

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to catalogue the litany of challenges 2020 posed for the African Studies Association and the *African Studies Review*, but we have weathered the storm and emerged stronger and more unified. As this issue goes to press, the ASR's first virtual Annual General Meeting and the ASA's first virtual Annual Meeting have been successfully concluded. While the dramatic forces informing these decisions were beyond our control, there are some upsides. One positive aspect of the virtual model was that scholars from Africa and elsewhere, who routinely encounter financial and visa obstacles, were able to participate and engage in a sustained fashion.

Increasing Africa-based engagement with the ASA and ASR has been a core mission since we restructured the journal in 2017–18. Over the past several years, we have substantially increased the representation of Africa-based scholars on the editorial team, made central components of the journal more accessible to Africa-based scholars, incentivized new Africa-based reviewers, and dramatically scaled up reviewing of books and films produced on the continent. With this issue, we are pleased to announce the winners of a new trio of prizes recognizing scholarly achievement in African studies, prizes created by the ASR's Editorial Review Board in 2019. We would like to express our appreciation to our publisher, Cambridge University Press, for its support for these prizes.

In 2019, the ASR created the Best Africa-based Doctoral Dissertation award to recognize an Africa-based scholar who has successfully defended a dissertation or doctoral thesis on any aspect of African studies at an African institution of higher education during the previous calendar year. The 2020 Committee was chaired by Claudia Gastrow (University of Johannesburg), and included Akosua Darkwah (University of Ghana), Bruce Hall (University of California, Berkeley), and Kwasi Konadu (Colgate University). The committee received sixteen complete applications in English, French, and Hausa. The committee was very impressed with the quality of research and writing being conducted at universities across the continent.

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The 2020 ASR Prize for the Best Africa-based Doctoral Dissertation is awarded to Dr. Cecilia Durojaye, a 2019 graduate of the University of Cape Town, South Africa, for her thesis, “Evoked emotional responses in the performances of selected Yorùbá *dùndún* ensembles.” Using research based on original fieldwork in Nigeria, Dr. Durojaye interweaves work from music, anthropology, and studies of emotion to investigate how *dùndún* ensembles communicate emotion. She provides a unique insight into African music, particularly into categories of emotion that are understood to be culturally specific, to move analyses of music performance and emotion beyond the confines of Euro-American registers of affect and emotion. In so doing, she takes seriously the call to integrate indigenous categories into existent theoretical frameworks, thereby enriching studies of music as well as African Studies as a discipline.

The committee also designated two theses for honorable mention: Antomélla Kornégie Atipo completed her PhD at the Université Marien Ngouabi in Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo, in 2019 with a dissertation entitled “Les relations politiques entre les deux Congo de 1960 à 2003: à travers la semaine africaine, dipanda et etumba,”; Dr. Abdulkadir Abubakar Zailani completed his PhD in Communication at Bayero University in Kano, Nigeria in 2019 with a thesis entitled “A study of communication strategies in Hausa request act.” The committee was deeply impressed with all of the submissions, but particularly with these three selected for commendation.

In 2019, the ASR also created the Best Africa-focused Anthology or Edited Collection published during the previous calendar year. This new prize recognizes the critical importance of collaborative work in African studies for advancing the field in new theoretical and/or methodological directions. The prize is awarded to a work of original scholarship, one that is cohesive in structure and interdisciplinary in nature, and it recognizes both the editor(s) and also the contributors as a whole. In making its selection, the prize committee paid particular attention to significance, originality, and quality of writing, and to its contribution to advancing debates in African studies. The prize committee consisted of Ana Lúcia Sá (ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon), Dawne Curry (University of Nebraska), Fallou Ngom (Boston University), and Benjamin Talton (Temple University). Edited scholarly works published in any country, in any language, in 2019 were eligible for consideration. The committee received twenty-one submissions.

The 2020 ASR Prize for the Best Africa-focused Anthology or Edited Collection is awarded to Oluwakemi M. Balogun, Lisa Gilman, Melissa Grayboyes, and Habib Iddrisu for *Africa Every Day: Fun, Leisure, and Expressive Culture on the Continent* (Ohio University Press, 2019). The prize committee acknowledges the originality, cohesiveness, and interdisciplinarity of this book, which covers different regions and various activities reflecting everyday life in Africa. The volume captures local voices and practices frequently overlooked in work on Africa. With new empirical research and diverse methodologies enriched by extensive fieldwork, young and senior scholars together present engaging narratives on real-life experiences of women and

men of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds across the continent. The book covers a broad range of subjects, from popular culture, leisure, and sports, to religion, education, family life, technology, and work.

