

ASA NEWS

ENHANCING THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ABOUT AFRICA



ASA WOMEN'S CAUCUS

MARKING MILESTONES

This issue celebrates a multitude of historic institutional milestones, including the ASA Women's Caucus 50th Anniversary.

FALL 2025

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LETTER FROM THE SECRETARIAT

This issue falls in the midst of the ASA Secretariat's busiest season, as we work tirelessly to put the final pieces of the Annual Meeting into place and eagerly anticipate your arrival onsite. It is an important reminder that while the Secretariat works year-round to host you, the essence of the Annual Meeting is you, our members, who arrive ready to engage in invigorating scholarly exchange and celebrate the victories of the year, small and large. We are delighted to report that despite myriad funding cuts and the gutting of many important African Studies programs this year, the number of Annual Meeting participants is still higher than in 2024. In Atlanta, we invite you to be inspired by one another, and hope you leave with a profound sense of community and renewed motivation to carry into 2026.

There is indeed much to celebrate at ASA. The ASA Women's Caucus turns 50(+5), and celebrates the realization of one of its founding goals with the endowment of the Dependent Care Grant supported by the new Robertson Fund. Read this issue's featured article on landmark moments in the history of the Women's Caucus (p.33) as well as about the Robertson Fund made possible a generous gift from ASA and Women's Caucus lifetime member Dr. Claire Robertson (p.47). While in Atlanta, indulge at the anniversary Luncheon & Lecture featuring incoming ASA President Dr. Nwando Achebe, and stop by the Women's Caucus Marketplace in the Exhibit Hall to purchase your limited edition commemorative fundraising scarf and view the anniversary display.

Members may be wondering why there has been so much to celebrate the past two years, beginning with the inspiring establishment of the Mahmoud Mohamed Taha Student Travel Award in 2023 by Dr. Steve Howard. The ASA is very excited to publicly share the Invest in a New Generation Capital Campaign, which has proven that scholars can make an immediate impact in the field through profound investment in African Studies at ASA. The recently announced ASA Christie and Chinua Achebe Fund is the newest addition, and will support the biennial Chinua Achebe Distinguished Lecture and the Chinua Achebe Manuscript Prize (p.7). This year we also celebrate the inaugural cohort of ASA Samora and Graça Machel Presidential Fellows, as three outstanding scholars prepare to visit institutions across the U.S., and join us at the Annual Meeting. We look forward to sharing more inspiring news about the ASA Capital Campaign in the coming week.

You may have noticed that this year, the Secretariat's otherwise modest number of staff tripled. Four 2025 Summer Support Administrators temporarily joined the team, and ASA welcomed a new Emerging Scholar Administrator. This summer was a productive one, with additional hands working to support our 33(!) fellows, revitalize areas of the ASA website, and ensure that Annual Meeting preparations ran smoothly. Meet our summer staff members as well as the more permanent members of the Secretariat in this issue (p.23) and be sure to say hello to them in Atlanta.

Finally, ASA is hard at work advocating for African Studies (p.3) but we need to amplify our message in Washington D.C. Your expert voices matter now more than ever. As we look forward to the new year, please consider applying for the ASA Advocacy Award to represent the field on Capitol Hill.

Sincerely,
ASA Secretariat



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Founded in 1981, the National Humanities Alliance (NHA) is an advocacy coalition dedicated to the advancement of humanities education, research, preservation, and public programs. NHA is supported by more than one hundred national, state and local member organizations and institutions.

COALITION FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Promoting U.S. Global Competence

September 29, 2025

The Honorable Linda McMahon
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary McMahon,

We respectfully write with deep concern over the Administration's actions to eliminate all future funding for HEA-Title VI and Fulbright-Hays (102 (b)(6)), our nation's foundational programs for International Education and Foreign Language Studies. In May 2025, the Department of Education abruptly cancelled an ongoing competition for Fulbright-Hays programs that began in October 2024. In June, the President's FY 2026 Budget Request proposed zero funding for these programs in FY 2026, stating that the programs "are inconsistent with Administration priorities and do not advance American interests or values." On September 10th, the Department informed all Title VI non-competing continuation grantees that their FY 2025 funding provided by the U.S. Congress in the FY 2025 Full-Year Continuing Resolution Act and signed by President Trump was repurposed to other unrelated programs, again without specific reason or consultation with the Congress. **These programs in fact are in the best interest of the Federal Government, significantly advance American interests and values, and contribute to U.S. global leadership.**

HEA-Title VI and Fulbright-Hays are longstanding bipartisan programs for international education, research, and foreign language studies, especially in the less-commonly taught languages and world areas that hold special strategic interest for our national defense, diplomatic presence around the world, and global economic competitiveness. As such, they contribute importantly to the security and well-being of our country and its citizens.

Today, international and foreign language expertise remains of vital, heightened interest to our defense, intelligence and diplomatic communities due to increasing threats and complex challenges in multiple world regions. GAO reports in recent years have cited shortfalls of language and cross-cultural skills in several federal agencies, finding that our nation's foreign language deficit could threaten our priorities and missions around the world.

Simultaneously, our nation's economic competitiveness, along with growing security challenges in areas such as global health, environment, law enforcement, food security, cybersecurity, engineering, financial systems, and more, also rely on a workforce equipped with language abilities, cultural knowledge and international experience. A recent national survey of 1,200 U.S. companies doing business internationally found that 96% agreed that having more international expertise on their staff would lead to increased business. Over 90% agreed that language and cross-cultural knowledge are needed by both professional and line manager staff.¹ These capabilities are vital for effectively addressing current and future challenges, and appear to be in line with the Department's workforce development and competitiveness agenda.

