



WEST AFRICAN  
RESEARCH  
ASSOCIATION

## Spring Newsletter 2014

In this Issue:

Diaspora: West Africans on  
both sides of the Atlantic



### Diaspora: West Africans on Both Sides of the Atlantic

From Equatorial Guinea to high school classrooms in the United States, this edition of the newsletter is designed to energize debate and invigorate critical conversations around the importance of the West African presence in the past and the present. 2014's spring newsletter reiterates the continued power and potency of the West African Research Association as it highlights WARC's outstanding assessment as a vital resource for Trans-Atlantic scholarship. Among the feature articles, Denise Dias Barros's presentation of Casa das Áfricas asserts the relevance of the African Diaspora as the institute continues to unmask and celebrate the African foundation upon which Brazilian society stands. In a similar vein, Ismael Montana reminds readers that Islam was just as important to the Trans-Atlantic slave trade as capitalism and Christianity.

Particularly delightful are the reports by the WARA fellows who are engaging in research and community building in areas as diverse as mapping ritualized dance practices to constructing regression prediction models of the *Acacia Senegal* gum tree. Although the Fellows' research varies widely, it is apparent that their contributions are not just scholarly but contribute to understandings of history, politics, and even sustainability efforts which impact the populace and the planet. This edition continues to spotlight WARA's lifetime members as well as keep us abreast of the work of the body as a whole. Articles include a poignant reminder of the contentious relationship between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, as that story continues with denial, disenfranchisement, and denigration of all things African. In short, this edition of the newsletter, like others before it, functions as a scholarly source itself and testifies to the significance of the important contributions being made by the body that is the West African Research Association.

—The Newsletter Committee

### *Casa das Áfricas: African studies in Brazil*

Denise Dias Barros

The *Casa das Áfricas* ("House of Africa") is an institute for research, training, and the promotion and coordination of cultural, educational and artistic activities related to Africa. We aspire to contribute to enhancing the understanding of African societies. Moreover, *Casa das Áfricas* promotes partnerships and dialogues among researchers, especially those dedicated to studies of West and North African societies, as well as Lusophone countries ("Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa"). The Institute, which is a nonprofit organization, was formed through the meeting of a group of people who, in their diverse ways, had created ties with the African continent. They wanted to share and expand their experiences. The activities of *Casa das Áfricas* may be summarized as having the following goals:

- Supporting research related to African history as well as to Africa's contemporary major human, economic, political, and social challenges;
- Creating opportunities to enhance the visibility of Africans in Brazilian society;
- Setting up shared spaces for both Brazilian and African scholars, students and artists, for the promotion of cultural and educational activities;
- Providing institutional support for African students, especially those in their masters and doctoral studies;
- Carrying out economic and socio-cultural development projects in Africa, especially with the people in the areas where members of *Casa das Áfricas* conduct their fieldwork.

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WARA is grateful to the African Studies Center and the College of Arts and Sciences at Boston University, which serves as WARA's institutional home.



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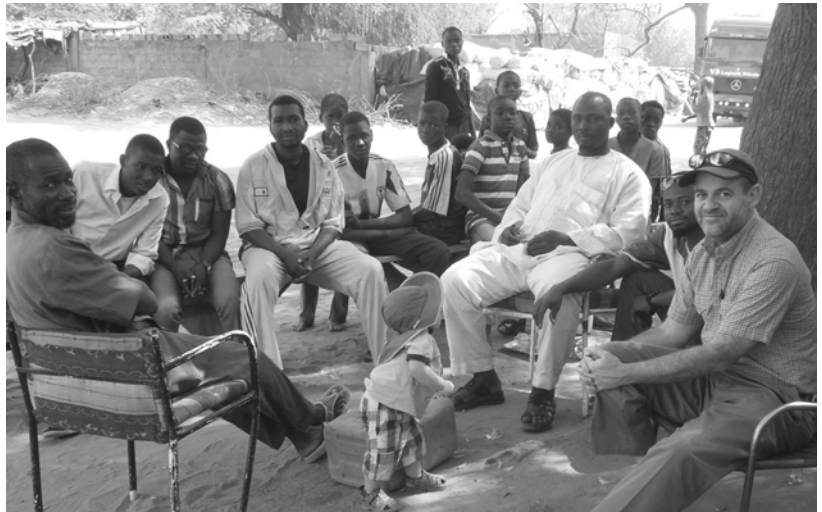
## Message From WARA Board President



WARA/WARC has been busier than ever pursuing our mission. As we continue expanding our programs in light of increasing demand for our services, we face significant challenges due to reductions in federal government support. In this context of structural adjustment, we have been actively seeking to increase our fund development capacity, particularly in the private sector. We need a collective effort involving all members if we are to maintain and grow the operational capacity of this remarkable association that has been so carefully built by generations of creative and committed people dedicated to the collaborative production and dissemination of knowledge of West African and the African Diaspora.

Thus, I urge all of you to find ways to become more actively involved in WARA/WARC that draw on your particular strengths. We are particularly in need of input from those of you with experience in and creative ideas for fundraising and the development of partnerships in the private sector. In addition, I remind you that you need not be a board member to serve on or to advise any of our Standing Committees—Membership, Fellowship, Finance and Development, Program, and Newsletter. And, of course, your donations, in addition to annual memberships, express your support for our important work and put us in a stronger position to gain support from external sources.

We enjoyed productive and well-attended meetings at the ASA Annual Meeting in Baltimore in November 2013. The Board of Directors met all day on November 20, and the General Membership Meeting on November 22 was a convivial gathering at the Lebanese Taverna in which we jointly celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the African Studies Program at Howard University—WARA's first institutional home and valued partner. The Executive Committee is finalizing preparations for its mid-year meeting on April 26. Vice President Wendy Wilson-Fall will once again graciously host us at Lafayette College. We are already planning for our all day, annual Board of Directors meeting on November 19—the day before the ASA Annual Meeting commences in Indianapolis.



WARA Board President introducing his son Reid to his favorite conversation group in Niamey, Niger in December 2013. (Photo by Sara Beth Keough)

I am very pleased to announce that the Executive Committee and Directors have restructured the staffing in the WARA office, adding the position of Assistant Director and eliminating the Assistant to the Director position. We believe that this organizational restructuring is warranted given the nature of the workload at WARA. And I am delighted to announce that Stephanie Guirand has accepted the new position, which represents a significant promotion from her previous position as Assistant to the WARA Director. Stephanie's outstanding job performance and commitment to WARA make her the perfect person to fill this position.

The WARA Board Standing Committees have been more active than ever, thanks to the special efforts of Stephanie, who serves as the liaison for all board committees. The Newsletter Committee has been busy; you will see that this issue is packed with articles, reports, and useful information. Perhaps our name leads us to overlook at times the fact the study of the African Diaspora is a vital part of our mission. The issue's thematic focus on the African Diaspora—with fascinating articles on *Casa das Áfricas* in Brazil by Denise Dias Barros, and on the complexity of race and citizenship in the Dominican Republic by Patrick Sylvain—serves to remind of this. The Fellowship Committee just completed its most difficult work of the year: the selection of fellows from an ever-expanding pool of worthy applicants. The Finance and Development Committee has been particularly active, holding regular meetings to review audits and finances and to develop strategies for generating funds.

The Newsletter also includes a summary of an expert, external reviewer's evaluation of WARC. While I am not the least bit surprised by the excellent assessment of WARC's work, it is a great pleasure and honor to earn affirmation from an experienced professional.

Last but not least, I join our Executive Directors Jennifer Yanco and Ousmane Sène in congratulating Mary Ellen Lane upon her retirement as Executive Director of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC). I cannot overstate how much the WARA/WARC team appreciates Mary Ellen Lane's long-term and invaluable support for our objectives. Who knows where we would be without her? I am confident that we will continue to benefit from her wisdom, creative problem-solving skills, and energy for many years to come.

*Scott M. Youngstedt*

# News From WARA and WARC Headquarters

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## WARA Director



I think we are all feeling somewhat bereft at the news of Mary Ellen's upcoming retirement. She will be stepping down from the CAORC directorship in June. Under her leadership, CAORC has demonstrated the critical value of research and the exchange of ideas across difference in building a more peaceful world. Instrumental in founding

WARA back in 1989, Mary Ellen has been our champion over the years. Although she is retiring, we look forward to her continuing guidance as we seek new ways to serve the communities of scholars of West Africa and the diaspora.

One of these (in which Mary Ellen played a key role) is The West African Collaborative Acquisitions Project (WACAP). A cooperative acquisitions model, WACAP provides member libraries timely and cost-effective access to a wide range of African imprints and periodicals. This model builds on the expertise we have developed over the past three years collecting for the Library of Congress in 10 West African countries. Please let your librarian know about this program. We are recruiting member libraries for a July 1, 2014 start date. Please contact the WARA office for more information.

The Saharan Crossroads Initiative, a joint program of WARA and AIMS, continues to explore this important region through conferences, publications, and research. The Saharan Crossroads Fellowship Program awarded three grants for 2014. The third Saharan Crossroads conference, *Views from the Desert Edge*, will take place in Oran, Algeria in June and promises to be a most engaging exchange. Among the presenters is Denise Dias Barros of Brazil, whose article appears in this issue. The conference is being held in collaboration with CEMA (the AIMS center in Oran, Algeria) and CRASC (Centre National de Recherche en Anthropologie Sociale et Culturelle). The proceedings of the Niamey conference (2011) will be out soon.

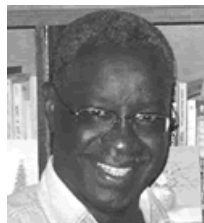
Congratulations to our 2014 WARA fellows who will be conducting critical research in six West African countries in a range of disciplines. We are grateful to the WARA Fellowship Review Committee—Wendy Wilson Fall, Ismail Rashid, and Hilary Jones—for their meticulous work in reviewing applications and selecting this year's fellows (listed on page 15). At the same time, I am pleased to draw your attention to the reports of WARC Travel Grantees and WARA Resident Scholars featured in this newsletter.

WARC received high marks on the recent evaluation that was conducted as part of our Title VI grant (see report on p. 21). This is a real tribute to the WARC leadership and to the WARC staff, each of whom gives 100%+ on a daily basis and assures that researchers, students, and other visitors have a wide range of resources in support of their research. It is thanks to their commitment and professionalism that WARC has become a center of intellectual activity in the region.

Our gratitude goes to CAORC, to the US Department of Education and to the Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau of the US State Department for their ongoing support.

Jennifer Yanco

## WARC Director



A few weeks ago WARC underwent an evaluation exercise conducted by an expert from the US. The conclusions of the exercise were very stimulating for WARC management and staff in as much as they underscored good practices at the Center while making valuable recommendations to further improve on the various activities.

Before the evaluation, an audit exercise was also conducted by an international auditing firm established in Dakar. WARC has since been making efforts to align with the recommendations made and further entrench transparency, accountability and quality delivery in its various operations.

The above two activities are extremely important not only because they will help WARC keep in the right track in terms of administration and management but they will prove to be invaluable arguments at a time when sponsorship is being sought by the Center to avail itself with the financial support which is the mainstay of all institutions of this kind.

Meanwhile, I was invited to an international conference on traditions and their influences on the present and the future. The international gathering took place at the India International Center in Delhi, India. The venue is one of the biggest research centers in South-East Asia and good contacts and exchanges were made with its managements and also the over 30 participants hailing from neighboring countries as well as from Latin America, Eastern Europe and Africa. My proposal to hold the second edition of such a conference at WARC was unanimously supported and, on condition that funding is secured on time, WARC could welcome such distinguished thinkers, writers and scholars to discuss issues relating to the future of emerging nations.

WARC is also currently hosting two researchers on American Council of Learned Societies fellowships: Mr. Kayode Atilade from Nigeria and Mrs. Joanna Boampong from Ghana. Mr. Atilade's research topic is "*Towards Deconstructing Home in Tahar Ben Jelloun's Novels: A critical Discourse Analysis*" while Mrs. Boampong's is "*Accounting for Hispanophone Perspectives in New African Writing: Sefi Atta, Fatou Diome and Guillermina Mekuy*". They are both in residence at WARC for two months. This underscores the diversity of WARC, with African fellows here along with other scholars from the US and elsewhere.

In the midst of the above developments, WARC continues to be engaged in its various activities. WARC is organizing, on behalf of the UN Office for Humanitarian Activities, an international seminar that will take place at WARC in May. This seminar will gather civil society actors from all ECOWAS member states, Mauritania, Cameroon and Chad.

WARC made a major contribution to the celebration of Black History Month in February and has a full program of events to mark Jazz Appreciation Month in April. Meanwhile, other public events such as lectures and book signing ceremonies continue to draw crowds to the Center almost every week.

Ousmane Sène

## Mary Ellen Lane's Retirement

Yes, Mary Ellen Lane is leaving CAORC after 28 years, but she is not leaving WARA/WARC. She is not leaving twenty-five or so other American Overseas Research Centers in faraway places that include Athens, Rome, Agadir, Jerusalem, Mexico City, Cairo, New Delhi, Bagdad . . . and Dakar, Senegal! We know that she will continue to be a reliable guide and counselor to all these centers, many of which saw the light of day on her watch.

I, for one, do not need to be reminded that when Mary Ellen became the first Executive Director of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers, some 28 years ago, it was a relatively small organization, with maybe, 12 or 14 Overseas Centers, mostly around the Mediterranean.

A year ago, about this time, I reminisced in these same columns of the WARA Newsletter about our unforgettable debt to Mary Ellen for transforming a thought, an idea that originated at an ASA - African Studies Association - annual meeting in Chicago, just over a quarter century ago, into a now thriving West African Research Association housed at Boston University under the creative leadership of Dr. Jennifer Yanco and a WARC/CROA in Dakar, Senegal with a reputation as a regional scholarly and cultural Mecca under the dynamic guidance of Professor Ousmane Sène.

When, through sheer perseverance, good faith and energy, Mary Ellen guided our shaky steps towards the emergence of WARA —which would be incorporated in the District of Columbia as a non-profit, on November 30, 1989—she had been in office barely 3 or 4 years. My own educated guess is that Mary Ellen's first real baby was not Julia, but . . . WARA! Or maybe, the two are . . . "twins"! I know for a fact that she has been and continues to be an excellent mother to Julia, but those of us who have witnessed and benefited from the nurturing care and counsel she has provided WARA over these many years, are very much hoping that she will also continue to be there for WARA, as she has been over these many years.

In her announcement of Mary Ellen's retirement, Professor Jeanne Marecek, Chair of the CAORC Board of Directors, used very appropriately the words dedication, vision and foresight to characterize her. As a former President of WARA and a former member of the CAORC Board of Directors, I wish to add generosity, cultural openness and universal *joie de vivre*. In her own farewell message to CAORC friends, she mentions several cultural and sports experiences from her many travels to CAORC countries. I will close this tribute by hoping that Ousmane Sène, Jennifer Yanco and my wife Julie will have, at least another chance to enjoy with her, Colin and Julia, another traditional Senegalese wrestling match.

Bien fraternellement,

Edris Makward



Mary Ellen Lane on a visit to WARC. With (from l to r) Sabi Tchagaffo, LOC country rep from Togo; Jennifer Yanco, WARA Director; and Adama Diouf, WARC librarian.

*It was with great vision, compassionate leadership and determination that Mary Ellen Lane succeeded in negotiations with Howard University to house WARA as the first overseas research center in sub-Saharan Africa. Within a few months, WARA expanded to include the Comite d'Initiative in Dakar that became the West African Research Center (WARC), thereby establishing the means of collaboration between Africa, its Diaspora and the United States. As WARA's first chairman, I remain indebted to Mary Ellen for her sustained support and commend her vision for the inclusion of global Africa in the community of overseas research centers.*  
Joseph E. Harris, Founding president, WARA

*With passion and a strong backbone, Mary Ellen gave her all to make WARA/WARC a reality. Brava!*  
Eileen Julien, Past secretary, WARA  
Founding director, WARC

*Mary Ellen's constant support for WARA over 25 years has been a pillar of its success. Hundreds, no doubt thousands, of students, researchers and scholars on both sides of the Atlantic have benefited from WARA and WARC, and we are all indebted to Mary Ellen.*  
Leonardo A. Villalón, Past president, WARA

*Mary Ellen, you are a treasure! So committed, so resourceful, so generous, so gentle. Your child WARA/WARC is now a productive adult. Many congratulations.*  
David Robinson, Founder, WARA

*MEL, institution builder, leader, manager extraordinaire and, above all, a pleasant human being. You do all in style and with incomparable elegance, wit and humor. As they say in Senegambia, only Allah can reward what you did (and will continue to do) for WARA/WARC. My own professional development owes a lot to you. Jerejef.*  
Mbye Cham, Past president, WARA

*Mary Ellen has been a phenomenal leader at CAORC and a reliable friend to WARA. Ever vigilante, leading with integrity and sound logic, Mary Ellen guided WARA officers toward the necessary steps to make the case with Congress for WARC to be recognized and funded as an American center for scholarship in sub-Saharan Africa. The rest may be history, but the beginning of WARC stability is embedded in Mary Ellen's grit and persistence. Her generosity, peppered with good humor and hardy laughter, smoothed the road and eased the task.*  
Jeanne Maddox Toungara, Past secretary, WARA

*Mary Ellen was this institution and was a personal dynamo in building it. She kept congressmen in her pocket, civil servants in her folder, and donors in line outside the office waiting to contribute, all the while helping academics do their things more easily. She made a simple pass-through into a multiple-program well-managed academic organization. It will take five people to replace her, and yet none will: She is a legend.*

I William Zartman  
Founder & past treasurer, WARA.

***Casa das Áfricas: experiences in the context of African studies in Brazil***

In Brazil, the coexistence of identities (Native South American, African, European, Asian), and the increasing challenges that come up when differences come side by side - in the domains of culture, gender, generation, and race, developing some form of friction, disagreement and violence, require new capabilities and methods in what concerns educational activities and research. According to the Brazilian Constitution of 1988, there are laws and regulations at the federal, regional, and local levels that have required changes in education syllabi. Among these, Laws numbers 10.639/2003 and 11.645/2008 must be singled out, as they altered the Maximum Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education in order to compel schools to teach African and Afro-Brazilian, as well as Native South American history and culture in the country's public and private schools. The main purpose is to guarantee that topics about Africans appear across the board in subjects such as history, geography, and Portuguese language and literature.

African studies in Brazil requires constant attention to contexts of knowledge production, foundations and view of history, without forgetting the importance of dialogue with African political agendas, and with the production of African intellectuals and artists. Led by these considerations, in its early years *Casa das Áfricas* carried out a research survey to identify African academic literature—theses and dissertations—issuing from Brazilian institutions, as well as their main authors. Based on this cartography of dissertations, theses, and researchers, a series of meetings was organized. These were called "Estudos africanos no Brasil: memória de seus protagonistas" (African Studies in Brazil: Accounts of Its Protagonists). Through its effort to streamline discussions, it has brought to Brazil internationally renowned scholars. In this way, Paulo Fernando de Moraes Farias, Ruy Duarte de Carvalho, Karin Barber, José Luís Cabaço, Elisio Macamo were some of the intellectuals whose thoughts and studies gave rise to courses and talks. All of these became then part of our library collection as audiovisual documents. Conferences and courses were also offered by Nikolay Dobranravin, Simon Djami, Mamadou Diawara, Augustin Emame, Samba Gadjo, and Ousmane Sène, the current director of the West African Research Center. Additionally, in the beginning *Casa das Áfricas* would offer scholarships to Brazilian researchers, besides providing an institutional link and support for African and Brazilian masters and doctoral students, as well as funding for participation in conferences and fieldwork in Africa.

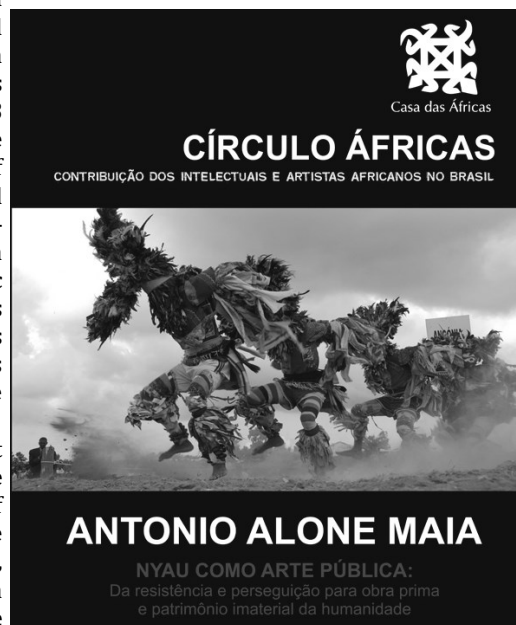
Currently, at a time when resources are limited, our priority is increasingly to provide support for training for young Africans, especially from the regions where researchers of

*Casa das Áfricas* do their fieldwork. The promotion of learning opportunities for graduate students is likewise essential within the scope of cooperation projects with Brazilian universities such as, for instance, University of São Paulo, Catholic University of São Paulo, Federal University of São Carlos, Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte.

Our head office is located in São Paulo, and has an Africa-related library with approximately three thousand titles, available for on-site perusal or research through its website. Its collection is made up of different media (such as books, DVDs and CDs) and is open to the public. The main purpose of Komoué Yao Library of *Casa das Áfricas* is to facilitate research, study and cultural interventions related to the African continent, its holdings including academic publications, literature, movie, music and digital photographic collections.

There is furthermore an extensive, broad-ranging but closely-knit network created by associates in different regions of Brazil. This network both broadens and enriches the range of *Casa das Áfricas's* undertakings.

For the members of *Casa das Áfricas*, art and knowledge remain deeply interconnected, as well as knowledge construction and political action. Moreover, the main effort is related to issues emerging out of well-circumscribed contexts and their meanings, thereby avoiding generalizations and abstract approaches to African societies. It is worth here singling out three on-going programs. The first is "Círculo Áfricas, contribuições de artistas e intelectuais africanos no Brasil" (Áfricas Circle, Contributions of African artists and intellectuals in Brazil) which started in 2012. Taking up the proposal of 'culture circle' from well-known Brazilian intellectual Paulo Freire, themes are related to African cultures. The intention is to contribute to discussion about coexistence and diversity, focusing on dialogue among African scholars, master and PhD students, artists and cultural actors who develop activities through non-hegemonic circuits. This allows us to deepen knowledge about Africa and African cultures, while responding to a social need and, at the same time, contributing to the implementation of Law No. 10.639/2003. This sort of activity improves dialogue, with academic contributions from universities, and opens up a debate with segments of society that have difficulty accessing these contributions. *Círculo Áfricas* was created after several years of collaborative work with the Centro de Estudos Africanos (Center for African Studies) and Projeto Metauia (Project Metauia) of Occupational Therapy, both at University of São Paulo. Its purpose is to highlight research fields of interest and aesthetic productions by African intellectuals and artists.



## Feature article

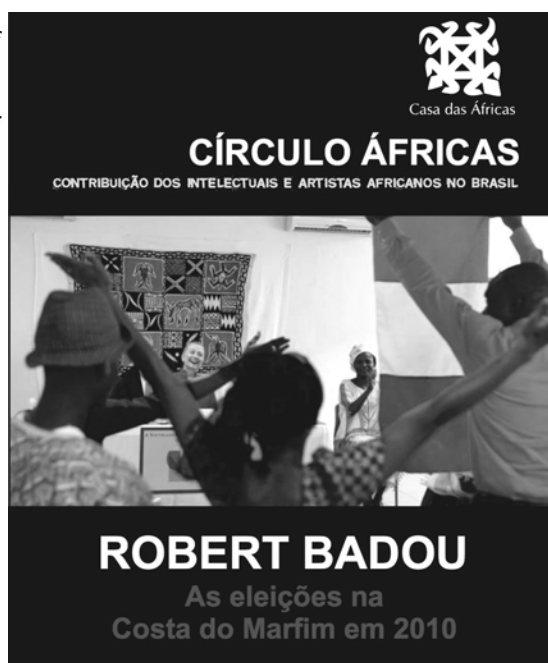
Meetings are held in different parts of town, all of them cultural spaces in the city of São Paulo. Guests are asked to create an environment that opens up a dialogue through different forms of expression and language (film, music, photography). *Círculo Áfricas* is a follow-up from meetings that made up the program called "African Studies in Brazil: Accounts of Its Protagonists", mentioned above. Researchers and intellectuals from Brazilian institutions were invited to develop a dialogue with the audience about their career and the central themes of their reflection and/or aesthetic production. *Círculo Áfricas* were enriched by the experience, among others, of Saddo Ag Almouloud (with a talk entitled "Influence of orality on Bamanan environment in the process of teaching and learning mathematics"); Alain Pascal Kaly ("Senegalese youth and the fate of the country: the elections of 2000 and 2012"); Maged Elgebaly ("The Memory of Egypt during Revolution"); Antonio Alone Maia ("Nyau as Public Art: Resistance and the Pursuit to Masterpiece and Intangible Cultural World Heritage"); Bas'llele Malomalo ("Teaching African Economic and Political Geography at school: from postgraduate studies to basic education"); Marina Berthet ("An experience of 'development' on the island of São Tomé and Príncipe: between appropriation and the strategies of participants"); Francisco Sandro Vieira ("The Decolonization of African knowledge: reflections on African history in the context of Law

10.639/03); Manuel Jaurá ("The role of ethnoural authorities in consolidating democratic institutions in Guinea-Bissau"); Toumani Kouyaté ("Youth between art and politics: challenges of independence in West Africa").

From the perspective of developing an approach to African issues from the point of view of their aesthetic expressions, a project has been developed since 2013, based on the work of filmmaker Ousmane Sembène, whose film themes embody the demands and imperatives of his time, that is, the anti-colonial struggle. Sembène Ousmane came to break with a "postcard" aesthetic, namely, the image of an idyllic Africa. He was besides an eloquent and polyphonic critic of both local and universal themes. Sembène's work is a valuable tool in order to approach many themes about Africa: for instance, colonial domination, gender, colonialism, slavery, African art, and oral tradition. Therefore, our aim is to propose an approach to society and the historical geography of African art and thought based on the work of a great African intellectual.

We have done movie screenings and courses about the life and work of Sembène Ousmane under the guidance of Samba Gadjigo, his official biographer, and Victor Martins, a researcher at *Casa das Áfricas*. Furthermore, we sponsor many activities, for instance, through visual arts workshops about the work Ousmane Sembène, as a way of preparing and training in order to understand his creation. A key purpose of this process is to create space for what we call trails of

creativity, through experimentation that allows an in-depth approach, and transformation/transposition of languages. Here, the central challenge is to create opportunities for experiencing through workshops, including the multiple languages of visual arts. From theater to reflection and practice by drawing, painting, photography, the participants have had contact with snippets of films (in this case, the movie *Emitai*) displayed frame by frame, for a detailed study of its elements. Thereafter, it was possible to discover the cultural and aesthetic foundations of filmmaker Ousmane Sembène's universe through the culture and history addressed in the movie.



Currently, we are making efforts to create a program about the Sahara and Sahel, with especial attention to the Amazigh world and the linkage between North and sub-Saharan Africa and its diaspora. For this reason we promote a space for reflection, research, and publication, besides encouraging Brazilian and African master students.

We are seeking in addition to strengthen ties with institutions with similar goals both in Brazil and in Africa, in order to strengthen the development of research and training for young Africans. In this regard, *Point Sud*, Centre for Research on Local Knowledge—an institution dedicated to training and research in Bamako (Mali)—has supported our activities in that country since 2005.

African contemporary immigration to Brazil is a new challenge and for *Casa das Áfricas* it has been an important issue, both in our research and social and political action, especially in what

concerns the educational and cultural domains. *Casa das Áfricas* works in partnership with the Inter-Institutional Network for the Immigrant and with the Immigrants Policy Coordination created by the São Paulo Secretariat of Human Rights in 2013.

Our philosophy strongly emphasizes an education for peace in order to attain social justice and a coexistence of differences of cultural-historical practices, favoring the understanding of multiple logics, values and needs. This requires from all of us a thorough review of the role of knowledge, forms, and methodologies of research, as well as an intensive effort to develop spaces of cohabitation of differences, including in the construction of a field of African studies, as well as an ethical way of teaching.



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### Blood in Hispaniola: Citizenship, Sovereignty and Exclusion (A view from Haiti)

In September 2013, the Supreme Court of the Dominican Republic, citing a “No Rights to Dominican Citizenship” decree, ruled against Dominican-born children and grandchildren of undocumented immigrants, especially Haitians of black African ancestry. This law, based on a constitutional birthright predicated on blood instead of territory, differs from laws of most countries around the world. In most parts of the world, birth on a national territory is a grounds for citizenship and constitutional rights. The Dominican Republic’s restrictions on citizenship have had grave historical consequences. Its revised constitution of 2010 explicitly prohibited citizenship for foreigners or migrant workers who were considered “transitory” in the country. This law was enacted in 1929 under President Vasquez, who signed land transfers and border demarcation lines with Haitian President Louis Borno under the auspices of the United States. As a consequence of the ceding of Haitian land, thousands of Haitians without legal representation had found themselves in Spanish speaking territories. That same year, the economic depression that resulted from the world-wide economic crash forced stock market prices to plummet, severely impacting the cost of sugar. Not surprisingly, this situation resulted in a U.S.-backed Trujillo dictatorship, which orchestrated the 1937 massacre of thousands of Haitian plantation workers whose labor was no longer needed, and whose skin color was not favored.

Despite the success of the Haitian Revolution (1791-1803) that temporarily reversed European fortunes across the island by achieving independence and emancipating the island’s enslaved West Africans, and bringing freedom and independence for the citizens of new Haitian state, barely a century later, racism was well entrenched among the elites of both sides of the island. The liberated Africans descended from Dahomians, Congolese, and Igbo slaves were caught in a bilateral government-managed system of exploitation that benefitted certain American industrialists and Dominican elites and a small portion of the Haitian elite, as well. Such system of exploitation was coercive, for it involved the enticement from both governments on behalf of private employers who sought to set in motion large-scale plantation labor in the Dominican Republic (1920s-1990s).

In the Americas, a plantation worker (whether under Jim Crow, servitude, cheap labor, bateys, or latifunda) was never considered a citizen due to the legalities of chattel slavery system that dehumanized the people of African ancestry. Indeed plantocracy and the colonial structures throughout the world have undermined the human progress of the people of African descent. After the former colonies were liberated, their progress was hampered by the legal construct of citizenship as a major obstacle to their attainment of true meaningful citizenship. Certainly, one could argue for the case of Haiti and the Dominican Republic that former colonial powers have nothing to do with the current quagmire. It is purely an unraveling of national and internal politics. This is true to some extent. When it comes to former colonies, however, the present can never be completely divorced from the past, nor can we overlook the policies of Western countries that have so often infected internal politics of foreign countries with their brand of “racial politics” and favoritism. Consequently, thousands of Dominicans with Haitian ancestry, whose parents were recruited as migrant workers to labor in the large sugar plantations owned by American companies, are now

not only facing expulsion for being undocumented, but also their fundamental right of citizenship has been violated by the same system they labored and served.

As Western Powers champion democracy around the world, in the Caribbean archipelago democracy is enshrouded in colonial arrangements or operates within non-inclusive political axioms. The market-based needs of the same Western Powers who provided the conditions for satisfying consumer aspirations for low-priced commodities resulted in a large-scale assemblage of extremely cheap and expendable labor. Haitians are one group of people in the Americas who are widely and systematically discriminated against and discarded as disposable migrant laborers. Without a doubt, discrimination is a factor at play in such treatment. Their blackness, or African-ness, becomes a major discomfort for those who have adopted Eurocentric standards of beauty, civility and religion. I am reminded of Frantz Fanon when he claimed, in the context of structural racism against blacks, that the “archetype of the lowest values is represented by the negro.” For the Dominicans who are rejecting their African ancestries, Haitians, who are viewed as Africans, represent that archetype.

Additionally political adjudication of citizen sovereignty under dictatorial rules or foreign occupation has created regimented and marginalized spaces, and Haiti itself has squandered its ideals of inclusive citizenship. Thus, those who have a conservative reading of history will and have blamed Haiti for its misery—as though Haitians are inherently dysfunctional.

However, the influence of colonial policies, politics, as well as the United States’ multiple military occupations of both Haiti and the Dominican Republic, cannot simply be overlooked. The hundreds of plantations in both pre-Castro Cuba and in the Dominican Republic that benefitted from cheap and unrepresented Haitian labor is a direct by-product of the United States economic interests that consumed the rights of human beings to be humans.

The black body, the Haitian body, not only was denied citizenship, but Haitian bodies formed such a collective of repulsion for the Dominican Eurocentric mindset that the massacre of 1937 and subsequent killings, hackings, and deportations of Haitians went on with impunity. The weak Haitian state, undergirded by the anti-black worldview of most of the elite Haitian, did not register complaints against the ongoing suffering of its fellow “citizens”. One of Michele Wucker’s poignant passages about the 1937 massacre asserted that the “Haitians were transported like cattle to isolated killing grounds, where soldiers slaughtered them at night, carried the corpses to the Atlantic port at Montecristi, and threw the bodies to the sharks. For days, the waves carried uneaten body parts back onto Hispaniola’s beaches (Why the Cocks Fight, 1999:49). In early 2000, when I worked as a public school teacher in Boston, some of my Dominican students used to joke about Haitians who were beaten and killed in various provinces—as if this were a national pastime.

When Aristotle conceptualized the idea of the state in the Politics, he argued that the state is “a compound made up of citizens; and this compels us to consider who should properly be called a citizen and what citizen really is. The nature of citizenship, like that of the state, is a question that is often disputed: there is no general agreement on a single definition: the man who is a citizen in a democracy is often not one in an oligarchy.” Although Aristotle may have lived in the past, his argument remains





## Feature Article

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relevant to citizenship for the modern state. This is especially true as states' boundaries have criss-crossed continental waters, co-habited or accommodated languages dissimilar to that of the hegemonic state, and also aligned cultural demographics as satellites into their metropolitan orbit. Furthermore, citizenship of the modern-nation state becomes much more complex when we factor in forms of colonial as well as post-colonial arrangements. Even the term nation-state must be re-articulated or shifted into a new paradigm if were to take Puerto-Rico as the ultimate example of a cultural-nation that does not exist as a nation-state since the United States holds legitimate power and its cultural practices and frame of references differ vastly from the cultural nation that it dominates. In the case of the Dominican Republic, Haitians are such abjects that even the rights of citizenship are not given to those Dominicans of Haitian ancestry. Discrimination is matter of fact in the same ways it openly existed in the United States prior to the passage of the Civil Rights Act.

Within the global and geo-political interests of the nation-state, citizenship becomes a powerful mechanism for socio-political inclusion. Started in the 1930s and continuing to this day, the Dominican Republic pursued a pro-European migratory policy that seeks to lighten its demography. Thus, within the enclosure of Eurocentric power dynamics Haitians became the antithesis of the wanted and are therefore tactically quarantined from the enlarged realm of citizenship that seeks to accommodate Westerners to its demographic spaces. As the Dominican Republic economically grew and became a relevant tourist destination, its laws became pervasive and coercive in order to protect its large scale post-emancipation system of migratory labor control that developed its agricultural industries into modern institutions. By denying citizenship to certain groups, namely Haitians, the sugar and construction industries are guaranteed a permanence of cheap, expendable labor.

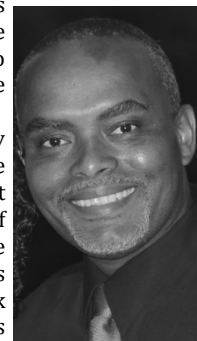
The manner in which citizenship is bounded varies from country to country and almost every nation discriminates between its citizens and non-citizens by one marker or another as rights are reserved, prescribed, and benefits administered. The remnants of colonialism such as slavery, racism and sexism become instruments of apportionment within the nation-state—regardless of symmetrical or asymmetrical arrangements of citizenship. Notions of citizenship are deeply rooted in ideological understandings and interpretations of nationhood that continue to subdivide citizens into ethno-cultural groups and where culture, and, or ethnicity is used as an instrument of discrimination. As David Beriss reminds us, the “idea of the culture of others allows some French leaders to argue that immigrants—even scarf-wearing little girls who have probably never lived anywhere but France—belong inescapably to cultures whose values are incompatible with those of the Republic” (Beriss 2004:42). Inversely, it is never the case that a metropolitan or a continental citizen from the dominant group would be made to feel culturally or ethnically inadequate when venturing into the demographic spaces of the cultural-citizen other. A white metropolitan French feels at home in the Antilles and will be treated with respect without labeling his or her regional affiliation; whereas, the Antillean will be labeled and classified without a second thought that this individual is a full-blooded citizen. The same is true in the Dominican Republic vis-a-vis a black person who is perceived to be Haitian. Yet, in Haiti, Dominicans are desired subjects. The paradox of self-alienation, cultural racism and “mulatta” desirability in the Caribbean, and especially on the island of Hispaniola, results in a deep-rooted and superficial sense of superiority that we have inherited from the colonial masters. Over two hundred years of the only successful black revolution against European dehumanizing, Haitians are

collectively paying for defanging the colonial system. Unfortunately, the Dominican Republic is very proud of its accomplishments, albeit in a semi-colonial system of labor exploitation and exclusionary citizenship politics.

During the era of slavery and colonialism, freedom and independence were the zeniths of humanity. Today, citizenship is the ultimate achievement of the struggle for freedom and independence. The freedom conferred, and the human actions within nations' borders become, the strict domain of states that permit the enjoyment of freedom within an allotted parameter. Citizenship permits national movements, membership (national and international), political rights, access to labor markets, eligibility for a full range of welfare benefits, environmental quality and security. Modern nations (former colonies or not) have structured vital legal parameters to their constituent citizens as well as to their territorial subjects in order to maintain administrative control of movement and access to their territories, while guaranteeing certain fundamental movements within the surveilled territories. The territorial subjects, the unlawful aliens, or simply the unwanted, are controlled through various forms of government propaganda, and sound bites in order to confine them within certain bureaucratic spaces. Cultural obstacles preclude the possibilities of collective action, and their narrow spaces of circulation render them identifiable targets for roundups. In the past ninety years, Haitians have been subject to roundups whenever a Haitian administration attempted to bring up the issue of citizenship for Haitian descendants, or simply to enforce certain trade laws. Indeed, the weakness of the Haitian state renders its citizens extremely vulnerable.

The notion of sovereignty is quintessential to all nations, and the Dominican Republic has the right to protect its borders and implement its laws; however, the country has to be consistent in its practices, or sovereign virtues. It cannot seize various forms of identification from the migrants that it promised fair work and fair pay, and once on the Dominican soil, keep them in the confinement of plantations without documentation; some of those workers had been permanently there for over fifty years. The terms for political refugees as established by the Geneva Convention of 1951 distinguished economic refugees from political ones. The unsophistication of Haitians vis-a-vis the law always places them in unfavorable corners when they testify about their reasons for migrating to the Dominican Republic. Despite the semi-coercive nature of their migration into the Dominican Republic, many of them have never cited discriminatory practices in Haiti; instead, they mentioned the lack of work and the extreme poverty as reasons for migrating. Hence, the protections allotted to political refugees are not applied to Haitians. Certainly, in the United States, Haitians, when compared to Cubans, found themselves in the same quandary.

Although Dominicans with Haitian ancestry are calling for the boycotting of the Dominican Republic's tourist industry, it remains extremely unlikely that the rest of the world will suddenly become race conscious and act on behalf of the hundreds and thousands of citizenship-less black people who are toiling in this “sun-bather's paradise”.



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### Encoded Histories: Ewe Dances in Ghana & Togo



From June 25<sup>th</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup> I conducted ethnographic research in Ghana and Togo on Ewe dances as forms that encode histories. I investigated ways that the pan-African water deity Mami Wata was being used to construct understandings of histories of national and ethnic identity. I observed Mami Wata rituals and performances. I also conducted interviews with local historians, professors, and practitioners in order to determine ways the dances are used by certain communities to define and strengthen ethnic ties. My results stem from research conducted in Cape Coast and Dzodze in Ghana and Lomé, and Tsévié in Togo.

My summer study allowed me to observe and examine the staging, revision, and presentation of local histories by conducting interviews and attending festivals and rituals. Before going to the field I hypothesized that Mami Wata dances functioned as means of history-making that comment on the meaning of diaspora, are in dialogue with diasporic practices, and encode specific local histories. The African water spirit Mami Wata, whose name is a pidgin version of the English words “mother” and “water,” nurtures through financial blessings, but turns against those who do not serve her well, driving them insane or claiming their lives as her ultimate price. My preliminary findings from this summer reveal that dances honoring the deity do specifically encode histories of origin even as they pertain to everyday needs for healing, financial stability, and moral adherence to communal codes.

Where Mami Wata was regarded with suspicion, some disgust, and even outright fear in Ghana, in Lomé Mami Wata was spoken of as an important aspect of local culture. I was able to attend two festivals pertaining to my research topic of Mami Wata and Diaspora during my time in Ghana and Togo. The first was PANAFEST which, while not an Ewe festival, is held in Cape Coast to commemorate the trans-Atlantic slave trade. At PANAFEST, I discovered that the performances were methods of constructing kinship ties between West Africans and African Americans. The performances at PANAFEST encoded histories through literal reenactments of slave journeys and through linking symbols of black transnational identity, such as a mask of Barack Obama’s face, with West African traditional practices and authority. The latter was accomplished through the procession of chiefs and the dances of masqueraders and local performing militias called asafo companies.

I also attended Ayiza, a local festival in the Togolese town of Tsévié. The Ayiza festivities were also based on a transnational tale of fraternity and struggle being told through dances. Ayiza focuses on the migration epic of Ewe people through which they remember how they were held as slaves in the city of Notse and how they escaped through cunning and divine intervention. This festival is always accompanied by dances for Mami Wata because she is one of the important deities brought by the Ewe to their present homes in Ghana and Togo, according to one of the Mami Wata priestesses I interviewed.

While in Togo I learned about the variety of different dances dedicated to Mami Wata and their significance. The dances function as a type of “medicine,” or power, that can effectively protect or harm those who perform them. These dances and drumming rhythms do indeed have a historical dimension as they are included in the festivals that reiterate the migration epic of the town. While the dances did not have the same type of diasporic significance that I had anticipated since the white mermaid was notably absent from the shrines that I visited, the dances do participate in a specific genre of history-making. Thanks to the WARA Fellowship I was able to collect ample data to write my dissertation prospectus and to structure my future research. I was able to discover exactly which festivals will be useful to me as I continue to explore Mami Wata’s role in Ewe history-making and the ways that these performances comment on or participate in transatlantic diasporic exchange. This summer research has been an essential aspect of my training as a researcher since I am working on histories-in-the-making. I cannot thank WARA enough for their support of my dissertation research.



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### Modeling Spatial Accessibility and Potential New Routes in the Afram Plains, Ghana



The core aim of this study (which also doubles as a PhD dissertation) is to model spatial accessibility to local market centers in the Afram Plains of Ghana. The study also focuses on modeling potential new routes aimed at improving rural accessibility to enhance rural development in the Afram Plains. The Afram Plains, an area in the Eastern region of Ghana is generally considered as the food basket of the country (Ghana District News, 2013). Yet, it is one of the most poorly developed areas in Ghana (African Development Bank Report (ADB), 2006; Daily Graphic, 2006). The area, in spite of its immense potential, has significant spatial accessibility problems (Ghana District News, 2013). There is essentially no access road connecting the district to the rest of the country as it is almost completely cut off by water bodies (Lake Volta and the Afram River). Currently, the only major means of access to the area is by water transportation (Figures 1, 2 and 3 in KNDA, 2013). Such isolation is believed to be the root cause of the poor development of the area (APCAP, 2010b). Besides, transport infrastructure within the district is limited and insufficient; most settlements are not connected by paved roads, while most existing paved roads are in deplorable condition. This discourages potential investors from coming to the district (Daily Graphic, 2006; Ghana District News, 2013). Owing to these setbacks, local residents who are mostly farmers incur losses during the crop seasons, as they are unable to find buyers who will offer reasonable prices for their products.

In light of the above problem, the following questions were formulated to guide this research:

- 1) *What is the current spatial accessibility to local market center (s) in the area based on the varied local forms of transportation?*
- 2) *Where are the areas of greatest need?*
- 3) *Which road network model (extensive/intensive) would better improve spatial accessibility in the area?*
- 4) *What are the associated costs and potential economic benefits of the proposed intervention?*

The WARC Travel Grant enabled me, the principal investigator, to travel to the study area in Ghana and to successfully complete the field research. Between May 21 and July 2 I conducted a field study, which included a survey, interviews and direct observation.

Overall, 200 participants responded to a survey questionnaire, while 10 experts including local opinion leaders and district agricultural officers were interviewed. I also travelled to a number of villages and towns in the area by road to observe and assess the physical conditions of the existing road networks. The direct observation was helpful in assigning

appropriate attributes to the road networks within a GIS environment which is a vital part of the accessibility analysis. The field trip also provided the opportunity to obtain all relevant secondary data from local agencies. After several hours of digitizing and accuracy assessments, a more reliable database has been generated for the advanced stages of the research. The responses from the survey are currently being decoded. So far, the responses show that residents' transportation dilemma is worsened during the major wet season. As a result, they prefer the minor wet season to the major for growing their crops. In places where there are no paved roads, the responses were unanimous in the need for better culverts and bridges over paved roads. These preliminary results present very interesting facts and this researcher cannot wait to conclude the entire research.

The Afram Plains has the potential to assert itself as the major source of food for Ghana and even the West African sub-region. There are enormous amounts of resources which are favorable for extensive agriculture available in the district. The abundant water supply from the Volta Lake and the many local rivers for instance provides opportunity for irrigation farming which can support year-round crop cultivation (KNDA, 2013). There is also the availability of extensive arable land and relatively inexpensive labor in the district. Nevertheless, none of these resources is being fully and efficiently utilized due to the existing poor spatial accessibility problem in the area. Until a feasible and effective plan is put in place, the area will remain deprived even in the midst of plenty. Such plan is what this research expects to achieve.

I am sincerely grateful to WARA for awarding me the WARC Travel Grant that enabled me to conduct field studies in the study area in Ghana. I really appreciate Dr. Jennifer Yanco, the Director of West African Research Association, for her stupendous assistance. I am also thankful to the following individuals: Ms. Victoria Tsibu, Mr. Frank Siaw, and Mr. Isaac Dede-Bamfo all of Ghana for their immense support during my field research.



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### *Acacia Senegal*:

#### Estimation of age, dendrometric parameters and productivity of *Acacia senegal* (L.) Willd., in north Ferlo, Senegal

**Background and objectives.** The arabic gum tree *Acacia senegal* (L.) Willd presents a large distribution in the dry and semi-arid tropical regions of Africa. In Senegal, it is mainly found in the Ferlo region in the northern part of the country. *Acacia senegal* is used for the production of gum arabic, which has been used by humans for more than 4,000 years, serving as a base for traditional medications, inks and glues. *Acacia senegal* serves also as aerial fodder, and firewood. Other uses include the restoration of soil fertility by fixing atmospheric nitrogen, providing wood for fuel, and building poles for local e-barriers. The diminishing density of this useful species is thus a cause for concern.

Good forest management and decision-making depend on accurate yield estimates. To obtain these, allometric equations are required. The development of equations to predict tree height, crown diameter, and crown height from stem diameter of a tree species will enable arborists, researchers, and urban forest managers to model costs and benefits, analyze alternative management scenarios, and determine the best management practices for sustainable forests

Dendrometric parameters vary with tree age [1]. Several studies have tried to improve the accuracy of assessments of the age of wood in general [2], and especially *Acacia senegal* [3]. But all the techniques used, such as the use of growth rings, the extraction of cores or entire cross sections, are destructive and inappropriate for degraded ecosystems, for which the development of less destructive methods remains a major challenge.

The objective of this study was to develop regression prediction models for tree age, tree height, crown diameter, crown ratio and crown depth for *A. Senegal*.

**Methods.** The study was carried out in Ferlo, located between latitudes 15° and 16° 30 north and longitudes 13° 30 and 16° west. Four plantations of different ages (ISRA, 10 years old, Ndodj, 8 years old, Boulal, 5 years old, and Déali, 4 years old) were selected. The following dendrometric variables were measured on 489 trees: crown height, crown diameter; stem diameter at the breast height, stem basal diameter (at 0.30 m), and the height from tree base to first branch.

**Results.** The results suggested that the ecological structure of the different year old *A. Senegal* plantation revealed a bell-shaped form with left dissymmetric distribution indicating a predominance of individuals with small diameter at breast height. Allometry study of *A. senegal* showed highly significant positive correlations ( $p=0.00$ ) between stem diameter at breast height, stem basal diameter, tree height, crown diameter and crown depth. Positive correlations were also found between crown diameter, tree height and crown height. Prediction models derived from these relationships can be used to estimate the tree height, stem diameter at breast height and crown depth from crown diameter with greater precision. As for *A. Senegal* age estimation, the established model is not strong, as it can explain only 49.1% of the age variation.

Prediction models derived from these allometric relationships can be used to estimate the tree height, stem diameter at

breast height and crown depth from crown diameter with greater precision. Estimating the tree height and crown depth from stem diameter at breast height will yield less accurate results because of the weaker correlations. The relationship between dendrometric parameters and gum production needs to be studied.



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### WARA 2014 ASA Panel



#### War-making and Peacebuilding in Africa: The Place of Language

Abu Bah (Northern Illinois University)  
Maimouna Barro (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign)  
Leigh Swigart (Brandeis University)  
Fredrick Ogenga (Rongo University College, Kenya)  
Michael Montesano (Indiana University-Bloomington)  
Eileen Julien, discussant (Indiana University-Bloomington)

*The panel explores the ways in which language has been used both in creating and recovering from conflict. Language has been deployed as a powerful tool in creating and exacerbating conflict, including through 1) the media and use of inflammatory speech and 2) the accounts of corruption, discrimination and other grievances causing conflict. Language also has an important place in peacebuilding and transitional justice activities in the wake of conflict, including 1) during criminal trials and truth and reconciliation commissions; 2) in the healing activities of the clergy, artists, and traditional leaders; 3) through the language of reconciliation and accountability written in peace agreements and literacy works; and 4) through the words of influential actors, including politicians, artists, intergovernmental organizations, and INGOs. The panel addresses the uses of language in promoting conflict or building peace through studies on Mauritania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Kenya. The paper ranges from ones in which language was used as both an instrument of oppression and resistance to cases in which language is a challenging and potent force in peacebuilding. In particular, the papers address the role of Arabization and Pulaar in Mauritania, the role of African languages in transitional justice trials and outreach in Rwanda and Sierra Leone, the use of local music to promote peace in Kenya, and the role of literary works in the way we understand and heal from the Rwandan genocide. Collectively, the papers address the way language is deployed to promote conflict and resistance and the technical and symbolic aspects of language in the peacebuilding process.*

### Music and Matter, Time and Space: A Musical Ethnography of the Kambonsi of Northern Ghana



My primary goals were to undertake an intensive language instruction course in Dagbanli, research Hausa Ajami documents in the Arabic library at the University of Ghana at Legon, and conduct preliminary interviews with Dagbamba musicians and traditional historians. I rented a cottage in a north-western section of Tamale called Kpalsi, about 10 kilometers from the central market but walking distance from the University for Development Studies, where I was generously given office space to work. The trip was a great success for me, as I was able to advance my meager language skills, access Hausa documents and other primary source materials at UG during a two-week stay in Accra, meet up with Ismael Montana—from the WARA Board of Directors—at the Northern Region archives, and spend time talking development, culture, and music with Northerners young and old. I also got to catch up with old friends and teachers, and spend some time making music!

Tamale is the capital of the Northern Region. As the economic, cultural, and educational center of the North, it is growing quickly. Migrants looking for work or coming to attend one of its many secondary schools or colleges are a significant reason for this growth. Northerners were systematically deprived of education during the colonial days, and many today complain that the central government and southern business interests have worked to stop or slow economic development in the North by fighting the expansion of the electrical grid, building and improving roads, and the construction of an international airport that many believe will bring transformative economic opportunities.

Over the past decade, Ghana's economy has boomed, a result of years of political stability, foreign investment, especially from China, and newly discovered oil and gas reserves, but during this same period poverty in the North has increased, despite the construction of new schools, hospitals, and businesses. Among the significant factors for the disjuncture between increased school enrollment and higher poverty rates are the schools themselves—more accurately, the teachers, or lack thereof. Teacher absenteeism is rampant throughout the rural areas of the North, and many students spend their days in unstaffed classrooms. Not surprisingly, most Northerners do not pass the standardized test required to receive the secondary school certificate. As more and more youths enroll in schools, they leave behind the farms and traditional trades of their parents. The result of these circumstances is a growing demographic of people who have received neither the education nor certification they endeavored to attain through school, nor the practical knowledge such as farming or drumming, that they could have acquired by staying home in their natal villages.

My dissertation project addresses the geopolitics of contemporary and colonial Ghana by focusing on local debates about the political, economic, social, and material marginalization of Ghana's northern territories. The central

focus for this project is on traditional culture and its role in human and economic development for the Dagbamba youth in and around Tamale, the largest and most populous city in the north of Ghana, which includes the Northern Region, Upper West, and Upper East Regions. I am particularly interested in how musicians have weathered the changes of the last several decades, how music and dance performances may have changed to suit new contexts, and in how the youth conceptualize and engage the many opportunities and crises of contemporary life in the North through grassroots organizations centered around music, dance, and traditional culture.

During my research this summer I got in touch with two youth groups that promote traditional music and dance as part of their primary goals, and with whom I will work when I return to Tamale this January. The Lamashegu Youth Takai Group travels throughout the region to perform for festivals and life-cycle events, while the Tamaha Youth Development Association, located in a small village about 70 kilometers north-west of Tamale, integrates music and dance into their larger mission of advancing the quality of life through development in education, entrepreneurship, and traditional culture. I also began working with a wonderful singer of Dagbamba and Hausa songs that are performed for funerals of local dignitaries. Born in a small village in the 1930s or 1940s, she moved to Tamale as a teen and witnessed the impact of social, political, and economic changes on her music firsthand. She told me great stories of how she learned songs, traveled throughout the region to perform, and how the urge to sing would often portend death.

My project was originally planned as a study of the role of performance and cultural production in sustaining a historical stranger population of warriors among the Dagbamba. Oral history research this summer showed that, contrary to the accepted scholarly and popular history of Ghana, they were not strangers but indigenous to the traditional polity. My drumming teachers complained that the historical and contemporary narratives of Ghana and the Northern Region have largely been written with minimal input from Northerners, often exaggerating the impact of the Asante on their northern neighbors. These oral narratives pointed to larger issues of political representation, economics, and access to education in the North. I will return to Tamale to build on this research from January through August 2014 to gather data for my dissertation.



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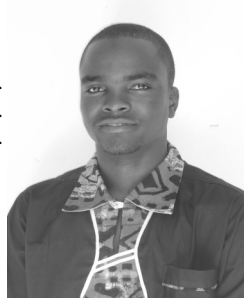
## Programme Economie Politique et Gouvernance (PEPG)

*WARA is pleased to have been able, through its Travel Grant program, to support the work of PEPG, a program that builds capacity in the region through training and mentoring young researchers. The program has two components: training and internship or supervised research.*

*Established in January 2012, PEPG aims to foster a research tradition in issues of political and economic governance in Niger around four axes: demography, migration, development strategy, and state building, with the immediate goal of training a cadre of young researchers. If the Program meets its criteria of success, it will develop into an independent social science research center, covering issues important to Niger and the West African region at large.*

“Capital,” writes David Harvey (*The Enigma of Capital*) “is the lifeblood that flows through the body politic of all those societies we call capitalist, spreading out, sometimes as a trickle and other times as a flood, into every nook and cranny of the inhabited world.” Capital, especially in the form of credit, is a vagrant force that can buoy and suddenly inflate whole economies, or reduce them to the lethargy of old age or strange diseases. Countries situated at the fraying edge of the ‘global economy,’ where capital is generally the unmerited reward of rare bonanzas of valued minerals or fossil substances, often move about like slothful metabolisms, starved of the oxygen of credit. Vital though the topic is, it is also uninviting, not sexy. Mostly, it is left to the arcane devices of economists. In a country like Niger—the site of the research presented below—where only ready cash can purchase most equipment and finance most start-ups, thereby restricting real economic agency to a minuscule caste of the affluent, the connected and the money launderers, the dismal problem of capital and credit is completely absent from the public conversation and perhaps from public awareness. Why so, and to what effects? These are the early subjective questions that guided the framing of our research.

This research took place in the framework of the *Programme Economie Politique et Gouvernance* (PEPG), a research and training program for BA/MA students in all social sciences (and the humanities) from the University of Niamey, in Niger. It was a two-pronged effort, with one segment conducted by Hadjara Djibo, and the other component taken up by Mahamadou Barma. Both Djibo and Barma have an MA in Law, and this is their first time conducting sociological research—so they were closely supervised by PEPG coordinator and WARA member, Dr. Rahmane Idrissa. However, seven months of training within PEPG in 2013 had already familiarized them with research methods and analysis. Djibo, a star student in her department, studied directly the issue of credit, while Barma, a well-known student union leader at the University of Niamey, was more interested in indirect effects of the political-economic climate on youth ‘employability’ (i.e., capacity of being employed in the economy as it (dis) functions). Both studies are related to PEPG’s overall research agenda of analyzing the politics and sociology of the dual sector structure characteristic of the economy of most—if not all – developing countries: that is, the fact that a small ‘modern’ sector—generally inherited from the part of the economy historically directly organized by the colonial regime—operates side by side with a very large, so-called ‘traditional’



Mahamadou Barma,  
PEPG Fellow

sector, a transformed remnant of pre-colonial economic conditions.

In the case of Djibo’s research, the perspective taken was to look at banks and businesses not just as economic agents, but as social actors, admittedly goaded by capital to behave in certain ways, but nonetheless members of the social body and interested in the development of Niger—included for self-interested reasons. Their position is thus taken in a number of contradictions, which can be solved only at a political level, by the state. To operationalize this general approach, we chose to study the policy of private sector promotion to which the state of Niger has committed itself at least since 1996, considering it as an effort to enlarge Niger’s tiny modern sector, including through transitioning segments of the traditional sector into the modern sector. Djibo studied the issue from the angle of the credit relations between banks and SMEs. Specifically, she conducted research on all Nigerien banks, including through questionnaires, which a plurality of the financial institutions accepted to fill out. She also conducted extensive interviews with businesses from the modern tertiary sector. While valuable data was gathered in this way, the ethnographic orientation of the research did suffer a bit from the fact that most banks restricted their response to the questionnaires and also, the time on hand did not allow an extension of the scope of the research into manufacturing and the traditional sector. In this sense, Djibo’s research has chiefly an exploratory value for PEPG.

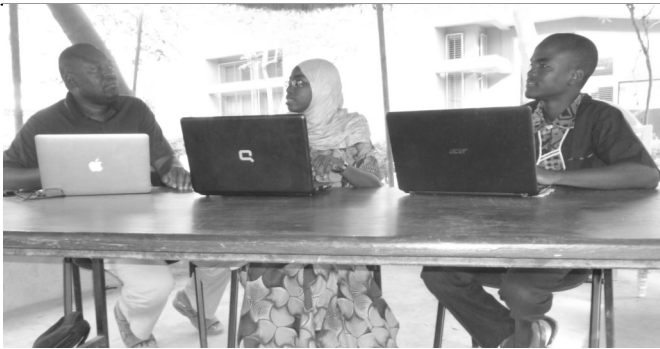


Hadjara Abdou Karimou Djibo,  
PEPG fellow

However, it was supplemented by the research of Mahamadou Barma, who investigated the differences between the workforces for the modern sector (school-educated youth) and for the traditional sector (non school-educated youth). Barma first conducted interviews with professionals of the employment sector (public and private employment agencies, officials from the labor inspection authority, government advisors), and a survey was afterward administered to 60 youths (age 18-35—the African Union definition of the category) equally divided between the modern and traditional sectors. While the interviews were geared at understanding the effects of government policy on both sectors, the survey sought to dig out some determinants of youth employability depending on the sector to which they belong.

Both fellows conducted their research over a four-month period, essentially in Niamey. The picture that emerges inspires mixed feelings. With regard to the issue of credit, one major finding is related to the fact that there is much hopefulness and sense of opportunity in the business community, apparently because so much still remains to be developed in Niger. But there are severe limitations. Credit products are as yet not sufficiently sophisticated to expand the nets of the banks—something necessary to modern-sector transition—and the banks in Niger, as in other West African countries, have excess liquidity, a sure sign of credit rationing. Yet, the banks are not the problem: just like businesses (and what are banks, if not businesses), they operate under conditions that are left to fester by the state. Indeed, we found that the heart of the matter is the weakness of the state—still not equipped with the public institutions that would enable it to implement the policy principles which it has been droning on about since at least the mid

## From Our Fellows



PEPG Coordinator, Dr. Rahmane Idrissa, with Fellows Djibo and Barma.

-1990s. If this sounds a bit like neoliberal mantra about building ‘institutions for the market,’ it really is not—as is proven by some of the results from Barma’s research.

Here, attitudes surveyed in the workforce point to a lethargy of the state as a problem, mainly in terms of its educational policy and the institution of social security. A first sticking point has to do with the fact that government employment policy is almost exclusively directed at youth in the modern sector. Findings suggest that there is no awareness, at the level of officialdom and those who work with them, such as the employment agencies, that this might be a form of discrimination. Content analysis of the interviews indicates that this lack of awareness is strongly connected to the formal ‘culture’ of policy and unionization. Most policy instruments, such as, importantly, the institution of social security, are operated only within the modern sector, and unionization in the traditional sector, though it exists, has much less bite than in the modern sector. This is due in part to the lack of genuine official recognition, which reinforces the effects of the nature of ‘employability’ in that sector (predominance of ‘service,’ including in households, as opposed to work in a productive sector—industry or agro-industry—which generates basic companionship among workers).

What neoliberal reformists—the guiding and not so invisible hand of economic policy in Niger and other countries like it—have persistently failed to see is that there are solid links between a successful economic policy and decent social policy. For instance, by shoring up the overall position of workers, the latter would increase the value of their stake in policy implementation, which in turn should play a more important role in improving the attractions of the modern sector. To be sure, at a time when, in the industrialized North, states are withdrawing from welfare provision while employers and capital-owners are offloading responsibility for social coverage onto workers, the suggested orientation faces an uphill battle. But the crisis of welfare has deep-seated political, rather than real economic reasons, and our case of Niger, where they have always been very limited, and yet where the same anti-welfarist outlook obtains, clearly demonstrates this fact. Just as for credit the need is for an expansionary monetary policy—something that goes against the grain of the West African States Central Bank, BCEAO, a strictly orthodox institution—, social policy in our context in fact calls for forms of inventive generosity. This follows a wisdom that, for some baffling reason, has tended to become more unconventional these days: it is the policy that matters to the people that becomes successful—always.

*Rahmane Idrissa, PEPG Coordinator*  
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## 2014 WARA Fellowship Awardees

### Diaspora Intern

*Brandi Simpson Miller*

(Georgia State University, Department of History)

To intern at the University of Ghana, Legon- Department of Family and Consumer Sciences

For research on food and nationalism.

### Post-Doctoral Fellows

*Sarah Zimmerman*

(Western Washington University, Department of History)

“Mesdames Tirailleurs: Marriage, Migration, and African Colonial Households in French Empire, 1880-1962”

For research in Senegal

*Michele Kuenzi*

(University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Department of Political Science)

“Political Parties and Representation in Senegal”

For research in Senegal

*Sidra Lawrence*

(Bowling Green State University- Department of Ethnomusicology )

“The Revolution will not be Subsidized: Dagara Female Musicians and the Problem of Development”

For research in Burkina Faso and Ghana

### Pre-Doctoral Fellows

*Matt Cooper*

(University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Department of Geography)

“Exploring the Sikasso Paradox: A Comparative Study of Land Use Change, Cotton and Malnutrition in Southern Mali”

For research in Mali

*Erin Kitchell*

(University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Geography)

“Institutional Arrangements, Climate Risk, and Conflict Resolution in Agropastoralist Zones”

For research in Burkina Faso, Mali, & Senegal

*Adrian Deese*

(Cornell University, Department of History )

“Theology and the State: Intellectual History in Early Nigeria (Yorubaland)”

For research in Nigeria

*Matthew Faytak*

(University of California, Berkeley, Department of Linguistics)

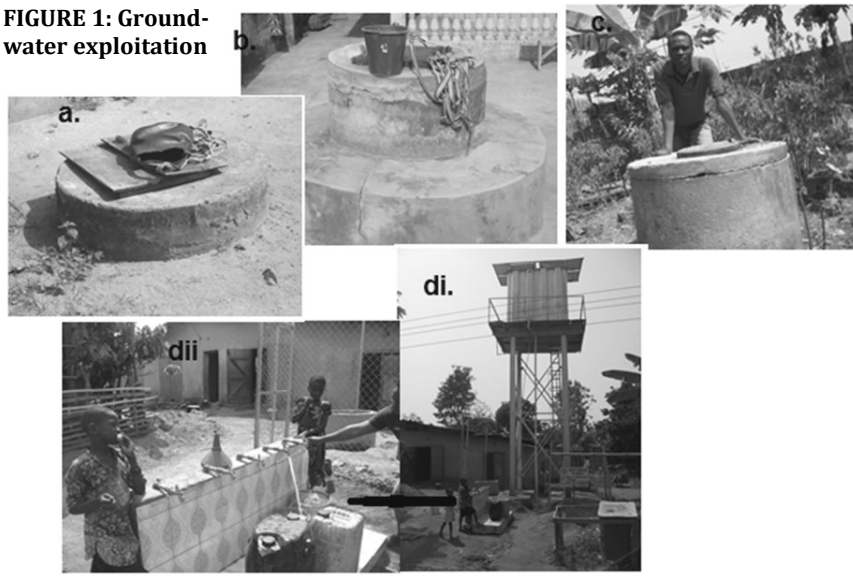
“Kom and Oku, two closely related Cameroonian Grassfields languages”

For research in Cameroon

**Environment, Sustainability, and Groundwater Quality:  
How is the Spatial Information System relevant to groundwater quality assessment?**

The WARC Travel grant was sought to assist my travel to Nigeria from the University of Exeter, Devon (UK), where I have been a PhD student in Physical Geography (option in chemical hydrology) since April 2010. The purpose of the grant was to conduct follow-up research in Nigeria as a case study of most developing countries, where

**FIGURE 1: Ground-water exploitation**



Nigeria is not centralised, and no standards are known to govern the exploitation of groundwater, except as driven by the need for water by individuals and communities. The implications of the decentralised infrastructure and lack of standards' enforcement include individualised water quests with different quality of water from the groundwater sources. Vulnerability to geological and land use contamination is rarely stringently considered before

access to quality water supply has become a challenge. My previous research on water quality in the region established a significant link between land use approach and water quality (Eludoyin, 2014; Oyeku and Eludoyin, 2010; Eludoyin et al, 2004). It was therefore considered important to investigate a holistic approach where given appropriate water governance, strategies to provide quality and quantity water to meet the water needs of the people and significantly reduce the presently increasing vulnerability to water related diseases in the region.

water is exploited, especially in cases for household use. For example, a cursory look at Figures 1a and b reveal sources of possible vulnerability of the well water to include pollution by contamination from the surrounding land use, due to unclean cover, low concrete base (Figure 1a) and fetcher (Figure 1b). Water quality in groundwater sources can therefore vary with locations and approach to its exploitation.

**The State of Groundwater Quality**

Groundwater, known to provide over 90% of the global freshwater supply, has been increasingly exploited in recent decades, probably to support the problem of the declining surface water sources in many regions (Edet et al, 1998; Nelson, 2003). Groundwater sources are however known to vary in depth, geology, land use and other factors that can affect the quality of water that is derived from them. Table 1 shows a list of cases of groundwater pollution observed in different parts of the world. The first two are related to contaminated geology and the others are related to poor land management.

In Nigeria, like many developing countries, groundwater is exploited as either hand-dug shallow wells or machine-dug deep boreholes. Figure 1 shows some forms of groundwater exploitation methods in Nigeria: **a-b** are shallow hand-dug wells for household use with different protection against pollution, **c** is a borehole for household use with a concrete ring protection for the source from which the water is piped into the house (the author is the one standing by it); and **di** is a community borehole (in Ayegunle-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria) with multiple taps (**dii**) for use. The borehole is powered by solar energy.

Unlike many developed countries, water infrastructure in

<b>TABLE 1: Some Reported causes of groundwater contamination</b>	<b>Examples of Studies</b>
Rare chemical (e.g. arsenic) in wells. Sources attributed to contaminated geology Abnormally high dissolved salts (calcium, carbonates, fluorides) in areas underlain with certain geology (e.g. regions underlain by Malmesburyshales, certain granites, limestone, coal deposits)	Janssen & Verweij, 2003
Unlined latrines and residential soak away systems Urbanisation; urban markets Landfills Preservative chemicals used in burial sites Industrialisation Agrochemicals	Mizumura, 2003; Eludoyin et al., 2004; Oyekuand, and Eludoyin, 2010 UNEP, 2006

**Methods**

Sustainability of environmental resources, including groundwater, is considered essential for adequate water management and sustenance (Edet et al, 1998). One approach that possesses the capacity to integrate the physical and the human components of an environmental resource is the spatial information system (SIS). The SIS adopted for this research is comprised of a digital database on groundwater supply and quality parameters for small and large areas as informed by user-driven concerns.

For the SIS decision support information on the distribution of the quality of groundwater sources, water samples were



obtained from three states (Osun, Ondo and Kwara), and were analysed for water temperature, electrical conductivity, total dissolved solids and pH. Samples were collected from each purposively selected region using the slovin formula. Positions (longitude and latitude) of each sampled groundwater source were determined using a Magellan version global positioning system (GPS). Average depths of the selected groundwater sources were provided by the owners, and in few cases the water level was determined with a twain attached to a fairly heavy object whose length was later measured. The research is continuous, and we expect to increase the sampling area.

## Preliminary Results

The preliminary results show that groundwater quality in the study area exhibits spatial variations due to differences in their proximity to major urban developments and their commercial, institutional, residential and industrial land uses. The hand-dug wells in the industrial region in one of the settlements (Ilorin), exhibited relatively more acidic ( $5.9 \pm 0.1$ ) than the other land uses, while the well water at the commercial sites exhibited more values of the solutes electrical conductivity and total dissolved solids ( $0.66 \pm 0.07 \mu\text{Scm}^{-1}$  and  $0.96 \pm 0.1 \text{mg l}^{-1}$ ). The relationships between the depth of the sampled well water and the chemical parameters showed that the electrical conductivity, pH, water

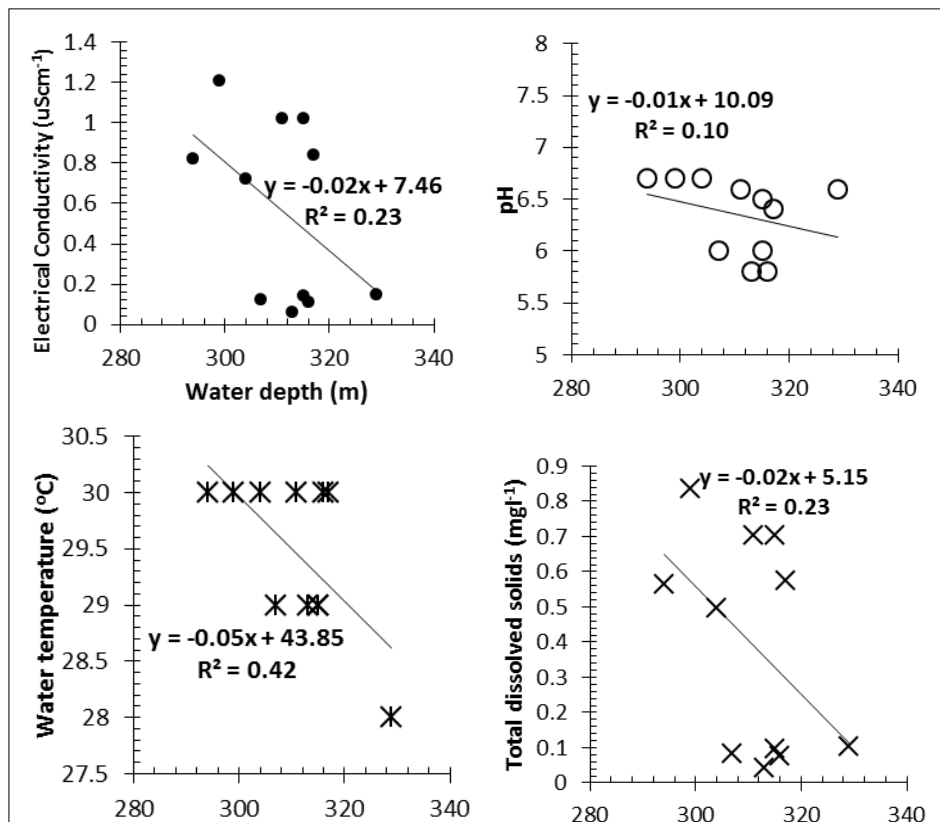
temperature, and total dissolved solids exhibited an inverse relationship at different levels of significance (Figure 2).

## Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the support of the head, Department of Geography, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria which served as the base for this research; Dr Oyekanmi Babatimehin, my contact at the Department of Geography, University of Ilorin, Dr. L.T. Ajibade and Dr. L. Oriola; contact at the Department of Geography and Planning Sciences, Mrs. O.M. Eludoyin. I also express gratitude to Dr. M.O. Ibitoye for assisting with the GPS and Mr. Dotun at the Centre for Research and Development, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria for the support with the analysis of the chemical parameters. I appreciate WARA for the grant.



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**FIGURE 2:** Representatives of the relationship between the depth of water in sampled well waters and the electrical conductivity, pH, water temperature and total dissolved solids in one of the sampled regions (Ilorin) in Nigeria. More analyses are on course to compare the results from different regions, using geographic information software, and for cartographic displays.

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## Free and French: The Challenge of Black Citizenship to Empire



The Old Friday Mosque, in Porto-Novo, Benin

My book project “Free and French: The Challenge of Black Citizenship to Empire” is ambitious in time and space, spilling across centuries, borders, and disciplines. It spans the Haitian Revolution to the fall of the Fourth French Republic in 1958, with chapters on ports and cities in Haiti, Senegal, Martinique, Benin, and France. Each chapter highlights crises when black and mixed-race subjects of French empire in Africa and the Americas struggled to define freedom and “Frenchness” for themselves. The book also engages imperial and legal histories, urban studies, literature, and art, not to mention the overarching themes of gender and race. With the WARA Post-Doctoral fellowship, I was able to complete research for several chapters of the book, specifically in Senegal and Benin.

Through the archives and my own exploration by foot, ferry, car and motorcycle-taxi, I was reminded how the topography of each location reflected the specific culture, economics, and politics of space. On eighteenth-century Gorée, lines between people of color, Europeans, slave, and free were blurred as spacious houses owned by African and mixed-race women and men sat beside French government buildings. In twentieth-century Porto-Novo, in an African kingdom turned colonial capital, the layout of the city reflected layers of history. Older parts of the kingdom hugged the lagoon with serpentine alleys connecting different quarters, while boulevards outlined the “French” part of city on the outskirts, superimposed on neighborhoods where returned Brazilians had built homes half a century earlier. When the First World Festival of the Negro Arts took place in 1966 in Dakar, visitors and participants descended on the capital of independent Senegal, with its modernist architecture circled by a winding coastline. The innovative Musée Dynamique (now the Supreme Court) that was the centerpiece of the Festival still stands out on the Corniche with its gleaming white stone, though many have probably forgotten what it stood for in 1966.

My archival research on eighteenth-century Gorée focused on *signares*, influential and wealthy women, often mixed-race, who have been more celebrated in the historical record for their beauty than for their business dealings or political work. In fact, to maintain their status among a majority slave population, *signares* signed several letters demanding privileges during the eighteenth century. In the Archives, I examined local council debates, slave-holding records, census data, and colonial reports on citizenship laws. Most scholarship traces the origins of citizenship rights in Senegal to nineteenth-century citizenship and emancipation decrees. I argue, instead, that the language of privilege in eighteenth-century petitions by *signares* allowed the French to imagine the possibility of African citizenship. Personally visiting Gorée again after many years, I was struck by how the landscape lends itself to idyllic tourism, obscuring the tumultuous economic

and political history suggested by generous old homes, rusty cannons pointing outward, and cobbled streets.

Gorée also played a role in the 1966 World Festival of the Negro Arts. Billed as a celebration of black people’s contributions to art and culture, politics permeated Festival rhetoric and performances. For example, the play staged on Gorée as part of a “sound and light” show became a vehicle to reflect on the past, present, and future of Africa and the

African diaspora. Rich archival sources on the Festival and two informative interviews reinforced my sense that this extraordinary meeting of artists and intellectuals was also about the struggle for black citizenship in the modern world.

My research in Benin focused on Porto-Novo, the site of a diverse kingdom of Africans, Muslims, returned Brazilians (*aguda*), and Catholics before it became the capital of the French colony of Dahomey. On one hand, I examine the transition from kingdom to colony in Porto-Novo through Ignacio Paraíso, an *aguda* who self-identified as Muslim and maintained ties to the ruling royal family and the French colonial administration. Known as a bit of a controversial figure because of his cross-cutting relationships, I conducted interviews with several of his descendants to help balance my written materials with family and local histories. I also uncovered new archival sources on wealthy African and *aguda* families who made frequent demands for rights, including citizenship. Finally, the physical layout of the city tells a story. Perhaps nothing better exemplifies the complex history of Porto-Novo than the old Friday mosque. Its typical West African/Brazilian (*aguda*) style made it look like more like an old Catholic Church, sitting on the edge of the main market, near the old royal palace, not far from the edges of the lagoon, where Porto-Novo was founded.

The research conducted during the WARA Post-doctoral fellowship directly contributed to three chapters in my manuscript. Some of my findings in Senegal and Benin also were incorporated into a forthcoming article based on another chapter that will appear in *Law and History Review*. I plan to submit the entire manuscript for review in the coming months. My research demonstrates how the intellectual, physical, and artistic activism of Africans and Antilleans played out in different contexts. By revealing the opportunities for and limits of black colonial subjects becoming “free and French,” this book also critically addresses more recent debates about immigration, citizenship, and broader human rights in France and elsewhere.



Gorée Island, Senegal



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## Scholar of Multinational Corporations



It was in March 2013 that I received an email from the West African Research Association informing me that I was selected as a resident fellow to teach a course in the School of Business, Lesley University.

After so many ups and downs related to the program, I succeeded to travel to Boston. Given that I was selected to teach, I had the opportunity to start working with the dean of the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Science, Mary Coleman, and her Vice Dean, Bruce Logan, who doubles as head of Division, Business Management. I was asked to prepare a course outline for a course titled "Multinational Corporations and Capitalist Development."

I successfully put a course outline in place that went through a few modifications, and started teaching on September 4, 2013. The course ran for 15 weeks and had an enrollment of 15 students. My teaching approach was mainly interactive and experiential. To make students feel the activities of multinational corporations in Africa, I made them watch a documentary on the activities of MNCs in Cameroon titled "The Big Banana". Thanks to this movie, students were able match discussions in class with practical lessons. In

addition to this, I was assigned to put in place syllabi for two new courses on Africa. After several visits to the Lesley library I found material that permitted me to draft outlines for these course, entitled "Post Independence Africa" and "The African Diaspora." The outlines were approved by the Dean, Professor Mary Coleman.

### THE CAMEROONIAN DIASPORA: AN ASSESSMENT OF ITS ROLE IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Kingsly Awang Ollong

*The present article aims at proving that the Cameroonian Diaspora, otherwise referred to as 'bushfallers' or 'bushfalling', is an indispensable tool for local development. Through its contributions to local development in the country of origin, it has asserted itself as an important source of financing development projects back home in Cameroon. However, the projects financed by the Cameroonian Diaspora lack coordination simply because the Cameroonians living abroad have not constituted an organization that consolidates the entire Cameroonian Diaspora. Instead, the Cameroonian Diaspora groupings are formed through ethnic or community linings. Against this background, this article has specified and discussed some challenges faced by the Cameroonian Diaspora as far as local development projects in Cameroon are concerned. It proposes recommendations that will make the involvement of the Cameroonian Diaspora in local development projects perceived more at national level and not just at ethnic levels.*

**Keywords:** *Diaspora, bushfallers, remittances, local development*

Apart from teaching, on November 14, I gave a talk on the activities of multinational corporations in Cameroon. This talk was preceded by the projection of "The Big Banana," a film by Cameroonian filmmaker Franck Bilieu at Bunker Hill Community College. I also took part in other academic and scientific activities. The most remarkable among these activities were the African Paper series hosted by Harvard University, the Boston Speaker Series organized by Lesley University, and the Walter Rodney Lecture Series at the Boston University African Studies Center. I also had the privilege to attend the African Studies Association (ASA) Annual Meetings in Baltimore, Maryland, from November 21 to 25. Though I did not present a paper during this conference, I took part in very insightful discussions on landgrabs, the activities of Boko Haram, and international migration.

In the course my fellowship, I was able to complete my research on the implication of the Cameroonian Diaspora to local development. The findings of this research were published in the *Journal of Globalization Studies, Volume 4, Number 2* of November 2013, the abstract for which is reproduced here. And, thanks to this programme, I am now able to connect with academics worldwide with whom I can exchange ideas in field of research and other areas of my interest.



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### Islam in West Africa as a factor in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Reflection

Discoveries of historical records in the Americas especially exotic *ajami* or Sudanic Arabic and Quranic scripts that have long escaped the scrutiny of historians, have triggered awareness of the importance of the "Islamic element" in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. These documents have introduced an entirely new dimension for historians considering enslaved African populations in the Americas. Moreover, the documents also challenge students of the Atlantic slave trade to rethink the connections between Africa, the Americas, and religious, political and ideological developments, especially in the western and central Sudan. The importance of the Islamic element in the Atlantic slave trade thus goes beyond the availability of exotic foreign written materials from enslaved West Africans about their life stories. In the words of the French scholar A. Martel, these documents "still await their historians."

Scholars now recognize that the period of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade was also an era when *Dar al-Islam* (the Islamic World) was a powerful entity, especially in West Africa. Thus, while historians have acknowledged the impact that Europeans had on this area, they now need to examine the religious, political, social, and cultural influence of Islam on the Trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Historians estimate that about 14 percent of African slaves brought to the Americas were Muslims. Allan Austin, Michael Gomez, Sylviane Diouf and many other scholars have done an excellent job of bringing together surviving accounts from the Antebellum South that speak to historians and elucidate that Muslim slaves, including some with Arabic literacy, struggled to sustain their religious practices in spite of the adverse environment in the Americas. To some historians such as Paul Lovejoy, the presence of Arabic literacy among slaves in the Americas was not a mere accident, rather it was an institutional factor. It had its roots for example, in the Jihad movement of the Sokoto Caliphate in northern Nigeria that was responsible for exporting literate Muslim slaves to various destinations of the Americas.

The arrival of Islam in the United States, where most of these records have been discovered, has been linked to the Muslim slaves who first came to America during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Scholars such as C. G. Woodson, John Blassigame, Charles T. David and W.B. Hodgson's reassessments of the Arabic narrative of African Muslim slaves have correspondingly shown that many Muslims who were brought to the Americas were literate and had some knowledge of the Quran. Literate Muslim slaves composed letters that have been preserved in depositories. Some of these were discovered by Carter G. Woodson in 1929, when he published seven such letters in his work, *The Minds of Negro as Reflected in Letters Written During the Crisis, 1800-1860* (New York: 1969).

H.B. Hodgson, author of *Gospel Written in the Negro Patois of English* (Ethnological Society of New York, 1985), has much to offer on Muslim slave literacy in the Antebellum South. Hodgson was among the first American scholars to grasp and convey the importance of African languages and to decipher the African-Arabic writings of the slaves in many places in the south. He was not only among the first American orientalist, but he was also founder of the American Oriental Society. He discovered three of the earliest texts of African Muslim writings. Hodgson could not hide his excitement on the discovery of these treasures when he noted: One of the three manuscripts by slaves preserved and translated by Hodgson was written by Abdul Rahman Ibrahim Sori. This text

"The pride of history may not descend to notice the fact that a feeble wave of Mohammanadanism and koranic letters once reached these shores, from Africa, bearing with it some humble captives, and then sank into the moving sand."

was the *surat al-Fatiha*, (the first and opening chapter of the *Quran*). The second text was a two-page passage from the *Quran* written by a slave in the area north of Santee River in South Carolina. The third manuscript came from a slave named London and it demonstrates that Arabic was also used as a language of communication among these slaves. London was not literate in English but certainly not illiterate. He could transmit his ideas using Arabic characters.

In addition to Muslim slaves who were brought to the southern shores of the United States, Muslims reached Brazil and other Central and Latin American destinations carrying with them the tradition of *Dar al-Islam's* political power and creativity from the western and central Sudan. João José Reis, in his pioneering work on the West African Islamic factor in Brazil, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil, The Muslim Uprisings of 1835 in Bahia*, (1993), speaks of Muslim slaves as a viable, cohesive minority. They were key and central to the 1835 slave revolt in Bahia. Their "troublesome" characters and "uncompromising" attitude brought them to the attention of the slave owners, so they were banned from importation into the Portuguese colonies, and deported back to West Africa.



The connections between Trans-Atlantic slavery, slave resistance in the Americas, and *Dar al-Islam's* heritage in West Africa are factors that have long escaped historians' attention. The contextualization of these Muslim slave source materials highlights the critical nature of Islam to the slave experience in America and West Africa.

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## Spotlight on WARA Lifetime Members

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This section of the West African Research Association newsletter is dedicated to WARA Lifetime members. The WARA Membership Committee has decided to honor Nwando Achebe, Michigan State University.

# NWANDO ACHEBE



Nwando Achebe (pronounced: Wan-do Ah-che-be; [pronunciation key: e as in pet]) is an award-winning author and professor of history at Michigan State University. She is the founding editor-in-chief of the new *Journal of West African History* (maiden issue, spring 2015), to be published by Michigan State University Press. Dr. Achebe received her Ph.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2000. In 1996 and 1998, she served as a Ford Foundation and Fulbright-Hays Scholar-in-Residence at The Institute of African Studies and History Department of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. She was also a 2000 Woodrow Wilson Women's Studies Fellow. Her research interests involve the use of oral history in the study of women, gender, and sexuality in Nigeria. Her firstbook, *Farmers, Traders, Warriors, and Kings: Female Power and Authority in Northern Igboland, 1900-1960* was published by Heinemann in 2005. Professor Achebe's second book, *The Female King of Colonial Nigeria: Ahebi Ugbabe* (Indiana University Press, 2011), winner of three book awards—The Aidoo-Snyder Book Award, The Barbara "Penny" Kanner Book Award, and The Gita Chaudhuri Book Award—is a full length critical biography on the only female warrant chief and king in all of colonial Nigeria, and arguably British Africa. The writing was funded by a generous grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation. In addition to the Wenner-Gren, Dr. Achebe has received a number of other prestigious grants including awards from Woodrow Wilson, Fulbright-Hays, Ford Foundation, the World Health Organization, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. She recently spoke to Lisa Heinemann of the New Books Network as well as Peter Limb and Peter Alegi of Africa Past and Present podcast about her critical biography, *The Female King*. She was also interviewed on South Africa Broadcasting Corporation's news program, "Morning Live."



### MESSAGE TO THE MEMBERSHIP:

My scholastic journey originated at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where I studied Theater Arts. After I graduated, I decided to study documentary filmmaking at UCLA. It was while I was awaiting the return of the only Africanist film instructor (who had been away on sabbatical) that I experienced a transformation that changed the course of my career. I enrolled in a West African History class taught by the late Professor Boniface Obichere and was opened up to a new world of ideas that had never previously attained fruition. He created a longing in me—a desire to study the history of the African people—to find out from “whence I came.”

This desire was nurtured as I took more and more classes in African History. During my tenure at UCLA I also studied with other distinguished and gifted Africanist historians/scholars, including Professor Edward Alpers (my dissertation chair), Professor William Worger and Professor Sondra Hale. Their careful tutelage and supervision empowered me to explore new trends in African historical research, and embark on the career of an Africanist scholar.

My interest in African women/gender history came out of a desire to “see myself in history.” For the most part, African history texts did not adequately espouse African perspectives/interpretations of women's realities. Could African women really be those downtrodden 'beasts of burden' who were sold to the highest bidder for their productive and reproductive labor? Interpretations of this kind created a thirst in me to present a different voice—an African voice. This thirst encouraged me to acquire a Master's Degree in African Area Studies (with a concentration on History, Literature and Film) in 1994; and subsequently a PhD. in African History in the Spring of 2000. In the time since the completion of my doctorate, I have maintained an active and productive research and teaching agenda; as well as most recently, becoming the Editor-in-Chief of the new *Journal of West African History*.

Best regards,

Nwando Achebe

## Outside Evaluator Gives WARC High Marks

As part of its Department of Education Title VI grant, WARA engaged an outside consultant to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of WARA's overseas headquarters, the West African Research Center (WARC). This was the first such evaluation in ten years and we were fortunate to have the services of Dr. Nanette Pyne, an experienced and expert evaluator. Having served as the Associate Director of the American Research Center in Egypt and worked closely with the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC), she is well-versed in the workings of American Overseas Research Centers. In February 2014 Dr. Pyne conducted on-site interviews with more than 35 individuals in Senegal, reviewed past WARC audits and evaluations, and contacted several other individuals in the U.S. who have used WARC's services.

We are pleased to report that Dr. Pyne found WARC to be "a critically important resource for U.S. scholars and educational programs, very professionally administered, and admired greatly by U.S. and Senegalese scholars, students, and the public." She reported that the directors of study abroad programs from U.S. universities were uniformly in agreement in their praise of WARC, especially the expertise, services, and networks provided by the WARC Director, Dr. Ousmane Sène, and the WARC Coordinator of Researcher Services and Programs, Mariane Yade. Dr. Pyne noted that WARC is being increasingly sought out as a partner for educational initiatives and to facilitate programs in Senegal or elsewhere in the region. She cited this as a testimony to WARC's growing stature as a well-organized and effective center of scholarly activity in West Africa.



Dr. Pyne also noted that interviewees said the most valuable aspects of WARC are in the areas of:

**Networking** – especially connecting them to their colleagues in Senegal and throughout West Africa

**Logistical Assistance** – assistance with finding lodging, procuring visas, facilitating research clearances, and getting transportation

**WARC Library** (and the WARC librarians' assistance) – for U.S. researchers, finding needed scholarly research materials available nowhere else in the world; for West African researchers, access to books, journals, films, and online scholarly resources available nowhere else in Senegal

**Programs** – WARC's frequent forums, seminars, film series, book launchings, and other programs encourage discussions and exchanges and increase networking among U.S. scholars, among West African scholars, and between U.S. and West African scholars

Before leaving Senegal, Dr. Pyne discussed her preliminary findings and recommendations with WARA and WARC leadership and staff, who immediately began working on implementing her suggestions.

The only negative finding Dr. Pyne reported was in the area of finance. She stated that is clear that cutbacks in federal funding (from the U.S. Department of State and Department of Education) over the last few years have had a severe, negative effect on WARC's ability to serve American scholars, researchers, students, and study abroad programs and West African researchers. WARA and WARC will address this by stepping up our work to secure private philanthropy, especially working to establish partnerships with the private sector that will allow us to continue to provide the high quality research services WARA and WARC are known for and to expand our fellowship and outreach programs.

**We welcome and encourage all WARA members to help us with this effort to increase private philanthropy.** Your donations, in addition to your membership support, will send a strong message to others that you value increased research in West Africa.

**The full report is available**

<http://bit.ly/WARCEVAL>

### Traces of African Diaspora in Equatorial Guinea

The history of Equatorial Guinea, far from being reduced to oil companies and the enrichment of the corrupt government, shows the complexity of a contested colonization. It involves Spain and Great Britain, the slave trade and the battle for linguistic imperialism, to name a few elements.

In my forthcoming publications (described below) I discuss first how the diasporic community facilitated the work of British missionaries and second, the circulation of African people and languages between West African countries and the Antilles (Cuba) during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Religion, race and slavery, oppression and resistance, native languages and hybridization in the African Diaspora are examined within the context of Spanish language colonization and linguistic imperialism in Equatorial Guinea.

In my chapter “The first missionary linguistics in Fernando Po: transliteration and the quest of Spanishness in an Anglicized colony” (to appear in *The Relationship between Colonialism and Missionary Linguistics*. Klaus Zimmermann & Birte Kellermeier-Rehbein (eds.) Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. forthcoming, 2014), I examine early missionary linguistics in Equatorial Guinea and demonstrate how translation into Spanish and English led to transcultural processes that reinforced the hierarchical condition of black people as an undeveloped human race and justified the civilizing mission. The African Diaspora played a key role in missionary linguistics, as slaves and freed slaves were used as interpreters. This began in 1807 when, in spite of the act to abolish the trade, the slave commerce flourished in the Atlantic until, in 1813, several nations secured a law to prohibit it. However, Great Britain suspected that Spain was still engaged in the trade in slaves and armaments between West Africa and Latin America. Profiting from the Spanish abandonment of Fernando Po, and as a pretext for controlling the trade of slaves in the Atlantic, Great Britain occupied the island, established a naval station and moved the Mixed Court for the Suppression of the Slave Trade from Sierra Leone to Fernando Po in 1827. In 1839, Thomas F. Buxton, an abolitionist, propagated his ideas to stop the African slave trade and to convert Africans to Christianity by sending Africans in the Diaspora as ‘native agents’ with the belief that they would be immune to the African diseases (Buxton [1839] 1967). As a result, in 1841 the English Baptist Missionary Society in Jamaica sent Reverend John Clarke and Dr. G. K. Prince – long residents of Jamaica and considered “accustomed to the Negro character” – to Fernando Po. Soon after, they returned to the West Indies to recruit Jamaicans whilst Rev. Thomas Sturgeon opened a Baptist church and a day school in Fernando Po. Among the ‘black and coloured’ families in Jamaica, a squadron of ‘native agents’ was recruited to work as settlers or teachers. The group that arrived in 1844 consisted of 36 Jamaicans, classified by Clarke as “black-creoles”, “black boys”, “Congo from Kabenda”, “Fanti” or “black”. Being bilingual “they were expected to serve as excellent sources for language study in preparation for missionary expansion in the Continent. Many might even be used as interpreters and agents to coastal tribes.” (Bela 1979: 21).

At the same time, black Africans captured by slave-ships and freed by the Royal Navy were landed clandestinely at Clarence. The interaction among this group with transient Kru sawyers working for the West African Company in the early 1840s, and natives from the Gold Coast led to a process of creolization.

The Pidgin English in Fernando Po crystalized into the creole Pichi, a lingua franca spoken between people of different ethnic groups, especially in Malabo (Bioko).

I am currently working on an article to be published in the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*.

The volume that I am preparing in collaboration with Laura Morgenthaler is entitled “Exploring Glottopolitical Dynamics in Africa: The Spanish Colonial Past and Beyond.” My paper deals with the linguistic transatlantic relations at the end of the nineteenth century between Cuba and Equatorial Guinea and their consequences in language contact. In 1861 nearly 200 emancipated black Cubans were sent back to West Africa as workers in the plantations of Fernando Po. Spain, suffering from a dearth of labor, sought other solutions in the Antilles. Reducing the ‘excessive presence of people of color’ in Cuba – a problem claimed by Cuban authorities since 1825 (Roldán 1982: 567) – by exporting them to Fernando Po could solve two problems simultaneously: it would increase the security in Cuba by diminishing the presence of blacks and mulattos, and it would serve as a means to populate Fernando Po (Royal Order of September, 13, 1845). What’s more, the Royal Order predicted some consequences of the contact: the Spanish colonies of Fernando Po and Annobón would get a major boost in terms of securing the place of the Spanish language, Catholicism, and customs. The ‘Barrio Congo’ of Fernando Po was created with the arrival of this population. The language contact resulted in loan words from the Spanish spoken in Cuba, which are labelled as ‘cubanisms’ in current Equatoguinean Spanish.

I urge the reader to review my dissertation (Colonizando lenguas: misiones y la política del español en Guinea Ecuatorial. 2013. The Graduate Center, CUNY) and my article “Language and the Hispanization of Equatorial Guinea” (in José del Valle. (ed.), *A Political History of Spanish. The Making of a Language*. Cambridge University Press, 2013) to have a general overview of the linguistic colonization and influence of the African Diaspora in the living languages of Equatorial Guinea. In my article in del Valle, I highlight changes in language use, function and representation that took place in two different periods: during the arrival and settlement of the Catholic missions (1848–1917), and under the colonial government of the Francoist regime up until the designation of Equatorial Guinea as a province of Spain (1939–58).

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## Viewpoints on African Communication Systems

Opinion about African Communication Systems (ACS) varies from assumptions to research findings. African Communication Systems have been influential, thus emulated by other cultures. In this way, ACS were models. According to Scannel<sup>1</sup> ACS such as gongs, town criers, puppet shows, dance, singing and masks influenced the Greek and Roman civilisations. They found certain elements of ACS worthy of emulation and incorporated these into cultural practices.

To a large extent, ACS are often oral, not mediated by technology. Harold Innis<sup>2</sup> applauds oral cultures for their power, vitality, freshness and elasticity. These qualities inherent in oral cultures and the various modes of communication make ACS appealing to its audience and far flung observers alike. Ululation is quite startling in a bid to arrest audience attention as it announces the arrival of a bride or a baby. The elasticity of ACS enables incorporation into modern mass media to enhance impact, reach and acceptance. Popular folk songs are often used as signature tunes for radio and television shows; broadcasts are aired in indigenous languages and; proverbs are incorporated on air as fillers. With this, symbiosis is achieved.

From a development perspective ACS are said to be interactive and participatory. In his work for the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) in Mali, Chiovloni<sup>3</sup> embarked on an educational campaign to convince sedentary farmers to adopt new techniques and made a significant observation. Using traditional story tellers (Griots) as well as other channels of disseminating educational information, Chivoloni observed that dialogue occurred each time the Griot told a story. Furthermore, the ensuing dialogue enabled the Griot to pass vital information needed convince the sedentary farmers to adopt new techniques.

Apart from the educational uses of Griots in Mali, other ACS such as puppet shows are entertaining as well as tools for promotion and mobilisation in the social, health and political sphere. Puppet shows can demonstrate the use of treated bed nets in the fight against malaria in communities where bed nets are not accepted. Furthermore, puppet shows are channels of criticism against unpopular actions of government, religious bodies and even traditional rulers. Gordon<sup>4</sup> finds that puppets can criticise society in ways that people cannot safely do. Reactions to criticism are often unpleasant and may be unfavourable to the critic. Thus puppet shows provide safe avenues for voicing criticism on various issues in society. Government may be in the firing line for its policies but other social actors too may be the subject of criticism at one point or another.

The participatory nature of ACS draws support from research and case studies. Fiofiori<sup>5</sup> highlights the participatory element in AC, citing the comments of a Yoruba farmer who lamented that radio speaks yet is unable to reply to questions and issues raised. ACS assure immediate feedback and subsequently, dialogue, which ultimately benefits both the speaker and the listener. Delayed feedback, which is experienced in some mass media brings to the fore the inability of listener to have their questions answered immediately. These are the advantages that word of mouth has over mass media. ACS are often oral thus clarify initial complexities.

Studies by Morrison<sup>6</sup> in Mossi communities of Burkina Faso to investigate support for vaccination of children highlight African theatre as a tool for identifying needs and solutions to pressing social issues. Toward this end, African theatre is also referred to as “forum theatre” for its interactive quality, immediate feedback and audience appraisal. The needs of communities can only be identified by the people who live there. Other people may not understand the prevailing social circumstances. Conversely, suggested solutions to challenges faced too should come from within; otherwise, the solutions might be irrelevant. Forum theatre triggers discourse following the dramatic presentation. These discussions, though informal, contain vital contents for the solution of distressing social problems. The use of forum theatre suggests a “bottom to top” approach where people at the grass roots comment on social issues because they were confronted with these same issues by the “actors in the play.” Hitherto, the activities of government in administering communities has often left much to be desired, hence the problems associated with the “centre to periphery” approach. Given the shortcomings of this approach administrators need to listen to the grassroots in order to effectively address challenges.

On a superficial level, ACS may be written off as relics of history. In comparison with mass media and digital media, ACS are often considered inefficient and unreliable as they are unable to send messages thousands of miles away at the click of a button. However, perception of ACS assumes significance due to inherent qualities and benefits of the craft.



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Coming Up Next Year  
WARA Undergraduate Paper Competition





### Teaching African Studies to High School Students in Boston

During the first week of my freshmen high school humanities course I ask my students to conduct a short community survey on how they and others imagine Afrika. Their task is to ask themselves, family members and friends the following prompts: "When I think of Afrika, the first thing that comes to my mind is..." and "If I went to Afrika, I would expect to see..." The day after my students complete this assignment, they write their responses on poster paper around the room. We then take time to reflect on what we notice about our community's perception of the continent. Reoccurring words/phrases that always arise are: poverty, desert, dry, jungle, animals, starving children, disease, huts, tribal dances, gold. Through examining these words we begin to unpack the pathological images of Afrika deeply embedded in our collective consciousness. This activity opens space for my students and I to begin to explore how perspective, specifically a Eurocentric perspective, has shaped our worldviews.

Thus the course becomes a journey of seeing the world through Afrocentric lenses. To do this, we contrast our status quo images of Afrika with Nikki Giovanni's poem "Ego Tripping" which personifies Afrika as a powerful woman, the mother of humanity; we spell Afrika with a "k" to symbolically represent a reclaiming of the name; we interrogate how perspective and bias connect to the creation of secondary historical sources; we study a precolonial Afrikan civilization to understand the complexity and sophistication of societies that existed over a thousand years ago; we explore literature of the Afrikan Diaspora; and we examine the anti-apartheid struggle in South Afrika as a case study for liberation movements on the continent.

Over 85% of the young people I teach are of Afrikan descent and represent a broad array of national and ethnic identities from the Diaspora. In addition to "Afrikan Americans," many are first generation Dominican, Puerto Rican, Jamaican, Trinidadian, Brazilian, and Haitian. However a large majority of these students do not identify their ancestors as being Afrikan. In fact, many students initially see no connection between themselves and Afrika. Even after demonstrating an intellectual understanding of the concepts of Afrocentrism and Eurocentrism, my students say that they wish they had "soft" hair or light eyes. Some of my current students made these exact comments during a recent reflective Circle about our family trees. As with the monolithic, one-dimensional images of Afrika highlighted during the community survey activity, many of my students hold deeply embedded notions of beauty and self-worth that are based in Eurocentric norms. My goal is to engage my students in critical and creative work that supports them in unearthing these notions, so they may embrace all aspects of their cultural and ancestral identity.

However, I am not only an educator of students of color. My white students are also part of our classroom community and are also on the journey of learning about themselves through the lens of Afrikan history and culture. It is just as important for them to understand how Eurocentric perspectives of the world have shaped their understanding of themselves and others, and, most importantly, that they have the ability to take on a different perspective. It is certainly a challenge to create both an inclusive and critical space to interrogate how histories of oppression connect to our current understanding of identity. Yet taking an Afrocentric approach to my teaching practice—creating opportunities to honor all of our ancestors, telling our stories,

and collaborating—allows for each individual to feel honored. Though I have dealt with defensive white students who do not want to address race, the modes of learning within the classroom support all students in (hopefully) recognizing the unique gifts they bring to the collective.

Despite the challenges, pride and passion do slowly emerge through the course. When we study the Kingdom of Ife and Yoruba influence on the Americans, my Caribbean students, especially the Puerto Rican and Dominican students who rarely identify as Black, begin to see direct connections to their culture. When we read poetry and short stories from writers of the Diaspora, we discuss the complexities of Afrikan American (in the most expansive sense) identity and how white supremacy ideology has cut us off from certain parts of our roots. Both students of color and white students struggle with making meaning of their social identities and the goal is for them to hold the tension of embracing their membership in a common human family—in the end we are all children of Afrika—and also recognizing the history and current realities of racism that privilege one group over others. When young people begin to unpack how relationships of power and oppression have shaped their cultural upbringing and how they see the world, they gain the agency to decide how they want to consciously position themselves in relationship to structures of power; they have tools to confront and challenge the status quo.

I believe that building solidarity among peoples of Afrikan descent must start with education. I see the high school classroom as a space to strip away the mental blindfolds that centuries of colonialism and slavery have inflicted on all people, but specifically Black and Brown people; I see understanding the roots of our common humanity and the power of our original homeland as a healing remedy to the deep scars of ideological white supremacist warfare waged for centuries on all of our psyches. Ultimately I hope that my students leave my course with a more nuanced understanding of Afrika and their own identities; my hope is that their understanding will only become more complex as they continue to learn and grow. Working with the hearts and minds of young people as they are in the midst of solidifying a more permanent identity and defining how they want to relate to themselves and others in the world, is a great privilege, and one that must be at the forefront of our vision for positive transformation.



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I use "Afrikan American" to refer to the group of people whose ancestors were enslaved in what is now the United States. I have chosen to put this label in quotation marks because I do not want to uphold the United States imperialist practice of claiming the term "American" as a singular national identity. In truth Afrikan Americans are people of Afrikan descent of the Americas (North, Central, South, and the Caribbean).

I often use the metaphor of "gifts" when describing the unique perspectives, talents, experiences that each individual brings to the classroom. This language comes from a quote by Sobonfu Somé, a healer and spiritual leader of the Dagara people. She writes: "Community is the spirit, the guiding light of the tribe, whereby people come together in order to fulfill their purpose, and to take care of one another. The goal of the community is to make sure that each member of the community is heard and is properly giving the gifts s/he has brought to this world." I share this quote with my students on the second day of class, and incorporate several different rituals into my teaching practice that focus on building an interconnected culture within the classroom.


## Announcements

**Council of American Overseas Research Centers**  
 Smithsonian Institution  
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The Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) is a federation of 24 independent research centers that promote advanced research, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, with focus on the conservation and recording of cultural heritage and the understanding and interpretation of modern societies. More information at [caorc.org](http://caorc.org).



# ÌRÌNKÈRINDÒ



*Ìrìnkèrindò: a Journal of African Migration* is a peer-reviewed journal devoted to the study of African migration and immigration to other parts of the world.

Ìrìnkèrindò is Yorùbá for incessant Wanderings or Travels. To our minds, the word, Ìrìnkèrindò captures the essence of past, contemporary, and future migrations and immigration of Africans around the continent, and from the continent to other lands.

**Ìrìnkèrindò features video of WARA 2013 ASA Panel  
 US Immigration Reform:  
 Implications for West Africans on Both Sides of  
 the Atlantic**


Watch the video at  
<http://africamigration.com/specialfocus.html>

## The Foundation For West Africa


### *Leh Wi Tok Film*

*Leh Wi Tok* is a documentary about radio journalist Andrew Kromah and his struggle to grow an independent network of community-based radio stations in war-torn Sierra Leone, West Africa. Amidst flagrant and persistent political harassment, financial and technical woes, Andrew puts his life on the line to bring information to his voiceless listeners.

Visit [www.lehwitok.org](http://www.lehwitok.org) to learn more; there you can see short film clips from interviews conducted in the summer of 2009, and meet the filmmakers and receive updates as filming and production continue in the United States and West Africa. You can receive news about the premiere screening of *Leh Wi Tok* and screenings in other locations around the country.



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## *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review* ACPR


ACPR volume 4:1 (spring 2014) is now out and includes the following articles, as well as Briefs and Book Reviews.

*Ending Impunity for Sexual and Gender-Based Crimes: The International Criminal Court and Complementarity in the Democratic Republic of Congo*

*Social Networks, Resources, and International NGOs in Postwar Sierra Leone*

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The West African Research Association is a member of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) based at the Smithsonian Institution. WARA is the only Sub-Saharan African member of CAORC. More information on CAORC is available at: [www.caorc.org](http://www.caorc.org).



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