Literacies of Africa: Their Emergence, Expansion and Functions,” Mapping Language Movement in Africa, Bowdoin College, September 25.
- 2015 **(Invited lecture)**, “Sanctified Suffering: The Response to Violence in Murid Ajami Poetry,” Islam and Peace: Perspectives from African Muslim Nonviolence Traditions Conference, Columbia University, September 12.
- 2015 “A Shibboleth Test for Asylum Seekers: Language Analysis in Asylum Cases,” National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL) 23rd Anniversary, Hilton, Washington Dulles Airport, April 24.
- 2014 “Ajami Writings as Major Sources of African Knowledge: The Case of the Murid Tradition,” Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Islamic Studies Program Faculty Seminar Series, Harvard University, November 12.

- 2014 **(Keynote lecture)**, “Ajami Sources of Knowledge and the Myth of Illiteracy of Africa,” Boston Pan-African Forum 4th Annual Meeting, UMass Boston, October 24.
- 2014 “Ajami Sources: ‘Writings of Illiterate Africans,’” African Languages in the Disciplines Conference, Harvard University, April 24.
- 2014 “Islam and African Sources of Knowledge in Ajami Script,” Institute for the Study of Muslim Societies and Civilizations Faculty Lunch Talk, Boston University, April 7.
- 2013 **(Language Expert)**, “Asylum and Expert Testimony Panel,” 56th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Baltimore, November 24.
- 2013 **(Invited lecture)**, “Africa’s Sources of Knowledge in Ajami Scripts,” Clarke Forum for Contemporary Issues, Dickinson College, March 21.
- 2012 **(Invited lecture)**, “Enhancing the Reliability of Language Analysis for the Determination of Origin,” sponsored by the School of Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, February 13.
- 2012 **(Invited lecture)**, “African Languages in Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities,” ESTEL: École Supérieure des Métiers du Management et des Langues, Dakar, Senegal, December 21.
- 2012 “Language, Asylum Law, and International Migration,” African Languages in the Disciplines Conference, Harvard University, April 20.
- 2011 “Le corpus wolof de la littérature mouride: Un océan de sagesse et de baraka pour l’humanité,” Le 1^{er} Colloque International du Grand Magal de Touba sur le Soufisme, Hotel Méridien-Président, Dakar, Senegal, December 23-26.
- 2011 **(Invited lecture)**, “Enhancing the Reliability of LADO: Examples from Fula and Wolof Cases,” Research Seminar: Language Analysis of Asylum Applicants: Foundations, Guidelines and Best Practice, funded by UK Economic & Social Research Council, University of Essex, November 26.
- 2011 **(Invited lecture)**, “Ajami Literary Traditions of West Africa,” West African Muslims and their Contribution to U.S. Culture Symposium, Howard University, October 11.
- 2011 “Ajami Literacy and the Myth of Illiteracy in Islamized Africa,” African Languages in the Disciplines Conference, Harvard University, April 22.

- 2011 **(Distinguished lecture)**, “African Sources of Knowledge in Non-Latin Scripts: The Case of Wolof Ajami in Senegambia,” Africa Awareness: Distinguished Lecture, Bridgewater State University, March 24.
- 2011 **(Invited lecture)**, “Opening the Ajami World to the World: West African Ajami Sources of Knowledge,” sponsored by the French Department and the Department of Linguistics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, March 10.
- 2011 **(Invited lecture)**, “West African Ajami Intellectual Traditions: The Case of Wolofal,” Cosmopolitanism and Diversity in the African World Lecture Series, Kent State University, January 25-26.
- 2011 **(Invited lecture)**, “Ajami Literary Traditions of Sahelian Africa: The Case of Wolofal,” Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, January 12.
- 2010 **(Invited lecture)**, “Wolofalu Soxna Maimunatu Mbàkke [The Wolof Ajami Poetry of a Sufi Woman: Soxna Maimunatu Mbàkke],” Sufi Literature of Senegambia: Texts and Contexts Workshop, organized by Northwestern University's Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought and WARC (West African Research Center), Dakar, Senegal, December 15-16.
- 2010 “Wolof Cultural Autonomy and Ajami Literature in Murid Communities,” Race, Ethnicity, and Place Conference, Binghamton University, October 6-8.
- 2010 **(Invited lecture)**, “International Migrations and the New Field of Forensic Linguistics,” Séminaire International: Regards croisés sur les migrations féminines internationales et la protection sociale, Gaston Berger University, Senegal, June 29-30.
- 2010 **(Panel chair)**, “Culture and Society Session,” Good News from Africa, Pardee Center for the Study of Longer-Range Future, Boston University, April 16.
- 2010 **(Invited lecture)**, “African Ajami Sources of Knowledge and Contemporary African Studies Scholarship,” Crossroads: Migration, Language, and Literature in Africa, Center for African Studies, Rutgers University, February 26.
- 2009 “The Sufi Orders of Senegal,” Fulbright Hays lecture to 16 American teachers traveling to Senegal, sponsored by WARA (West African Research Association) and the US Department of Education, Boston University, June 27.
- 2009 **(Keynote lecture)**, “African Languages & Linguistics and Knowledge Production about Africa in the 21st Century,” 40th Annual Conference on African Linguistics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, April 9.