Administered together, HEA-Title VI and Fulbright-Hays are an essential federal responsibility. This almost seven decade partnership with the Department has ensured our nation's educational capacity and deep knowledge about all world regions, international business, and over 200 foreign languages over time, and at all levels of education. Without these programs, the steady supply of experts on less commonly taught languages and world areas of strategic interest would not be replenished on a regular basis if dependent on state funding, university

endowments, foundation grants or institutional support alone. Nor would there be collaborative outreach activities to K-16 educational institutions, business, government, the media, and between four-year postsecondary institutions and community colleges that multiply the reach of these small but effective programs. Other federal agencies depend on the infrastructure and knowledge created by these programs to further their respective strategic goals. For example, the Department of Education's FY 2022 "Consultation with Federal Agencies on Areas of National Need" cited over 160 priority languages and all world regions.

That these programs are indispensable to the United States and American interests, such as the safety and prosperity of our nation and its citizens, is not an overstatement in today's world. They represent a strategic federal investment in workforce development, innovation, and informed policymaking. Defunding these programs will deal a severe blow to the pipeline of globally competent professionals, undercutting the ability of American institutions and our federal government to compete on the world stage. Thousands of students, faculty, government agencies, and companies rely on the infrastructure these programs sustain. Now more than ever, global challenges demand globally prepared citizens—an outcome only achievable through sustained federal leadership and support.

We strongly urge the Department to reverse this elimination, and replace it with the Congress's intended FY 2025 funding of \$85,664,000 to HEA-Title VI and Fulbright-Hays. Comprehensive global and regional expertise is now more crucial than ever for our nation's wellbeing today and in the future. Discontinuing funding undermines long-standing national security imperatives, putting America's strength and competitiveness at risk.

Please find with this letter an Information Packet including a one-page summary, examples of graduate employment, testimonials from beneficiaries, a recent survey of federal agency national needs, and results of a 2024 survey of business needs for international skills. It is clear that these programs are critical to American interests.

We would be pleased to work with you and your team to continue and strengthen these programs.

1 Centers for International Business Education and Research, "U.S. Companies Rely on International Markets Now and in the Future" (unpublished study, 2025).

Submitted by the following organizations:

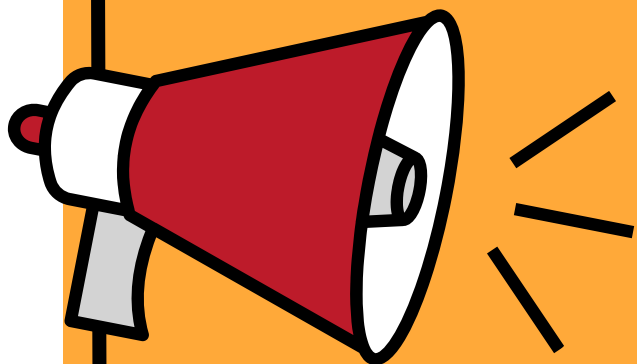
African Studies Association
 Alliance for International Exchange
 American Association of Community Colleges
 American Council of Learned Societies
 ACTFL: American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
 American Councils for International Education
 American Historical Association
 American Political Science Association
 Association for International Business Education and Research (AIBER)
 Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies
 Association of International Education Administrators
 Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
 Association of Research Libraries
 Consortium of Social Science Associations
 Council of American Overseas Research Centers
 Council of National Resource Centers for International and Area Studies (CNRC)
 Council of Graduate Schools
 The Forum on Education Abroad
 Joint National Committee for Languages
 Latin American Studies Association
 Middle East Studies Association
 Modern Language Association
 NAFSA: Association of International Educators
 National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
 National Council for Languages and International Studies
 National Humanities Alliance
 North American Small Business International Trade Educators Association

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ATT: HEA-Title VI and Fulbright-Hays Information Packet

CC: Chris McCaghren, Acting Assistant Secretary

Be the Voice of African Studies on Capitol Hill



ASA ADVOCACY TRAVEL AWARD

APPLY TO ATTEND:

NAFSA Association of International Educators Advocacy Day,

Virtual, March 18

Consortium of Social Science Association (COSSA) Advocacy Day,

Washington, DC, March 23-24

National Humanities Alliance (NHA) Meeting and Advocacy Day,

Washington, DC, March 8-10

Coalition for International Education (CIE) Advocacy Day,

Washington, DC TBD

Applications open December 2026



The ASA Christie and Chinua Achebe Fund was made possible by a generous gift from Drs. Christie, Chinelo, Ikechukwu, Chidi, and Nwando Achebe. The Fund is named in honor of celebrated Nigerian author Dr. Chinua Achebe (1930-2013) and his wife, Dr. Christie Achebe, two educators whose partnership and lifelong dedication to teaching, storytelling, and the empowerment of African voices have inspired generations.

AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES ASA CHRISTIE AND CHINUA ACHEBE FUND

PISCATAWAY, New Jersey — The African Studies Association is pleased to announce the establishment of the **ASA Christie and Chinua Achebe Fund** created to support two new initiatives: the Chinua Achebe Distinguished Lecture and the Chinua Achebe Manuscript Prize.

The Fund will support the new biennial Chinua Achebe Distinguished Lecture, which will highlight humanistic scholarship and creative industries including architecture, design, fashion, film, music, visual and performing arts, and literature. The inaugural **Chinua Achebe Distinguished Lecture** will be held in New Orleans at the 2026 ASA Annual Meeting. The Fund will also support the new **Chinua Achebe Manuscript Prize**, which recognizes the best unpublished Africana literary manuscript each year. In addition to receiving the prize, the winner will be considered for publication by Penguin Press under the Chinua Achebe Imprint. The manuscript award will open in late 2026 for the inaugural award cycle in 2027.

