

Nina Sylvanus

Curriculum Vitae

Department of Sociology & Anthropology
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Academic Appointments

- 2017- Associate Professor of Anthropology, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Northeastern University
- 2010 -2017 Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Northeastern University
- 2008-2010 Visiting Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Department of Anthropology, Reed College
- 2006-2008 Postdoctoral Fellow, International Institute, Global Fellows Postdoctoral Program, University of California, Los Angeles

Education

- 2006 Ph.D., Anthropology, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales
- 2001 M.A., Anthropology, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales
- 2000 B.A., Anthropology, Université Paris VII

Scholarship

Book

- 2016 *Patterns in Circulation: Cloth, Gender and Materiality in West Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Articles and Book Chapters

- 2023 “Un port ancré dans l’histoire, une histoire ancrée: Circulations, passé et present.” In *Anthropologie et Développement*. (forthcoming June)
- 2022 “Privatizing the Port: Harboring Neoliberalism in Lomé.” In *New African Transport Corridors*, edited by Paul Nugent and Hugh Lamarque. James Curry, pp. 155-179
- 2019 “Conspicuously Public. Histories of Sartorial and Social Success in Urban Togo.” In *Conspicuous Consumption in Africa*, edited by Deborah Posel and Ilana Van Wyk. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- 2017 “Real/Fake: Brands, Labels, and China in West Africa.” In *African-Print Fashion Now! A Story of Taste, Globalization, and Style*, edited by Fowler Museum, UCLA, pp. 106-113.

- 2013 “Chinese Devils, the Global Market and the Declining Power of Togo’s Nana-Benzenes.” *African Studies Review* 56 (1): 65-80. Special Issue: China in Africa.
- 2013 “Fashionability in Colonial and Postcolonial Togo.” In *African Dress: Fashion, Agency, Performance*, edited by Karen Tranberg Hansen and Soyini Madison, pp. 30-44. London: Bloomsbury.
- 2012 “Fakes: Crisis in Conceptions of Value in Neoliberal Togo.” *Cahiers d’Etudes Africaines* 205(1): 237-258.
- 2011 “Snapshot: African Print Textiles from China.” In *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*, edited by Joanne Eicher. London: Bloomsbury.
- 2010 “Counterfeited Fashions: The Politics of Dress and Style in Togo.” *Africa e Mediterraneo* 69-70 (1): 26-32.
- 2010 “Navigating Chinese Textile Networks: Women Traders in Accra and Lomé” (co-authored with Linn Axelsson). In *The Rise of China and India in Africa. Challenges, Opportunities and Critical Interventions*, edited by Fantu Cheru and Chris Obi, pp. 132-141. London: Zed Books.
- 2009 “Commerçantes togolaises et diables chinois. Une approche par la rumeur.” *Politique Africaine* 113 (1): 55-70. Special Issue: Afrique, la globalisation par les Suds.
- 2008 “Rethinking Free-trade Practices in Contemporary Togo : Women Entrepreneurs in the Global Textile Trade.” In *Globalization and Transformations of Local socio-economic Practices*, edited by Ulrike Schuerkens, pp. 174-191. London: Routledge.
- 2007 “The Fabric of Africanity. Tracing the Global Threads of Authenticity.” *Anthropological Theory* 7 (2): 201-216.
- 2007 “L’habilité entrepreneuriale des Nana-Benz au Togo,” *Africultures* 69 (2): 179-185
- 2007 “Chinese devils? Perceptions of the Chinese in Lomé’s Central Market. Rethinking Africa’s ‘China Factor’ “Working Paper No. 3, UCLA, April 27.
- 2002 “L’étoffe de l’africanité.” *Les Temps Modernes* 620-621: 128-145.

Invited Book Reviews

- 2015 Review of *African Fashion, Global Style: Histories, Innovations, and Ideas You Can Wear* by Victoria Rovine. **African Studies Review** 58: 244-246.
- 2007 Review of *Shea Butter Republic: State Power, Global Markets, and the Making of an Indigenous Commodity* by Brenda Chalfin. **Politique Africaine** 106: 178-179.
- 2004 Review of *Objects as Envoys. Cloth, Imagery and Diplomacy in Madagascar*, edited by Christine Kreamer and Sarah Fee. **Cahiers d’Etudes Africaines** 176: 962-965.