- 2008 “Murid Wolof Ajami: The Scholars, their Works, and Research Methods,” 51st Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Chicago, November 13-16.
- 2008 “Les potentialités de recherche et d’enseignement en ajami en Afrique de l’ouest: Le cas de la tradition wolofal au Sénégal,” Bibliothèque de Manuscrits Mamma Haidara, Timbuktu, Mali. Trip funded by the U.S. Embassies in Dakar and Bamako through the Fulbright Exchange Program, July 28.
- 2008 **(Invited lecture)**, “Le système éducatif américain: Quelles perspectives et contraintes pour le modèle sénégalais?,” sponsored by the Public Affairs Office, U.S. Embassy in Senegal, West African Research Center, Dakar, Senegal, June 5.
- 2008 **(Invited lecture)**, “Études aux U.S.A.,” sponsored by the Public Affairs Office, US Embassy in Senegal, CESAG: Centre Africain d’Études Supérieures en Gestion, Dakar, Senegal, April 23.
- 2007 **(Invited lecture)**, “Les stratégies de réussite dans le processus sélectif d’inscription dans les universités américaines,” sponsored by the Public Affairs Office of the US Embassy in Senegal, Université Gaston Berger de Saint-Louis, Senegal, November 14.
- 2007 “Popular Culture in Senegal: Blending the Secular and the Religious,” Popular Culture in Africa Conference, University of Texas at Austin, March 31.
- 2006 “Ajami in Africa: the Research and Educational Potentials,” 49th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, San Francisco, November 19.
- 2006 “Enhancing the Reliability and Objectivity of Language Analyses in Asylum Cases,” 2nd European International Association of Forensic Linguists Conference, Institut Universitari de Lingüística Aplicada, Barcelona, September 16.
- 2006 **(Distinguished lecture)**, “Language Analysis in Asylum Cases: A Recent Development in Forensic Linguistics,” Distinguished Lecture Series, Western Washington University, April 12.
- 2006 “Forensic Language Analysis in Asylum Applications of African Refugees: Challenges and Promises,” Conference on Movements, Migrations and Displacements in Africa, University of Texas at Austin, March 24.
- 2005 “Issues in Using Sociolinguistic Evidence to Determine Nationality,” Language and Law 2005 Conference: East Meets West, University of Lodz, Poland, September 13.
- 2004 “Arabic-based Scripts in Senegalese Muslim Communities: The Case of Wolofal,” Annual Meeting of Michigan Linguistic Society, University of Michigan-Flint, October 16.

- 2003 “Linguistic and Socio-cultural Hybridization in Senegalese Urban Spaces,” African Urban Spaces: History and Culture Conference, University of Texas at Austin, March 28.
- 2001 “Lexical Borrowings as Sociolinguistic Variables,” 25th Annual Pennsylvania Linguistic Colloquium, Department of Linguistics, University of Pennsylvania, March 3.
- 2000 “Religious and Linguistic Behaviors as Means of Anti-Colonial Resistance in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case of the Murids,” 31st Annual Conference on African Linguistics, Boston University, March 3.