The committee also recognizes Mariana P. Candido and Adam Jones for *African Women in the Atlantic World: Property, Vulnerability, and Mobility, 1660–1880* (James Currey, 2019) with the designation of honorable mention. This work addresses a significant gap in the historiography of the continent by explicitly examining women's agency during the European exploration of the Atlantic world before the formal imposition of colonial rule in the nineteenth century. Its chapters draw on various sources, documenting the multiple forms of women's agency and the social and historical construction of gender roles. Furthermore, it addresses the important socio-economic and political roles that women have played in Africa's Atlantic coast that have been largely overlooked in the literature.

Finally, in 2019 the ASR Editors created a new prize for the Best Article published during the previous calendar year. Each of the nine editors was invited to nominate one article for consideration, accompanied by a short note outlining their reasoning. The sole criterion was that the article must have appeared in one issue of Volume 62. The submissions were circulated among the Editorial Review Board, and all members were invited to vote for up to three top contenders. The winner of the ASR's Best Article Published in 2019 is anthropologist Ato Kwamena Onoma, for his exceptional article entitled "Xenophobia's Contours During an Ebola Epidemic: Proximity and the Targeting of Peul Migrants in Senegal" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2019.38>]. Onoma uses ethnographic research to demonstrate how xenophobia toward Peul migrants in Senegal during the Ebola crisis followed pre-existing personal patterns of relations rather than simply blanket animosity towards an entire group. The article uses rich interview material, and its findings are particularly relevant in the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic. For a limited time, this article will be available to access and download freely courtesy of Cambridge University Press.

The ASR Editors recognized a Runner-Up, Oluwakemi M. Balogun, for "Beauty and the Bikini: Embodied Respectability in Nigerian Beauty Pageants" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2018.125>]. In "Beauty and the Bikini," Balogun takes the reader into the remarkable and vibrant world of Nigerian pageant aesthetics, examining how various national contests engage ideas of respectability and reputation. Bikini-wearing is controversial, and contestants and observers deploy various personal, domestic, and global frameworks as they adjudicate physical beauty.

The Editorial Team congratulates all the awardees and nominees, and thanks the committees for their hard work.

The final December issue of 2020 contains exciting new research from across the African continent and beyond, with particular attention to Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa. We are pleased to publish engaging disciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarship,

from film studies, history, law, literature and cultural studies, anthropology, political science, gender studies, and media studies. We are thrilled to share a review essay on recent scholarship on Namibia [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2020.89>]. In our online format, you will find Rachel Engmann's interview with Ghanaian journalist Anas Aremeyaw Anas, the first of our new digital-only interview series [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2020.73>], along with eighteen book reviews and three film reviews.

We begin this issue with the 2019 Presidential Lecture by the ASA's past president, Maria Grosz-Ngaté, entitled "Knowledge and Power: Perspectives on the Production and Decolonization of African/ist Knowledges" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2020.102>]. In her public lecture, Grosz-Ngaté outlined the importance of African scholarship for the wide projects of epistemic decolonization and African self-determination. In recent years, debates around the African production of knowledge and production of African knowledge have been rocked by political events and social activism focusing on the persistence of institutional racism and racialized discourse. The author reflects on these issues and related issues, with a view to exploring the production and decolonization of knowledge among the membership of the African Studies Association.

In the first of a pair of articles about Islam and cultural production, Musa Ibrahim examines how the implementation of sharia's implicit and explicit visual regimes in northern Nigeria transformed cinema as a cultural production, deeply affecting what and how people see, think, and perform. In "Islam and Visual Culture: Sharia Implementation and Cinema as Visual Management in Nigeria" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2019.88>], Ibrahim focuses on the intrinsic importance of visuality and visualization, in particular since the liberalization of media that occurred in the 1990s. His ethnographic research explores the replacement of cinemas with religious or other "neutral" objects to reveal how a visual regime shift transforms cultural and religious production.

In the second article, "Contested Meanings: Timbuktu and the Prosecution of Destruction of Cultural Heritage as War Crimes" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2020.16>], Oumar Ba revisits the International Criminal Court's (ICC) prosecution of Al Mahdi, one of the chief perpetrators of the destruction of sacred Islamic sites in Mali. Crimes against cultural heritage are revealed to be easy targets for the ICC because they are expedient and represent an interest convergence between the Court, the Malian government, and the wider international community, in spite of differing attitudes and approaches to cultural heritage.