The ASA Christie and Chinua Achebe Fund was made possible by a generous gift from Drs. Christie, Chinelo, Ikechukwu, Chidi, and Nwando Achebe. The Fund is named in honor of celebrated Nigerian author Dr. Chinua Achebe (1930-2013) and his wife, Dr. Christie Achebe, two educators whose partnership and lifelong dedication to teaching, storytelling, and the empowerment of African voices have inspired generations. Widely acclaimed as the father of modern African literature, Chinua Achebe forever transformed world literature—redefining the global narrative and restoring Africa's voice to the literary canon. Born in Ogidi, Nigeria, Achebe studied English at University College, Ibadan (then affiliated with the University of London), and graduated in 1953. He began his career at the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, where his gift for narrative first took shape. In 1958, Achebe published *Things Fall Apart* (Heinemann) a literary masterpiece translated into 57 languages, and read by millions. Through its lyrical power and moral clarity, Achebe re-centered Africa within the global imagination, asserting the dignity and humanity of African life. Achebe began his university career in 1967 at University of Nigeria, Nsukka, where he was later named Professor Emeritus. He taught at numerous institutions including University of Massachusetts Amherst, University of Guelph, Canada, Dartmouth College, and concluded as the David and Marianna Fisher University Professor at Brown University. Across a lifetime of brilliance, Achebe authored numerous novels, short stories, poems, essays, and children's books, receiving many prestigious honors and awards including the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize (2010) as well as over 40 honorary degrees from universities in the U.S., U.K., Scotland, Canada, South Africa, and Nigeria. His belief in the power of story endures, inspiring writers and scholars around the world.

Dr. Christie Chinwe Achebe, EdD (b. 1935) is a distinguished scholar, counselor, and educator, who earned her doctorate from University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She is the author of two books, two anthologies, and more than 60 articles published in academic journals and periodicals. Dr. Achebe has taught at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Bard College, and held a short consultancy at Brown University. A Phi Beta Kappa inductee, she made history in 1988 as the first woman President of the Nigerian Counseling Association. She currently serves as Board Chair of Achebe Masterworks and Director of the Christie and Chinua Achebe Foundation.

Dr. Chinelo Achebe Ejueyitchie, EdD (b. 1962) is a scholar of education (Columbia University), Board member of Achebe Masterworks, and Senior Lecturer in Africana Studies and Women's Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Dr. Ikechukwu Achebe, PhD (b. 1964) is a historian of African Religion (Cambridge University), and Director of the Igbo Language Project. Dr. Chidi Achebe, MD, MPH, MBA (b. 1967) is a physician (Dartmouth Medical School), Co-CEO of Achebe Masterworks, and CEO of African Integrated Development Enterprise (AIDE). Dr. Nwando Achebe, PhD (b. 1970) is a historian of Africa and gender (University of California, Los Angeles), Co-CEO of Achebe Masterworks, University Distinguished Professor, and Jack and Margaret Sweet Endowed Professor of History at Michigan State University.

If you wish to support this work or honor Achebe's legacy with a gift, the fund is available in the **ASA Donation form** or you may contact the ASA Executive Director for alternative gift information.

About the ASA

Established in 1957, the African Studies Association is the flagship membership organization devoted to enhancing the exchange of information about Africa. The ASA is based in the United States and aims to cultivate a better understanding of the continent, by providing access to path-breaking research and facilitating interdisciplinary exchanges with African scholars and institutions. The ASA Annual Meeting fosters global networks by convening people with scholarly and other interests in Africa, and ultimately broadens professional opportunities in the field. The organization publishes two leading journals, *African Studies Review* and *History in Africa* and promotes an informed understanding of Africa to educational institutions, the public, businesses, media, and other interested communities.

JOIN US

12-1PM FRIDAY, NOV 21

FRANTZ FANON

→ **→ TURNS 100**

AT ASA IN ATLANTA

**Lewis R. Gordon,
ASR Distinguished Lecturer
*Fanon's African Dream***



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ASA Annual Meeting

M108 (Marquis Level)

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A TALE OF TWO ASSOCIATIONS: 18TH CENTURY AFRICAN STUDIES

Executive Directors Benita Blessing (ASECS) and Alix Saba (ASA) discuss their collaborative vision to improve publication outcomes for emerging scholars working at the intersection eighteenth century history and African and Diasporic Studies.



The fellowship is an exciting ACLS-funded collaboration between two societies that have not historically worked together. How did this project start?

Benita: Alix and I had been talking for a couple years about the intersection of our societies' members and member interests since 2023, when I attended ASA in San Francisco. It was incredible – there were these great sessions on the 18th and 19th centuries, and I kept thinking "ASECS members would love to hear these talks!" Then I ran into an ASECS member, and talked with him about his membership in both societies. Later I read an emerging scholar's draft about M. NourbeSe Philip's work *Zong!*, and told her Philip was performing a reading of that work at the ASECS 2024 conference in Toronto. Alix and I started talking about collaborations, and when the ACLS Intention Foundry grant was announced the next year as a program to support scholars in precarity, it felt like an invitation to envision what we could accomplish together as societies.

How did you decide to focus on first-article publication mentorship when applying for the ACLS Intention Foundry grant?

Alix: ASA has a longstanding publication workshop series we now call the Publishing Improvement Pipeline for Emerging Scholars (PIPES) that began as a more narrow project in 2017 as the ASR Pipeline for Emerging African Studies Scholars (PEAS). The PIPES is designed to pair emerging scholars with a mentor from one of ASA's two journals, *African Studies Review* or *History in Africa*, to refine a manuscript for publication. Rather than just pair papers remotely and have emerging scholars wait for written feedback, we have found that there is a lot more about journal publishing that emerging scholars benefit from knowing. The PIPES workshop is an all-day event that starts with a roundtable on demystifying the publication process. Emerging scholars find this helpful as it increases transparency and gives them greater confidence in their submission. However, we've also found that getting

your first publication into a journal pipeline is the most difficult as there are many considerations when selecting a journal, completion of edits, formatting, and navigating unique journal submission platforms. This can be daunting. Multi-touchpoint mentoring has proven the most successful route to a first publication, so we knew that this would be the ideal format for a year-long publication fellowship.

Fellows attended the ASECS 2025 Virtual Annual Meeting this spring and participated in publishing workshops led by ASECS senior scholars and journal editors. Can you provide a brief reflection? What aspects of the fellowship have worked particularly well so far?

