

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The Buzz of Africanist Energies Renewed

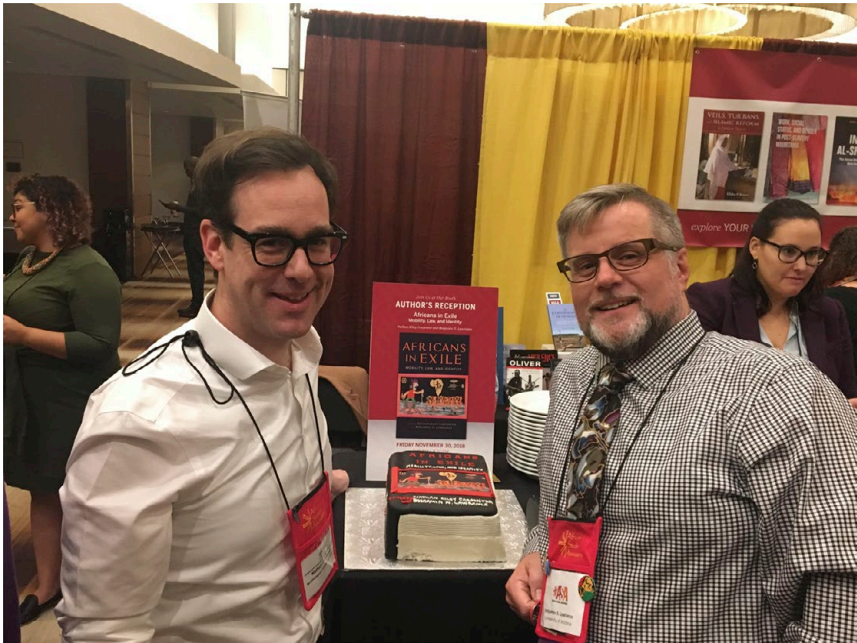
The Annual Meeting of our beloved African Studies Association is one of my favorite events on the academic calendar. I look forward to seeing old friends, learning about new research in dynamic panels, workshops, roundtables, *Africa Now!* and plenary sessions, and strategizing with brilliant colleagues about ideas, initiatives, and shared goals. The recent meeting in Atlanta met all of my expectations, and in abundance. Not only did I witness one of the best organized and best attended gatherings in the association's history, but the renewed energy was palpable. People celebrated new scholarship, some with cakes in the shape of books [see Figure 1]. They toasted collaborations at the bar. Others channeled their energies into diversifying the organization, democratizing its remit, and conceiving of innovative ways to ensure greater participation in the association, its committees, and its publications by our colleagues based on the African continent. The Editorial Collective salutes the leadership of the program co-chairs, Nana Akua Anyidoho and Mark Auslander, and the Local Arrangements Committee co-chairs, Jennie Burnet, Pamela Scully, and Harcourt Fuller.

The *African Studies Review* is deeply involved in Annual Meeting activities, and 2018 was a banner year for collaborations with our ASA membership and the Africanist scholarly community at large. Thanks largely to the valiant efforts of our Managing Editor, Kathryn Salucka, and our Executive Director, Suzanne Moyer Baazet, the *ASR* in collaboration with the Carnegie Fellows Program successfully hosted our fourth Pipeline for Emerging African Studies Scholars (PEASS) workshop [<https://africanstudies.org/peass-workshops>], with generous support from the University of Arizona's Africana Studies program [<https://africana.arizona.edu/>]. The workshop featured ten emerging scholars from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Togo, Uganda, the USA, and Zimbabwe. Mentors representing universities from the greater Atlanta area, from across the country, and from beyond provided rigorous and engaged feedback on pre-circulated work, with the goal of seeing it appear in print in peer-reviewed venues. The *ASR's* editors eagerly await the submission of this promising work.

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Figure 1. Nathan R. Carpenter and Benjamin N. Lawrance launch their new book “Africans in Exile” and website with a book-shaped cake in the Atlanta Marquis Marriott, December 1, 2018. Photo credit: Author



The Annual Meeting is also the opportunity for the Annual General Meeting of the journal's Editorial Collective, comprising the executive editorial team (those who perform the bulk of the day-to-day work of the journal), the Editorial Review Board, Emeritus Editors, and our publisher, Cambridge University Press. This year's meeting marked several important milestones, not the least of which was the completion of the editorial transition, with the retirement of editor Richard Waller. The AGM is the occasion for the discussion and adoption of the annual report. It also witnessed the passage of our strategic plan and a new statement about interdisciplinarity [<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/african-studies-review/information/statement-of-interdisciplinarity>] and its intrinsic role in African studies. We formally adopted a proposal for the journal to become officially bilingual from mid-2019. This new policy will enable francophone authors to submit via the ScholarOne portal entirely in French. We also created new ad hoc sub-committees, one to investigate enhancing digitization and digital access, and a second to consider the creation of new prizes and awards. We welcome the involvement of our membership and readership in these deliberative processes.