The next pair of articles explores manifestations of tradition, custom, and ritual, and their critics. Turning to South Africa, Nyasha Karimakwenda explores *ukuthwala* (the isiXhosa term for abduction for purposes of marriage). In "Deconstructing Characterizations of Rape, Marriage, and Custom in South Africa: Revisiting the Multi-Sectoral Campaign Against *Ukuthwala*" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2019.93>], Karimakwenda highlights

gendered tropes pertaining to marriage, custom, and sexual assault. She deconstructs the framing of customary practice, zeroing in on the absence of historicization, which silences women's narratives. Whereas the historical and locally-embedded connections between marriage and rape are abundantly documented, the anti-*ukuthwala* campaign is enmeshed in simplistic misrepresentations of violence within Black communities and state power.

In Ghana, Jonathan Roberts, Richard Nii Oshiu Codjoe, Jenny Davison, Flair Martin, Janet Mills, and Zackary Parsons examine the records of a sacred court. In "Medicine for Hatred: Civil, Criminal, and Supernatural Justice at the Nae We Shrine Tribunal in Accra, Ghana" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2020.14>], the authors find a refuge from social conflict and animus. Combing through the remarkable court records of the Nae We Shrine Tribunal, the authors describe a unique form of vernacular jurisprudence that navigates civil, criminal, and supernatural crimes existing outside the prevailing normative chiefly and state judicial contexts.

The next pair of articles turns our attention to colonial and contemporary Kenya. Julie MacArthur's essay, "Prosecuting a Prophet: Justice, Psychiatry, and Rebellion in Colonial Kenya" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2020.1>], revisits the life and prophecies of the Bukusu activist Elijah Masinde, an anti-colonial religious revival leader who was deported by British colonial authorities. MacArthur focuses on religious innovations, intellectual work, and moral debates, drawing on a rich corpus of Masinde's own documentation, centering on the trial. She reveals that Masinde used the court to counter pathologies of rebellion for his own patriotic purposes, effectively countering colonial efforts to portray him as a madman and criminal.

In "Conservancies, Conflict and Dispossession: The Winners and Losers of Oil Exploration in Turkana, Kenya" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2020.2>], Kennedy Mkutu and Anna Mdee reexamine extractive mega-projects and their impact on economic growth. Oil exploration in Kenya's Turkana region provides an opportunity to explore alliances between local elites and foreign investors. Employing longitudinal ethnographic research, the authors find evidence of increasing inequality, social marginalization, and violence.

In "Resisting Democratic Backsliding: Malawi's Experience in Comparative Perspective" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2019.62>], Peter VonDoepp explores conceptualizations of democratic regression. Malawi's experience from around 2011–2012 presents an opportunity to explore how democratic rights and institutions are challenged by popular attacks and the authoritarian tendencies of leaders. By comparing Malawi's experience with that of Zambia, VonDoepp contends that resistance in Malawi arose in economic tensions and civil society upheavals.

A final pair of articles examines sporting practice and performance. In "Green Eagle Nation: The Politicization of Sports Journalism in the Post-Independence Nigerian Press" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2020.3>], Lynn Schler and Itamar Dubinsky turn to the sports pages of postcolonial Nigerian newspapers to revisit the tensions of nation-building. Nigeria's Green Eagles

embodied earlier independent aspirations for a united Nigeria while also serving as a vehicle for political anxieties. By focusing on journalistic narrations of particularly celebrated games, debates about choosing a national coach, and other conflicts, Schler and Dubinsky reveal how the sports pages became national mouthpieces for ideas of cohesion and discord.

And finally, Jonathon Repinecz's article, "Senegalese Wrestling between Nostalgia and Neoliberalism" [<https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2020.8>], explores the cultural ambiguity of Senegalese wrestling. Whereas the sport of wrestling has been dramatically commercialized, Repinecz finds that wrestling is often framed as the nostalgic embodiment of traditional, national, or African values. Via a close reading of Aminata Sow Fall's *L'Appel des arènes*, Cheikh Ndiaye's 2005 film adaptation of the same, and Boubacar Boris Diop's *Doomi Golo*, Repinecz reveals how wrestling narratives position the performance between tradition and socioeconomic fragmentation.

The Editorial Team

CORRECTION: In our editorial in the previous issue we incorrectly identified all but one of the previous editors as white Americans. This is incorrect. For the period 1975 to 1980, Alan K. Smith (Syracuse University) served as Editor, with Evelyn Jones Rich as Associate Editor. Both individuals are African American. We apologize for this error and the offense it caused.