Benita: Fellows had the unique opportunity over two weekends of the ASECS Virtual Annual Meeting to meet with mentors in the field who could demystify the publication process, and provide guidelines for what to expect. Emerging scholars seldom get to hear from senior scholars that everyone's first article is rough, that rejections feel crummy but can create opportunities for professional growth, and that it is worth it to stick with an article that you believe in. This combination of structured, thematic talks – such as a journal editor's tips for why you should follow editorial guidelines – and intentional time and space for fellows to talk about their work, ask questions, and get to know other emerging scholars, helped ensure that the program was flexible enough to meet fellows' needs in real time.

Fellows are preparing for ASA in Atlanta where they will participate in the Publishing Improvement Pipeline for Emerging Scholars (PIPES) Workshop and present their work on two thematic panels. What will fellows will gain from their experience?

Alix: Fellows will have opportunities to learn about ASA specific journals, ask questions in a supportive environment, meet other participants from institutions all over the world, receive one-on-one feedback from their mentor, experience the full ASA Annual Meeting in Atlanta, present to and engage with over 1,800 scholars in their field, and

(we hope) find likeminded colleagues they are excited to collaborate with, now or in the future. Fun outings in the city, free coffee, an exhibit hall marketplace of African crafts, and a DJ dance party make ASA a unique experience beyond the scholarship. Perhaps most exciting of all for these fellows – they will meet each other in person for the first time! They have been meeting on Zoom for months and will finally have an opportunity to sit down face to face and get to know one another.

We hear again and again that emerging scholars desire more mentorship opportunities. How does a multi-association partnership serve the needs of emerging scholars particularly well? How do you see this fellowship evolving in the future?

Benita: The multi-society program offers fellows diverse points of view from mentors coming from two interdisciplinary societies, and different experiences of conferences themselves. We all get pretty comfortable in our "home" association meetings, and we become familiar with those associations' publications and publication scholars. Learning to feel comfortable with the discomfort of new people reading and responding to your work, or with the uncertainty of submitting to a new publication, is a professional gift that keeps on giving.

Alix: When you have more than one interdisciplinary society collaborating, it can feel a little like a clash of cultures. We are all evolving with new trends in our fields and new members that shape our communities. Rarely do two societies have enough in common, culturally and topically, to have the same vibe. We believe this is a major project strength and we aim to underscore it so that future fellows have more practice speaking across disciplines and society interests to improve their presentations and their publications. For future iterations, we'd love to work with editors to bring a special section to fruition with the fellows. That would be a very special experience but one that takes time and commitment.

MEET THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AFRICA PUBLICATION FELLOWS

Twelve outstanding scholars were selected for the 18th-Century Africa Publication Fellowship, which is generously funded by the American Council of Learned Society through a multi-association grant. Fellows participate in publishing mentorships at both the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) and African Studies Association (ASA) Annual Meetings, including the ASA pre-conference PIPES workshop.

Umar Sheikh Tahir, Columbia University

"West African Hajj "Travel lodge": Impacts of Royals and Clerics on Economic and Intellectual Expeditions"

What does it mean to be an eighteenth century Africa scholar?

It means engaging with a century of profound global transformation—politically, intellectually, and spiritually. For me, it's about rediscovering African intellectual voices who were active agents in reshaping these traditions in the fields like logic, mysticism, poetry and theosophy. Studying this period allows us to challenge Euro-American and Arabic centric narratives by foregrounding Sub-Saharan scholars who contributed immensely to the global Arabic and Islamic thoughts.

What are the challenges and opportunities of studying the eighteenth century?

The biggest obstacles are archival inaccessibility and misrepresentation. Many 18th-century texts—especially Arabic manuscripts from West Africa—remain unedited, uncatalogued, or kept in private libraries that are difficult to access. Often, works by West African scholars writing in Arabic are misattributed to the Middle Eastern scholars, erasing their local originality and identities. This stems from colonial-era geographic and epistemic boundaries that excluded West Africa from the Arabic intellectual traditions. That challenge could be turned into opportunities. There's a growing movement to recover indigenous knowledge through critical editions and contextual translations of Arabic manuscripts of "Beyond Timbuktu". Shifting Arabic manuscript studies from "text" to "meaning" opens pathways for reclaiming intellectual agency and rebuilding our understanding of African scholarly contributions to global Islamic knowledge. There are very few experts in the field who can dive into those manuscripts by reading them, critically editing them, analyzing them and putting them into conversations with other material from outside West Africa.



Allegra Aiyda, Yale University

"A Painting in Paris; An African prince in 18th century France"

What does it mean to be an eighteenth century Africa scholar?

To be an 18th century scholar frequently means thinking through the contradictions of the coexistence of enlightenment thinking and trans-Atlantic slavery. Being a scholar of West African history more specifically means exploring how African societies experienced and shaped global transformations during a period of expanding European presence in my case in coastal West Africa. 18th century history is well studied in relation to the transatlantic slave trade, but often with Africa in the background rather than the main focus. I hope to contribute to scholarship by centering Africa's global and dynamic history and its foundational contribution to modern history.



What are the challenges and opportunities presented by studying the eighteenth century?

Eighteenth century African history frequently relies on fragmentary sources in the European archives, including European travel accounts, missionary letters, trade records. In addition, African history as a formal academic field is heavily focused on the colonial and postcolonial period. There are many opportunities to push against this euro-centric and more modern leaning history, including studies emphasizing African agency and the political complexity of eighteenth-century empires and kingdoms such as Asante, Dahomey, Oyo, Kongo. Additionally, we see the emergence of more environmental and regional histories such as the Sahel, Niger Delta and Great Lakes. Overall, despite the eighteenth century being understudied this is both a challenge and an opportunity for more scholars to engage with this dynamic century.

A. Véronique Charles, *Columbia University*

"Abolition in Two Acts: Freedom's Grains and Losses in the Imperial Republic Before 1802"

What does it mean to you to be an eighteenth century Africa scholar?