The *ASR*'s Annual Meeting activities are expansive because we play a leadership role, connecting the ASA membership to activities and publishing venues and creating new ventures with new collaborators.

In Atlanta, a number of scholars met to plan a fifth PEASS workshop, in Dakar, in July 2019. This will be the first PEASS workshop entirely in French. Beyond the innovative PEASS workshop, 2018 also witnessed the relaunching of “meet-the-editors” activities with a new, interactive, and more personable format. Participants at the meeting had an opportunity to engage directly with editors of a dozen Africanist journals. In the *Publish That Article!* plenary session, editors were interviewed about best publishing practices and fielded questions from the audience. In the new *Pitch That Article!* follow up session, prospective authors had an opportunity to talk one-on-one about their nascent projects with individual editors. We look forward to making this a regular fixture on the Annual Meeting schedule.

The Annual Meeting is also an ideal opportunity for the *ASR*'s eight Editors, five Book Review Editors, and its more than three dozen Editorial Review Board members [<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/african-studies-review/information/editorial-board>] to hear new and persuasive work and engage with authors. Many conference attendees will ultimately find a publishing home for their research via the personal interactions and solicitations that took place at Atlanta. The sociable and engaged atmosphere of the Annual Meeting is an ideal occasion to make the connections that bring embryonic thoughts to fruition. For five years now, the *ASR* has sponsored an annual Distinguished Lecture, and anthropologist Professor Peter Little of Emory University delivered a trenchant critique of environmental experimentation in Kenya based on his almost four decades of observations. The *ASR* also sponsored two panels: one featured Mohamedou Ould Slahi, live from his house arrest in Nouakchott, in dialogue with Ann McDougall, Erin Pettigrew, and Abbass Braham, discussing *Guantanamo Diary*, Slahi's riveting memoir of his almost fourteen years in illegal detention by the U.S. military in Cuba [see Figure 2]. A second panel explored new research on African refugee mobilities, past and present, featuring Christian Williams, Bonny Ibhawoh, Joanna Tague, and others. We look forward to publishing iterations of each of these exciting endeavors, but you can find a teaser in the form of an Africa Past & Present Podcast [<http://afripod.aodl.org/2018/12/afripod-121/>] conducted by one of our editors, Peter Alegi.

We hope our efforts to broaden the reach and impact of the journal, to reconnect with the ASA membership and draw in new readership, contribute to the generation of new energy in Africanists circles. With your continued support and engagement, we will ensure the continuity and growth of our foundational journal and further cement the role of the African Studies Association in provoking, debating, and publishing the most compelling new research and scholarship in African studies.

With the above considerations in mind, it should come as no surprise that this issue, the first of 2019 and our new four-issue format, features scholarship from two past Annual Meetings in Chicago and Washington DC alongside other work. We are pleased to publish the 2017 *ASR* Distinguished

Figure 2. Author Meets Critics Panel, featuring Abbass Braham, Erin Pettigrew, and Ann McDougall discussing Mohamedou Ould Slahi's *Guantanamo Diary*, with author live from his house arrest in Nouakchott, Mauritania, November 30, 2018, Atlanta Marriott Marquis. Photo credit: Author



Lecture, delivered at our Chicago meeting by Alcinda Honwana. We also have a fascinating collection of articles on power and performance that were first delivered at the Washington DC meeting in 2016. This issue offers a compelling selection of disciplinary research, ranging from sociocultural anthropology and international development to history and film studies. Our contributors explore case studies in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Kenya, and Senegal, as well as the African continent and interdisciplinary African studies and film writ large.

Our issue opens with Alcinda Honwana's distinguished lecture "Youth Struggles: From the Arab Spring to Black Lives Matter & Beyond" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2018.144>]. Honwana contends that "waithood" is a profoundly useful category for understanding the "prolonged, difficult and dynamic transition" of African youths into adults [see Figure 3]. Drawing on comparisons with the developed North and Arabic North Africa, she finds that the faith of Africa's younger generation in the capacity of its leaders to meet needs and expectations is in freefall. From Senegal and Spain to New York City and Ferguson, Missouri, young people are marshaling their energies to provoke political change.