SELECTED HONORS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2025 Annual Distinguished Scholar Lecture delivered at the Center for the Study of Africa and the African Diaspora (CSAAD), New York University.
- 2024 Boston University Provost’s Scholar-Teacher of the Year Award
- 2021 Leland Prize of the American Historical Association awarded to *Oxford Encyclopedia of African Historiography: Methods and Sources*, which includes my article “West African Manuscripts in Arabic and African Languages and Digital Preservation”
- 2020 My grant proposal, “Ajami Literature and the Expansion of Literacy and Islam: The Case of West Africa,” featured as a model by the National Endowment for the Humanities Collaborative Research Grant Program
- 2018 Phi Beta Kappa Honorary Faculty Member, BU Chapter
- 2017 *Muslims beyond the Arab World* (Oxford University Press, 2016), winner of the 2017 Melville Herskovits Prize for the Best Book in African Studies
- 2016- Editorial Board Member by invitation, Oxford Research Encyclopedias
- 2015- Advisory Board Member by invitation, *Islamic Africa Journal*
- 2015 Special Recognition Award in Appreciation of Outstanding Service and Commitment to the African Studies Association Board of Directors
- 2015 My chapter, “Murid Ajami Sources of Knowledge: The Myth and the Reality,” selected as one of 19 publications (out of 244 projects) showcasing the significance of the works funded by the British Library Endangered Archives Programme

- 2014 Plaque in Recognition of Outstanding Scholarship in African Languages, History, and Culture and Leadership and Commitment to the Promotion of Pan-Africanist Ideals, Boston Pan-African Forum
- 2011 John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship Award
- 2011- Advisory Board Member by invitation, Language & Asylum Research Group, University of Essex, UK
- 2008 Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Performance as a Fulbright Scholar, College of Arts and Sciences, Université Gaston Berger, Senegal
- 2004 ACLS/SSRC/NEH International Area Studies Postdoctoral Fellowship
- 2004 West African Research Association Postdoctoral Fellowship
- 2001 Phi Kappa Phi, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Chapter

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL GRANTS

- 2023-25 PI, Project EAP1430: Digital Preservation of Fuuta Jalon Scholars' Arabic and Ajami Materials in Senegal and Guinea. British Library Endangered Archives Programme. Duration: May 2023-February 2025. Amount awarded: £107,920 (\$129,504).
- 2020-24 PI, Project RIA: Readers in Ajami and Companion Multimedia Website. US Department of Education. Duration: 10/01/2020-09/30/2024. Amount awarded: \$178,900
- 2019-22 PI, Ajami Literature and the Expansion of Literacy and Islam: The Case of West Africa, National Endowment for the Humanities: Collaborative Research Grants. Duration: 09/01/2019-12/31/2022. Amount awarded: \$250,000
- 2018-22 PI, Boston University National Resource Center for Africa, US Department of Education. Duration: 08/15/2018-08/14/2022. Amount awarded: \$994,000
- 2018-22 PI, Boston University Foreign Language and Area Studies Program, US Department of Education. Duration: 08/15/2018-08/14/2022. Amount awarded: \$1,212,000
- 2018-19 PI, Project EAP1042: Digital Preservation of Mandinka Ajami Materials of Casamance, Senegal, British Library Endangered Archives Programme. Duration: 012/01/2018-03/31/2019. Amount awarded: £44,000 (\$57,000)
- 2011-12 PI, Project EAP334: Digital Preservation of Wolof Ajami Manuscripts of Senegal, British Library Endangered Archives Programme. Duration: 07/10/2011-

02/09/2012. Amount awarded: £20,630 (\$33,307.16)

COURSES REGULARLY TAUGHT AT BU

- AN 327: Islam in Africa
- AN 532: Literacy and Islam in Africa
(Cross-listed as RN 532 in Religious Studies)
- AN 312: Peoples and Cultures of Africa
- AN 524: Language & Culture Contact in Africa
- AN 521: Sociolinguistics
(Cross-listed as LX 341/LX 641 in Linguistics)

MEMBERSHIP IN SELECTED PHD AND MA COMMITTEES

* Indicates students for whom I have served as first or second advisor/reader.