Working on the eighteenth century offers me the means to investigate the parts of the African littoral that were incorporated in and interfaced with the French colonial empire. I focus on the demands and discontents from

free, or possibly freed, Senegalese men and women as they navigated the French Atlantic enslaving enterprise. As a result of the armed resistance in Caribbean colony of Saint-Domingue (present-day Haiti), in 1794, the French ushered the singular legislation of abolition of slavery in Atlantic World of this century. In focusing solely on the eighteenth-century, I juxtapose the insistences from the Senegalese colony and the mandate from the French metropole for (more) Black freedom (s).

What to you are the challenges and opportunities presented by studying the eighteenth century?

As a literary scholar, I foreground the poetics within the seemingly perfunctory articulations of desired freedoms found in petitions and correspondences from colonized Black subjects addressed to French colonial and metropolitan administrations. I embrace the challenge of deciphering proto-authorship in a region without a printing press. Through this research, I have the opportunity to expand upon the work of Lisa Ze Winters (2016), and Lorelle D. Semley (2017), Jesscia Marie Johnson (2020) whose book-length studies examine the gendered experiences of freedom in French colonial Senegal during the violent context of Atlantic slavery.





Deena Al-halabieh, *University of California, Santa Barbara*

"Resisting Western Paradigms: The Life of Omar ibn Said and the Politics of Translation"

What does it mean to you to be an eighteenth century Africa scholar?

To be an 18th-century scholar means reckoning with how racial, religious, and linguistic differences were weaponized to further justify human bondage. My work rethinks the 18th-century using the silenced and distorted voices of enslaved African Muslims, who despite the systemic erasure of their ethnicity and religious identities, found ways to speak and leave behind traces of their intellectual and spiritual traditions. Being an 18th-century scholar in this context means reading critically across paradoxical archives to not only recover their voices but to also challenge the very frameworks that sought to silence them.

What to you are the challenges and opportunities presented by studying the eighteenth century?

One of the biggest challenges of studying the eighteenth century is the fragmented and often distorted nature of its archives, especially when examining the writings of enslaved African Muslims, which predominately appear through inaccurate translations and other mediated forms. Yet, these distortions provide me with an opportunity to rethink reading epistemologies and to develop new methodologies attuned to absence, translation, and erasure. Through this approach, the eighteenth century becomes a site of meaning-making that allows us to center the voices that have been silenced by

colonialism and to challenge the legacies of racial and religious exclusion.

Jack Casey, *New York University*

"Margins of Freedom: Caribbean Central America and the Age of Revolution, 1786-1821"

What does it mean to you to be an eighteenth century Africa scholar?

As a scholar of the Age of Revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean, I am always fascinated by the eighteenth century's central role in forming modern social, political, and economic institutions. I consider it incredibly important to understand the contours of the eighteenth century in the Atlantic world not only for their relevance to the period, but also for today. For me, this means being attentive to the role of slavery, resistance, and revolutionary movements in shaping eighteenth-century political and social discourses around republicanism and liberalism that are still around today.

What to you are the challenges and opportunities presented by studying the eighteenth century?

For my research, the eighteenth century presents a unique opportunity to understand how liberalism and slavery reached an apotheosis together while also witnessing the largest slave insurrection in world history. Historical counterintuitives like these abound



in the eighteenth century and present fascinating challenges and rich historical inquiries. This historical complexity, like many other periods, lends itself to a wealth of historical studies that recreate the social complexity of the eighteenth-century world.

Jessica Johnson, *University of Oregon*

"In Splendid Court Dress: William Armfield Hobday's Portrait of Prince Saunders and the Reception of African Nobility in Georgian Britain"

What does it mean to you to be an eighteenth century Africa scholar?

As an 18th-century scholar, I feel inclined to help highlight stories of people's lives from various classes and ethnicities, especially those whose voices have been largely ignored or forgotten in history. I view myself as tasked with the responsibility of helping to bring these stories to light and illustrate their relevance to the present. Overall, as an 18th-century scholar, I hope my work will have a public impact by facilitating connections between the past and the public, thereby fostering a sense of community through cultural understanding.

What to you are the challenges and opportunities presented by studying the eighteenth century?

At times, studying the 18th century can be challenging on a practical level, as it can sometimes be difficult to identify and find resource materials. However, processing archival material is an enjoyable challenge, as I see each source as a piece of a large puzzle. Other times, the material can be emotionally challenging, especially when the source expresses racist, sexist, or imperialist ideologies; however, my work helps me feel connected to a complex and diverse past and demonstrates the long history of resilience by marginalized peoples.

Tim Soriano, *University of Illinois, Chicago*

"The 'Landlord- Stranger' Land Tenancy Relationship in Early Sierra Leone: A Reassessment"

What does it mean to you to be an eighteenth century Africa scholar?

An 18th century scholar anchors one's historical viewpoint in both the 17th and early 19th centuries. The 17th century provided for the western Europeans the political and religious underpinnings in the establishment of their respective "first" empires. By the early 19th century, the "first" European empires had been established, laying the foundation for the "second" waves of empire building, dominated by the effects upon the Industrial Revolution on



their respective colonies. The 18th century served as the transmission between these periods, by slowly pulling away from the influence of religion and uniting a European capitalist economy with an imperial mindset.

What to you are the challenges and opportunities presented by studying the eighteenth century?

Examining the 18th century empires requires knowledge of the religious and philosophical influences on their empire's development. Therefore, one must go beyond the archival record of a colony to ascertain the underpinnings of their respective historical events. By going "beyond the record", tighter linkages can be made between the European metropolises and their nascent colonies. As a result, other fields, such as art history, architecture, cartography and natural sciences, can come into conversation with the colonial historical record.

Myriam Iuorio, *University of Toronto*

"Conjurers, Witches and Sorcerers': Recovering Early Modern West Central African Healing Practices"

What does it mean to you to be an eighteenth century Africa scholar?

Being an historian of the 18th century has allowed me to better understand how early modern socio-cultural events have deeply shaped our world. To me, observing how

18th-century people have influenced so many of the cultural, social and political structures we live in today, and their implications on a global scale, can provide important insights to understand and address current issues – such as the interconnection of discriminating attitudes I address in my own research. Dealing with the complexity and contradictions emerging from 18th century documents has also been a fun and unique opportunity to sharpen my critical thinking and learn to constantly question my assumptions.