We next move to Kenya, where Corinne Kratz examines marriage among the Okiek. In "Kinship in Action, Kinship in Flux: Uncertainties and

Figure 3. Former ASR Editor, Sean Redding, presenting ASR Distinguished Lecturer, Alcinda Honwana, with a plaque commemorating her lecture in Chicago, Illinois, November 2017. Photo credit: African Studies Association



Transformations in Okiek Marriage Arrangement” [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2017.147>], Kratz finds that marriage arrangements operate as a nexus for transformations in personhood, social relations, land tenure, and state engagements. She outlines Okiek marital patterns and reflects on the centrality of interlineage discussions.

Our third article considers the cinematographic oeuvre of Cameroonian director Jean-Pierre Bekolo. Hot on the heels of our celebration of the late Idrissa Ouedraogo in the September 2018 issue [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2018.72>], we are pleased to offer Vlad Dima’s “Waiting for (African) Cinema: Jean-Pierre Bekolo’s Quest” [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2017.153>], a highly original exploration of the pursuit of an aesthetically African cinema. Dima reflects on Bekolo’s corpus and its relationship to African and Third Cinemas, and critically reviews “Naked Reality,” Bekolo’s 2016 somewhat absurdist and unfinished work.

The remainder of our issue is devoted to a forum on the power of performance and the performance of power, edited by Till Förster and Aïdas Sanogo. In their introduction to the forum [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2018.145>], Förster and Sanogo explain that the West African savannah is today the site of a rich history and powerful present energy pertaining to non-state-based institutions, notably secret societies and hunter fraternities. Among these groups, spanning Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire, as well as parts of Guinea, Sierra Leone [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2018.6>], Liberia, Mali, and Senegal, are those that claim deep

historical connections to pre-modern empires, as well as others that have formed in a dialectical tension with regional conflicts and civil wars. This forum is a multi-faceted collection of performance in action, and we are pleased to be able to offer vibrant color photography as well as digital music files to complement its display and representation. The authors in this collection provide a rich and diverse documentation and critique of ethics, aesthetics, and relationships between communities and states.

In Lorenzo Ferrarini's article, the author highlights the materiality of Donso associations in a rich analysis of the smocks worn by individual hunters. In "The Shirts of the Donso Hunters: materiality and power between concealment and visual display" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2017.152>], Ferrarini departs from existing depictions of hunting attire embodiments of power, by instead revealing the aesthetics of concealment embraced by Burkinabé hunters.

Till Förster, himself a Senufo poro initiate, explores secrecy and performance in "The Invisible Social Body: Experience and Poro Ritual in Northern Côte d'Ivoire" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2018.10>]. Förster contends that the privileging of the performative in the study of secret societies overlooks the way poro lodges, as institutions, foster and sustain what he calls a "bodily experience" and "all-embracing sensory regime." Nocturnal funerals and other gatherings render the social body invisible and help account for the revitalization of poro associations in post-war Ivorian society.

In "Songs from the Hunters' Qur'an in Côte d'Ivoire: Dozo Music, Textuality, and Apostasy in the Repertoire of Dramane Coulibaly," Joseph Hellweg highlights the complexity of hunting songs among the majority-Muslim Odienné region of northwestern Côte d'Ivoire. The songs of Dramane Coulibaly, which our readers can listen to courtesy of digital files hosted on our web platform [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2018.142>], "conjoin and distinguish" Muslim goals and ostensibly non-Muslim hunting practices. Dramane's lyrical performances at funerals bring dozos closer to God. And informed by the fact that gifts of game calm the spirits of deceased hunters, Hellweg offers a new analysis of multivalent hunting modalities.

Kathrin Heitz-Tokpa's analysis of state/non-state tensions in postwar Côte d'Ivoire zeroes in on the prefecture of Ouangolodougou and the legacy of the security operations of dozos during the violent decade-long conflict. In "Mande hunters and the state: cooperation and contestation in post-conflict Côte d'Ivoire" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2018.143>], she reveals how dozos today draw on a performative repertoire to entrench their power and profitable activities, notably via public processions.

And in the final forum article, Sten Hagberg directs our attention to the interplay of political pragmatics and cultural representation in public debate in Burkina Faso. In "Performing Tradition while Doing Politics: A comparative study of the dozos and kogllewogos self-defense movements in Burkina Faso" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2018.52>],

Hagberg compares two self-defense movements—dozos and koglweogos—and highlights political rivalries and social antagonisms. While the Burkinabé state once tried to restrict self-defense movements, dozos and koglweogos have asserted a new public authority in the wake of Blaise Compaoré's ouster.

Our issue concludes with an excellent selection of film and book reviews. From 2019, all film and book reviews will be online only, and entirely free to access. We hope our readers will share these widely. All the original scholarly articles appearing in this issue originated under the previous editorial leadership of Sean Redding and Elliot Fratkin, and we thank them for continued engagement with the journal's activities.