2026 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Martin Aucoin, Anthropology*

2025 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Anya Bounar, Anthropology*

2025 PhD Prospectus Defense Committee, Ousmane Cisse, Linguistics*

2025 PhD Prospectus Defense Committee, Peter Corti, AAAS (Harvard University)

2024 PhD Qualifying Exam Committee, Ousmane Cisse, Linguistics *

2024 PhD Qualifying Exam Committee, Hayat Althagafi, Linguistics

2024 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Mahtab Sirdani, Anthropology *

2024 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Jenny Parker, Anthro (Indiana University)*

2023 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Margaret Rowley, Ethnomusicology

2023 PhD Prospectus Defense Committee, Aizaz Younas, Anthropology

2022 PhD Prospectus Defense Committee, Martin Aucoin, Anthropology *

2022 PhD Qualifying Exam Committee, Nairan Wu, Linguistics

2022 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Gana Ndiaye, Anthropology *

2022 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Emily Williamson, Anthropology

2021 PhD Prospectus Defense Committee, Anya Bounar, Anthropology *

2021 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Sheila Otieno, School of Theology

2020 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Claire S. Lim, Political Science

2020 MA Thesis Defense Committee, Corina Morton, IR and Religion *

2020 MA Thesis Defense Committee, Mary G. Rezk, International Affairs

2020 MA Thesis Defense Committee, Kira Levin, International Affairs

2019 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Mimi M. Stith, Anthropology*

2018 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Sarah Westwood, History

2018 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Mustapha Kurfi, Sociology *

2015 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Lynsey Farrel, Anthropology

2011 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Alex Zito, University Professors Program*

2010 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Nicole Hayes, Anthropology

2010 PhD Dissertation Defense Committee, Shelby Carpenter, Anthropology

2009 PhD Prospectus Defense Committee, Arianna Fogelman, Anthropology

SERVICE

Service to Boston University

2024-25	Honorary Degree Review Committee, Office of the President
2024-25	Faculty Teaching Awards Committee, Office of the Provost
2024-25	College of Arts and Sciences Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee
2021-25	Visiting Researchers Committee, African Studies Center
2009-25	Fellowship Committee, African Studies Center
2025-26	Graduate Committee, Department of Anthropology
2018-24	Fulbright Student Program Review Committee, Office of the Provost
2021-24	Faculty Grievance Committee, Office of the Provost
2023-24	Academic Program Review Committee, Office of the Provost
2024	Society of Fellows, Review of Finalists, Department of History
2022-23	Search Committee, Archaeology, Anthropology
2021-23	University Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee
2023	Committee for Promotion to Professor, Linguistics
2021-22	Search Committee, Africanist, History
2021-22	Faculty Mentor, Fulbright Scholar from Mali
2020	Search Committee, Europeanist Anthropologist
2019	Chair, Outreach Manager Search Committee, African Studies Center
2019-	Appointment and Promotion Reviews Committee, Anthropology
2017-20	Executive Committee, Center for the Humanities
2018-19	Faculty Mentor, Fulbright Scholar from Russia
2017-18	University Librarian Search Committee, Office of the Provost
2017	Chair, Assistant Director Search Committee, African Studies Center
2016-17	Search Committee, Wein Chair, African American Studies
2014-22	MLK Jr. and Whitney Young Fellowship Committee, Office of the Provost
2014	Social Sciences Curriculum Committee, College of Arts and Sciences
2010-17	Graduate Admission and Aid Committee, Anthropology
2009	Search Committee, Africanist Anthropologist
2008-09	Search Committee, Director, African Studies Center
2008	Lecturer Promotion Committee, College of Arts and Sciences

Selected Service to the Profession

One of the founding members of Islam in Africa Studies Group (IASG); *Islamic Africa* Advisory Board; Board of Directors of African Studies Association; African Studies Association Committee for the Best Book Prize; *African Studies Review* Best Article Committee; *African Studies Review* Committee for the Best Africa-focused Anthology; *African Studies Review* Editorial Board; West African Research Association Board of Directors, Finance & Development Committee, and Fellowship Committee; National African Language Resource Center Advisory Board; American Anthropological Association and African Studies Association Planning Committee for the 2018 Meeting in South Africa; Search Committee Member for a Coordinator of the Library of Congress West African Acquisitions Project; Fulbright Scholar Program Resource Person;

ACLS/Mellon Dissertation Innovation Fellowship Committee; NEH Review Panel; Howard University Title VI National Resource Center External Evaluator; and External Evaluator for Promotion for the University of Colorado Boulder, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Florida, and UCLA.

Selected Reviews for Journals, Publishers, and other Organizations

Islamic Africa Journal; Africa Today; African Studies Review; Canadian Journal of African Studies; History Compass; Journal of African Languages and Linguistics; Oral Tradition Journal; Germanic Society for Forensic Linguistics; Revue Internationale de Langues, Littératures et Cultures; Bloomsbury Publishing; Brill; Palgrave Macmillan; University of Michigan Press; University of North Carolina Press; University of Rochester Press; Indiana University Press; Ohio University Press; Cambridge University Press; Oxford University Press; US Census Bureau; US Fulbright Scholars Program; National Science Foundation; US Department of Education; National Research Foundation (South Africa); and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Canada).

DIGITAL RESOURCES: VOICES OF MUSLIM AFRICA

2020-24 *Readers in Ajami and Companion Multimedia Website*: Leader of three pioneering Ajami Readers of over 600 pages. The Wolof, Mandinka, and Hausa Ajami Readers offer a comprehensive learning experience with a multimedia interactive website. They increase visibility of African primary sources in Ajami scripts and address the historical gap in accessing local perspectives on African history, politics, religions, societies, and cultures. See <https://sites.bu.edu/ria/>.

2019-22 *NEH Ajami Project Resources*: Leader of the first open-access multimedia resource on Muslim Africa with Latin script transcriptions, annotated French and English translations of 80 key Ajami manuscripts authored by Hausa, Fula, Mandinka, and Wolof writers, and declamations of their Sufi poems. See <https://sites.bu.edu/nehajami/>.

2011-24 *The African Ajami Library (AAL)*: Founder and leader of AAL, North America's largest digital archives of African Ajami texts. The site hosts the resources of our new Readers in Ajami project, our NEH Ajami project materials, and over 30,000 pages of Ajami texts in 11 languages of Muslim Africa. Based on data analytics, over 730,000 people worldwide have accessed the African Ajami Library resources, making them some of the most accessed materials in OpenBU. See <https://open.bu.edu/handle/2144/1896>.

AJAMI TEXTBOOKS

- Mustapha Kurfi, *A Practical Guide to Learning Hausa Ajami*, supervised by Fallou Ngom and Peter Quella (Boston, MA: BU African Studies Center, 2017).
- Fallou Ngom and Alex Zito, *Diving Into the Ocean of Wolofal: The First Workbook in Wolofal—Wolofal Ajami* (Boston, MA: BU African Studies Center, 2010).

SELECTED WORKS FEATURED IN THE MEDIA AND OTHER VENUES

- “An African Spiritual Odyssey: The Ajami Traditions of African Islam,” *Akbar’s Chamber: Experts Talk Islam with Nile Green (UCLA)*, <https://akbarschamber.podbean.com/e/an-african-spiritual-odyssey-the-ajami-traditions-of-african-islam/>
- Africa’s Ajami Writing System, *The World*, <https://theworld.org/stories/2013/08/14/african-ajami-writing-system>
- “Episode 108: Ajami in African History,” *Africa Past & Present: African Online Digital Library (AODL)*, March 3, 2017, <https://afripod.aodl.org/fullPodcast/episode108/>
- “What might you learn if you discovered a hidden language?,” *BBC News World Service*, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0gjj91g>
- “Nos archives sont des désastres,” *Interview with BBC Afrique*, June 9, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/afrique/region-40340963>
- “African Language Scholar Wins Guggenheim Fellowship,” *BU Today*, <http://www.bu.edu/today/2011/african-language-scholar-wins-guggenheim-fellowship/>
- “Unearthing a Long-Ignored African Writing System,” *Brink: Boston University*, <https://www.bu.edu/articles/2022/fallou-ngom-discovers-ajami-african-writing-system/>
- “Digital Preservation of Mandinka Ajami Materials of Casamance, Senegal,” *British Library Endangered Archives Programme*, <https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP1042>
- “Little-Known Writing System Highlights African Voices,” *BTW – Stuff You Should Know*, <https://mhebtw.mheducation.com/2023/04/28/little-known-writing-system-highlights-african-voices/>
- “Understanding Ajami: The Deep Roots of Islam and Arabic in Africa,” *Bouctou: An Africana Magazine for Teachers and Students, Issue 2*, https://cfas.howard.edu/sites/cfas.howard.edu/files/2024-01/Bouctou-Issue2_3.pdf

LANGUAGES

- Wolof (native); Mandinka (fluent); Séeréer (conversational); Fuuta Jalon Fula/Pular (conversational); Guinea-Bissau Creole/Kiriol (conversational); Spanish (conversational); French (fluent); English (fluent); Arabic (reading); Latin (reading)

REFERENCES: Available upon request