What to you are the challenges and opportunities presented by studying the eighteenth century?

As an historian engaging with critical disability studies, I am eager to explore how adopting interdisciplinary methodologies can add fresh perspectives to understanding the 18th-century world. I am curious to see how more and more interdisciplinary projects, especially those focusing on understudied fields, can help address the complexity characterizing 18th-century social, cultural and political processes. Looking at the intersections of different research fields also calls for more collaboration between scholars, putting in dialogue different methodologies and expertise. While fostering more collaborative projects presents many practical difficulties, I believe it also provides the opportunity to experiment with new fruitful angles of investigation and broaden the depth of our individual knowledge.

Justine Ajao (Tola), *University of Toronto*

"Scales of ruin and restitution: tracing the epistemologies of Bilali Mohammed, a Georgia Sea Island plantation manager"

What does it mean to you to be an eighteenth century Africa scholar?

To be an 18th century scholar of Africa and the diaspora means going beyond the confines of 19th century accounts of slavery and emancipation to understand what modernity and freedom have come to mean. The concepts that animated eighteenth-century revolutions in politics and epistemologies all gain a new valence when considering the active role of 18th century Africa in fashioning systems and technologies which were instrumental to the acceleration and scaling up of newly entangled economies and worlds.





What to you are the challenges and opportunities presented by studying the eighteenth century?

Sources are rich but complex in the 18th century. For me, the deep trouble that comes from working with colonial archives is most eloquently expressed by Saidiya Hartman in *Venus in Two Acts*. I read her challenge to find the voice of Black subjects in these sources as holding out that possibility while always maintaining the forward and backward sight of a Sankofa.

Matthew Steele, Yale University

"Reforming the Sharī'a in 18th Century Africa: Ṣāliḥ al-Fullānī (d. 1218/1803-4), the Legal School, and Sindh"

What does it mean to you to be an eighteenth century Africa scholar?

What a wonderful question! Because my work regularly takes me from colonial debates to 9th-century texts, I will answer it a slightly different way. Rather than what it means to be a scholar of the 18th century, I will try to answer what it means to be a scholar in the 18th century. And for the communities that I work on – Muslim jurists in Africa – the 18th century is a really exciting time to be thinking about law. Legal manuscripts are fairly easy to access, family libraries are spreading throughout the continent, and travel to study under specialists of law within and outside of Africa is widespread. The 18th century is also a time of really interesting tensions as jurists in Africa are wrestling with questions of textual authority and social practice in the communities within which they live. It isn't an accident then

that period produces two of my favorite works on law, a 70 some volume commentary of a medieval handbook as well as a 1000-verse poem haranguing those that rely on the very same text.

What do you see as the challenges and opportunities presented by studying the eighteenth century?

Another excellent question. Beyond the value of studying the debates and scholarship I mentioned, the opportunities are fairly straightforward. Very few people work on Islamic law or intellectual history in Africa in the 18th century. The reasons for this probably speak to your question of the challenges working on the period. Here I offer nothing new by pointing to the shadow cast by modernity and colonialism in discussion of Islam and Africa. With few exceptions, the 18th century has been left out of many these discussions to their detriment. My hope is that my current work on an 18th century iconoclast from Guinea, one whose writings remain a staple of reformists from South Asia to Saudi Arabia, will be a modest step toward taking the 18th century as seriously to the study of Islam and Africa as we have the 19th.

Eighteenth Century Africa Publication Fellowships were also awarded to:

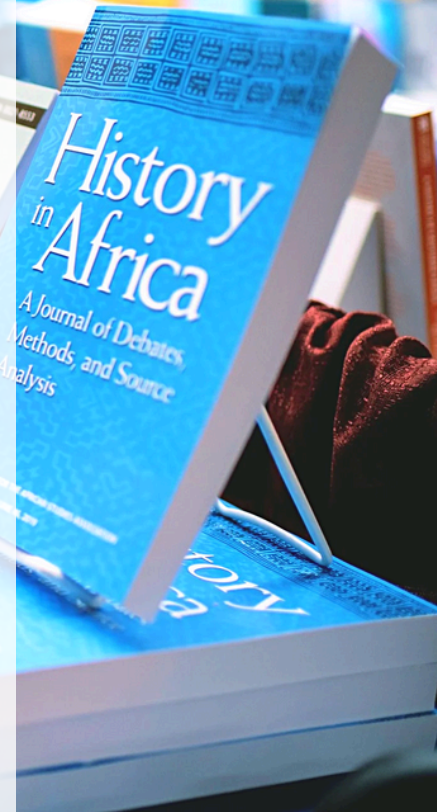
Ethan Key, Boston University

Duangkamol Tantirungkij, City University of New York



THE NEW FACES OF HISTORY DEBATES, METHODS, AND SOURCES

History in Africa is a leading international, peer-reviewed journal focusing on methodology and historiography relating to African studies. The journal welcomes incoming Editor-in-Chief Paul Bjerk (Texas Tech University) and incoming Deputy Editor Andrew Wegmann (Texas Tech University) for the 2026-2030 editorial term. Chapane Mutiua (Universidade Eduardo Mondlane), Alex Lichtenstein (Indiana University), and Nicole Eggers (University of Tennessee, Knoxville) will join the team as Associate Editors. See the full team including the new Editorial Review Board online.



What is your academic or professional background, and how has it prepared you to take on the role of HiA editor?

Paul: I am a historian of modern Tanzania, but as with many in my field, my PhD training at the University of Wisconsin entailed broad reading in colonial and precolonial Africa as well. And now I teach all eras of African history here at Texas Tech University. This perspective on history, entailing awareness of former social orders, which in Africa were less than a century removed from the independence generation, has been a foundation of my scholarly inquiry. Perhaps more importantly I have spent quite a number of years living in Tanzania which gave me some grasp on what everyday life entails for people there.

Andrew: I received my PhD from Louisiana State University in 2015 and immediately took a job at Loyola University New Orleans as a Lecturer. From there, I moved to Delta State University in Mississippi, where I made my way from an assistant professor to an

associate professor and taught a wide variety of classes. This led me to adopt a more open-minded, interdisciplinary, and broad approach to the study of history, seeing the boundabetween “fields” as impediments to discourse and academic exchange. This opened my eyes to new methodologies and allowed me to find value in interdisciplinary work, merging anthropology, archaeology, and philosophy with social, cultural, and intellectual history. I have authored or edited three books on identity, memory, and culture in the Atlantic World, each one focusing on some aspect of the African Diaspora and the effect it had on the production of corporate identities in the Atlantic realm. *History in Africa*, is the perfect journal for my broad, methods-oriented expertise. It is a journal that attracts scholarship built around the process of scholarly thought and production—the essence of our craft at its most foundational level—and it brings critical thought, and indeed exploration and creativity, to the methods of a historical field that touches and informs so many others. Now that I am at Texas Tech

University, which provides a much more supportive scholarly environment, I can help facilitate the creation and publication of that same type of scholarship for a fresh and engaged audience.

What are you most looking forward to about becoming the HiA editor?

Paul: I look forward to bringing new historical insights to light, and in the case of this particular journal, the debate about methods. I knew David Henige, the founding editor of this journal at the University of Wisconsin and admired his dedication to the craft of history. It was something of an in-house journal for the leading historians of Africa, a place where in the era before the internet they shared interim insights and methodological innovations among a smallish group of specialists. I look forward to cultivating that creative sense of craft.

Andrew: *History in Africa* is the perfect journal for creative, provocative, and progressive methodological history—the very thing about history that I love so much. As co-editor of the journal, I will not only be able to engage the frontline of that discourse but also see that it enters into the larger historiography of African and African diasporic history. Additionally, and importantly, I will be able

Paul Bjerk, Incoming HiA Co-Editor-in-Chief



to shepherd that scholarship into a wider historiographical purview, bringing in and sending out scholarship that informs the history of the African continent through its diaspora, the Atlantic World, African American history, Black studies, and Caribbean history, among others.

What challenges do you anticipate HiA will face in the coming years, and how do you plan to address those challenges?

Paul: HiA will continue to face the same challenges that many journals face, the sourcing of good articles, the recruitment and maintenance of good peer reviewers and editors, and generally making demands on people's time in an age where a vast ecosystem of ostensibly labor-saving devices have left us busier than we've ever been. A second challenge, which I fear to take on, but for which I may be as well qualified as anyone in my field, is the confrontation with AI and its impact on knowledge industries like ours. Its ubiquitous presence has become a great frustration for me as a teacher, yet I'm fully aware that there is no turning back. I fear that it may begin to shape our thinking and the entire endeavor of composing new knowledge in ways that will be hard to identify. At the same time, as a journal of method we must consider what AI will mean for historical methods, it may bring ugly shortcomings, but also extraordinary new possibilities for research and publication.

Andrew: *History in Africa* faces and will continue to face challenges met by every journal right now—chief among them, of course, being the unclear place of AI in both scholarly production and consumption. I see the chief challenge that *History in Africa* can most directly address and work to dismantle is the increased “siloeing,” as it were, of academic fields and subfields. Not just within university structures and curricula, academic discourse has often tended to insulate itself to establish its novelty, value, and use. As a result, interdisciplinary and interfield research, especially within the realm of methodology and practice, has become difficult to place in journals. *History in Africa*, due to its focus on method and the breadth of its scholarly gaze, has a unique—or at least close-to-unique—ability to embrace progressive, interdisciplinary, and highly inventive research without the fear of “taking a risk” on something new. The entire idea of a journal of method is engaging and promoting what is new and provocative and important, not just to, in this case, African history, but everything that touches African history. I see it as my mission to help break this “siloeing” and use *History in Africa* as an avenue for

scholarship that informs the many audiences and speaks to the many fields that make African history so important and central to this world.

What are your visions for the future of HiA: what kinds of innovations do you hope to encourage, and how do you see the publication evolving under your direction?

Paul: In applying for this position, I reached out to my colleague Andrew Wegmann, a historian of the Atlantic World coming from the perspective of African American history, with the goal of expanding the remit of this journal to more fully embrace trans-oceanic and diasporic trends, trajectories, vectors, and communities. We aim to bring the journal's deep engagement with the profound methodological debates and innovations in this field, which some have called the "decathlon of the social sciences," into the wider geographic scopes that have been influenced by African peoples, cultures, and historical processes. At the same time, there are great possibilities in bringing insights into diasporic processes to bear back on African history, which has never been separate from its vast diasporic communities.

Andrew: Paul and I both took up the position with a mind to expand the coverage of the journal to include all of Africa's diasporas and its connections to the worlds of both the Atlantic and Indian oceans. We see this as a way to attract a larger number of submissions and bring the journal and its contents into a wider historical discourse. This, of course, is not built on the idea of divorcing *History in Africa* from its critical place within African continental history and historiography. Rather, it is built on the belief that the journal's foundation can *and should* inform more than that history and historiography without fundamentally changing its ways, its expectations, and the value it holds within that field. Indeed, Africa lies at the heart of so many historical methods, projects, and ideas, and we are interested in helping make *History in Africa* the standard-bearer of that inclusive, complex, and important network of historical research and discourse.

How can ASA Annual Meeting attendees engage HiA and the editorial team in Atlanta this November?

Paul: We are thrilled to host an exciting panel at ASA on the topic of transoceanic trajectories for African history and for this journal in particular. The panel will welcome senior scholars like Michael Gomez and James Sweet, mid-career scholars like Caree Banton, and up-and-coming scholars like Kimberly Wortmann and Chelsea Berry, all bringing innovative methods and perspectives to the discussion. It promises to be an extraordinary conversation that we hope will point us in the right direction.

