The Committee for African Studies at Harvard University would like to inform you of the *Chiefship and the Customary in Contemporary Africa Conference* that will be held on Friday, April 25, 2014. We are hoping you could share the information on the event listed below with people who may be interested at your institution. This conference will be a great opportunity to learn and network with other Africanists in the Greater Boston area. For those unable to join us in person, we will also have a livestream link available to watch the conference sessions the day of the event.

**Chiefship and the Customary in Contemporary Africa**

The African Studies Workshop culminates each year with a conference event in the spring. The 2014 conference, entitled *Chiefship and the Customary in Contemporary Africa*, will be held on Friday, April 25, 2014 at the Knafel Center. **Registration** deadline is April 21, 2014.

The scholarly objectives of the conference are to interrogate — to document, analyze, and theorize — changes in the politics, economics, and cultural practices surrounding the institution of chiefship, and of the so-called “customary,” under present-day conditions in Africa. We seek to explore the impact of the global economy, liberalization, state transformation, and corporate neocolonialism on these institutions, along with the rise of new forms of sovereignty, new religious geographies, and new identities in local life-worlds. In many, if not all, contexts, traditional authorities retain significant popular allegiance. In many, they have also become agents less of the state than of overseas businesses; in some, they have become absentee rentier capitalists on their own account; in others they have pushed legislative agendas that violate liberal democratic constitutions in the name of the sovereignty of custom and the authority of their office. Older metaphors deployed to describe “traditional authority,” from Gluckman's “lowest NCO's of empire” to Mamdani's “tinpot dictators” — whether or not they were empirically persuasive at the time, now seem more to simplify and misrepresent than to capture a complex, changing reality.
SPEAKERS

PETER GESCHIERE (KEYNOTE)
PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY AT THE AMSTERDAM SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH
Presenting African Chiefs at the Post-Cold War Moment – Millennial Capitalism and the Struggle over Moral Authority?

INSA NOLTE
SENIOR LECTURER OF AFRICAN STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM
Presenting Oba ni olóri gbogbo ésin ('The ruler is the head of all religions'): Religious tolerance and its limits among Yoruba traditional rulers in southwest Nigeria.

JANINE UBINK
VISITING PROFESSOR OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE
Presenting Access v. justice. Malawi’s Local Courts Act, justice for the poor, and political oppression

JAMES SMITH
PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS
Presenting How to colonize a gold company: The story of a female king, a golden cow, an armed village, and a new artisanal city that refuses to go away.

JOCELYN ALEXANDER
PROFESSOR OF COMMONWEALTH STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
Presenting Party politics, state-making and chiefs in Zimbabwe.

JUAN OBARRIO
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY AT JOHN HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
Presenting Chieftaincy, temporality and customary citizenship in Northern Mozambique.

LAUREN COYLE
PHD CANDIDATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
Presenting Chiefs, Gold, and Sacred Violence in Ghana.

LUNGISILE NTSEBEZA
PROFESSOR OF AFRICAN STUDIES AND SOCIOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
Presenting The Resurgence of Chiefs: Myth or Reality?

LAUREN ADROVER
PHD CANDIDATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY AT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
Presenting Corporate Branding and The Currency of Chieftaincy: Festivals, Corporate Sponsorship, and Emergent Spheres of Consumption in Ghana.

MARIO KRAEMER
SENIOR RESEARCHER, DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF COLOGNE
Presenting Chiefship and the ANC: power and basic legitimacy of ubukhosi in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Find more information at Africa.harvard.edu