Works-in-progress

- n.d. “When African Labor is Cheaper than Robots”
- n.d. “Harboring Publics: Of Ports and Infrastructure”
- n.d. “Harboring the Future”

Conferences and Invited Talks

National

- 2018 “Harboring the Future.” Harvard African Studies Workshop. **Harvard University**, November 12.
- 2018 “The Labor of Maritime Logistics.” **AAA** Double Panel: “From Port to Port,” San Jose, November 14-18.
- 2018 Discussant. **AAA** Panel “Beyond Narratives of Crisis,” San Jose, November 14-18.
- 2017 Keynote. “South South: Materiality and Embodiment in Greater Africa and Asia”. **Columbia University**. October 27.
- 2017 Discussant. Harvard African Studies Workshop. **Harvard University**, February 23.
- 2016 “Sensuous Materiality.” **AAA** Retrospective Session “Paul Stoller’s Sensuous Scholarship,” Minneapolis, November 16-20.
- 2014 “Crisis in Conceptions of Value.” **AES** panel on “In/Visibilities of Value,” Boston, April 10-12.
- 2013 “Citizen-Consumers and Market Entrepreneurs in Neoliberal West Africa.” **Anthropology of Markets and Consumption Conference, UC Irvine**, March 7-9.
- 2012 “New Directions in the study of West African Market Women.” **ASA** panel in Honor of the Retirement of Claire Robertson, Philadelphia, November 29-December 1.
- 2011 “Disjunctive Global Orders in a West African Marketplace.” Transnational Studies Initiative Workshop, **Harvard University**, March 7.
- 2010 “The Copy and Its Counterfeit. Anxieties over Product Authenticity in a West African Marketplace.” **AAA** panel on “Brands, Counterfeiting, Authenticity, and Authority Panel,” New Orleans, November 16-20.
- 2009 “New Hegemons on an Old Continent: Chinese Competition in the Lomé Market.” **ASA** panel on “Africa-China: Through the Looking Glass,” New Orleans, November 19-22.
- 2009 “Branding Counterfeits: Pagne Fashion in Togo.” Program of African Studies Conference on “African Dress and Fashion,” **Northwestern University**, March 13-14.
- 2008 “Contesting Heritage: The Struggle Over Authenticity in the Global Fabric Trade.” **ASA** panel on “Branding the Nation: Performance, Identity, and the Politics of Authenticity Panel,” Chicago, November 13-16.
- 2007 “Death in the Market: Rumors of the Chinese Devil in Togo.” **AAA** panel on “Zombies, Witches and Others. Representations of Labor, Memory and Modernity in Africa and the African Diaspora,” Washington, DC, November 28 – December 2.
- 2007 “Global Mimicry: Fashion Change and the Danger of Dressing ‘Chinese’ in Togo.” **ASA** panel on “In and out of Fashion? Politics of Dress and Style in Africa Panel, New York, NY, October 18-22.

- 2007 “Chinese Devils, the Global Market and the Declining Power of Togo’s Commodity Queens.” Culture, Power and Social Change Speaker Series, Department of Anthropology, **UCLA** June 7.
- 2007 Chair, Organizer, Presenter. “Perceptions of the Chinese in Lomé’s Central Market.” Conference on “Rethinking Africa’s ‘China Factor,’” Globalization Research Center Africa, **UCLA** April 27.

International

- 2021 Keynote. “Harboring History. Historic Harbor. Circulation Past and Present.” **Association for the Anthropology of Social Change and Development (APAD)** Annual Conference, Lomé, November 29-December 3
- 2021 Invited Lecture “From Togo to the World: Labor, Infrastructure and New Technologies in the Global Maritime Economy.” **University of Basel**, September 30 (in-person)
- 2014 “The Pagne Politics of Style.” Style and Substance Panel. Crisis in Conceptions of Value. Conspicuous Consumption in Africa Symposium, **Institute for Humanities in Africa (HUMA)**, **University of Cape Town (UCT)**, December 3-6.
- 2012 “Fashionable Subjects and Global Regimes of Commerce: Piracy and Fashion in Colonial and Postcolonial West Africa.” **World Economic History Congress** panel on “Fashion and Economic Development,” University of Stellenbosch, July 9-13.
- 2011 “Fakes: Crisis in Conceptions of Value.” Monday Seminar Series on “Emergent Ethnographies,” Department of Anthropology, **University of Cape Town**, October 11.
- 2011 “Counterfeit Modernities.” Tuesday Seminar Series, South African History and Humanities Seminar, **University of the Western Cape**, September 20.
- 2008 “The Role of Women Entrepreneurs in Togo’s China Trade: Perspectives from the Lomé Textile Market.” Conference on “China and India in Africa: New Strategic Encounters,” **The Nordic Africa Institute**, Uppsala, September 22-23.
- 2008 “Heritage à la Mode: China’s Influence on Contemporary Pagne Fashion in Togo.” International Symposium on “Global Fashion and Local Identities,” **University of Recife**, Recife (Brazil), May 19-21.
- 2006 “Interstitial Spaces and International Development Agencies: Female Entrepreneurial Strategies in West Africa.” Graduate Student Symposium, **School of Oriental and African Studies**, March 14.

Fellowships and Awards

- 2018 (summer) Sai Wai-Kin Junior Fellowship, University of Hong Kong
- 2017-2018 Northeastern University, Research Development Grant
- 2012-2013 NSF/Advance Mentorship Grant, Northeastern University
- 2011-2012 Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship, Center for the Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape
- 2009 Summer Research Grant, Dean of Faculty, Reed College

2006-2008 Global Fellow (Postdoctoral Fellowship), International Institute, University of California, Los Angeles
2002 Visiting Fellow, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago