

History in Africa CFP for 2022 Special Section

"New Interdisciplinary Approaches to African History"

History in Africa is seeking contributions that examine interdisciplinarity in African history in new ways. Interdisciplinarity happens across academia on multiple, overlapping levels including the use of methods from other disciplines, team-based collaborations (multidisciplinary), and the creation of new fields (transdisciplinary).

As historians of Africa, we may engage in interdisciplinary work by doing ethnographic research or by maintaining an appointment in a multidisciplinary African Studies program. Meanwhile, at many of our institutions, there are pressures to establish new interdisciplinary majors, often in STEM, but also in the humanities and social sciences. How does this proliferation of interdisciplinary programming relate to us as historians? In particular, the editors are interested in how scholars are rethinking interdisciplinary methods while engaging with source materials. As historians, we have generally taken for granted our capacity to engage in interdisciplinary work, especially by working with anthropology, linguistics, or even archaeology (Zezele 2007; Brizuela Garcia 2008). Yet, as historians of Africa we also rely on literature, visual arts, and, increasingly, digital media, in our scholarship and teaching. *Are there ways in which interdisciplinarity in African history is being redefined by changing methodologies, archival materials, or sources?*

This CFP comes as the story of the post-World War II origins of African Studies and the role of scholars in a changing world faces new scrutiny. It is compelling that African Studies did not emerge on the scene in the 1950s as the story has often been told. Instead, African Studies began in the aftermath of the US Civil War as Black intellectuals and activists developed an interdisciplinary and pan-African outlook to their work that originally flourished at

Historically Black Colleges and Universities. ([James Pritchett, "Reflections on the State of African Studies," Presidential Lecture, ASA 2014, Indianapolis, IN](#)) The theme of the 63rd ASA meeting that we just shared virtually called on us to recognize and confront these legacies of division and exclusion in African Studies. We must also respond to the range of twenty-first century movements calling for social justice on the African continent and in the Global North (Ampofo 2016). *How do interdisciplinary frameworks provide different creative spaces to address these calls to action that also shape our work as historians of Africa?*

We invite contributions that address interdisciplinarity in African history in relation to methods, source analysis, and historiographical debates.

As always, submissions that fall outside of the scope of this special section theme of interdisciplinary approaches are welcome.

We also invite submissions for other features in our journal including Archival Reports, "Interview with an Archivist," and "History from Africa" on a rolling basis. Please address any questions to the Managing Editor.

Possible topics related to our interdisciplinary theme include:

- Theorizing interdisciplinary methods
- Promise and challenge of collaboration
- Interdisciplinary methods and public histories
- Redefining the discipline
- Linking Africa and its diasporas
- Interdisciplinarity and the digital humanities
- Racial justice and interdisciplinarity
- Centering Africa in interdisciplinary approaches

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Please email a 500-word abstract to managingeditor@historyinafrica.org by February 15, 2021 with the subject line: **HiA Abstract Submission 2022**. By late February, authors will be notified whether to submit a full article for peer review by June 14th, 2021. Please note that invitations to submit articles for peer review do not guarantee publication.

Articles selected for publication after peer review will be included in the 2022 volume of *History in Africa*. Articles may appear in advance of the publication date via FirstView once the copy editing process is completed. Any queries should be addressed to Lorelle Semley at managingeditor@historyinafrica.org.

Works Cited

Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, "Introduction: The Disciplining of Africa," in Zeleza, ed., *The Study of Africa: Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Encounters*, vol. 1 (CODESRIA: Dakar, 2007), 1-35.

Esperanza Brizuela-Garcia, "Towards a critical interdisciplinarity? African history and the reconstruction of universal narratives," *Rethinking History* Vol. 12, No. 3, September 2008: 299-316.

James Pritchett, "Reflections on the State of African Studies," Presidential Lecture, ASA 2014, Indianapolis, IN, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYxbYLgx32M>

Akosua Adomako Ampofo, "Re-Viewing Studies on Africa, #Black Lives Matter, and Envisioning the Future of African Studies," *African Studies Review*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (September 2016): 7-29.