HiA Sponsored Session:

VII-A-10 Roundtable: Transoceanic Techniques: History in Africa and Diasporic Methods

Room: M301 (Marquis Level)

Friday, November 21, 2025 1:30 - 3:15 PM

Beyond that, Andrew and I will participate in the PIPES workshop, to mentor young scholars towards publication, the day before the conference starts, and we will be around throughout the weekend and hope to engage current debates on method and to encourage new submissions.

Andrew: Both Paul and I will be present at the ASA Annual Meeting, and we both invite anyone interested in the journal to email us, either together or individually, to

Andrew Wegmann, Incoming HiA Deputy Editor



meet at any time during the conference. In addition to that, we will be hosting a roundtable on Friday, November 21 at 1:30pm entitled “Transoceanic Techniques: History in Africa and Diasporic Methods.” This roundtable will bring together a remarkable group of scholars whose work exemplifies the value and complexity of diasporic methods and their relations to African history—Michael A. Gomez, James Sweet, Caree Banton, Kimberly Wortmann, and Chelsea Berry. Of course, the audience will be part of that roundtable, but we also would love to meet as people as possible both before and after the roundtable to further the discussion and talk about the places we can bring *History in Africa* together.

ASA looks forward to welcoming the new editorial team:

Paul Bjerk (Texas Tech University) Editor-in-Chief

Andrew Wegmann (Texas Tech University) Deputy Editor

Associate Editors:

Nicole Eggers (University of Tennessee – Knoxville)

Alex Lichtenstein (Indiana University)

Chapane Mutiua (Universidade Eduardo Mondlane)

Editorial Review Board Members:

Jeffrey Ahlman (Smith College) *USA*

Ana Lucia Araujo (Howard University) *USA*

Taiwo Bello (Oklahoma State University) *USA*

Esperanza Brizuela-Garcia (Montclair State University) *USA*

Carlos Fernandes (Universidade Eduardo Mondlane) *Mozambique*

Jeffrey Fleisher (Rice University) *USA*

Lindsay Frederick Braun (University of Oregon) *USA*

Jill E. Kelly (Southern Methodist University) *USA*

Giorgio Musso (Roma Tre University) *Italy*

Trishula Rachna Patel (University of Denver) *USA*

Rachel Petrocelli (Santiago Canyon College) *USA*

Andreana Prichard (University of Oklahoma) *USA*

Baskouda S.K. Shelley (The University of Maroua) *Cameroon*

Kate Skinner (University of Bristol) *UK*

Francois Wasssouni (The University of Maroua) *Cameroon*

Christopher D. E. Willoughby (University of Nevada, Las Vegas) *USA*

Closing January 1:

History in Africa

Call for Submissions



The HiA editorial team is seeking contributions for the 53rd volume.

With new methodological directions emerging in histories of Africa, the Americas, and the Atlantic and Indian ocean realms, we seek to invite work that further integrates these fields into the purview of this esteemed journal. Whether using archeology as a means of identifying under-documented Atlantic crossings, reconstructing African culture traditions by way of scattered traces in diasporic communities, or identifying new themes emerging in documents beyond the European archive, we seek submissions that articulate methods and research agendas that map global connections and collapse unidirectional theories of historical influence.

-  **Articulate innovations and challenges of archives and methods within African diasporic histories**
-  **Develop approaches that trace the methods of African history into those of World history**
-  **Highlight the unique breadth of diasporic methods for a global vision of African history**
-  **Transform our scholarly debates rather than rehash them**



The 2025 ASA Annual Meeting will be held in Atlanta, GA from November 20-22. The Publishing Improvement Pipeline for Emerging Scholars (PIPES) Workshop will be held November 19. For more event information, visit our Annual Meeting information page at africanstudies.org/annual-meetings.



ELLEN MCPHERSON

PROGRAMS MANAGER

Ellen brings with her a background in language education and environmental justice expertise. In 2021, she earned dual bachelors degrees in environmental sciences and German from Oregon State University. She completed a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship in Jena, Germany, and in 2024, she graduated with her masters in German literature with a special interest in digital humanities from the University of Arkansas.

Ellen joined the ASA Secretariat in 2023 ahead of the San Francisco Annual Meeting. She is looking forward to this year's meeting in Atlanta, to seeing familiar faces, and to meeting many of ASA's members who she's communicated with virtually throughout the year. She encourages members to stop by the registration desk to say hello!

This June, Ellen welcomed baby Valentina, who will be attending her first ASA Annual Meeting this November! Apart from plenty of newborn snuggles, Ellen enjoys dancing salsa and bachata, board game nights, and spending time outdoors in her home state of Oregon.

MEET THE SECRETARIAT.



MELODY BELL-GAM

EMERGING SCHOLAR ADMINISTRATOR

Originally from Nigeria, Melody is a graduate student pursuing a degree in International Social Work at Rutgers University (New Brunswick Campus). Her background is in International Development, focusing primarily on the African continent, though she has also worked in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. She is working on her second masters' degree, having completed her first in Global Affairs and International Relations/Development with an emphasis on law and economics. Melody is excited to join the ASA Secretariat team, where she will support the Emerging Scholars Network.

When she is not working, Melody pursues her many hobbies: she is always looking for new and innovative ways to merge her love of creative work and academics. She has a passion for reading and writing and is currently working on writing a book—she also loves filmmaking, photography, and connecting with others through art and storytelling. As her name suggests, she also loves music. When asked what she'd like the ASA readers to know most about her, Melody said the following: "I would love ASA News readers to know that I am passionate about their work! I'm passionate about the African continent and always look forward to supporting initiative that advance Africa's progress. As an avid traveler, I also look forward to visiting more African countries in the near future!"

MEET THE SECRETARIAT.



REED COUVILLON

EMERGING SCHOLAR AND FELLOWSHIP COORDINATOR

Originally from Louisiana, Reed now lives in New Jersey. He has a background in both U.S. and African history, holding a master's degree in each field. Before relocating to New Jersey, Reed studied and worked in various academic and archival settings, focusing on projects that emphasized 19th-century historical research and African studies. His work at ASA centers on the support of emerging scholars, academic program development, and the coordination of mentorship initiatives, particularly initiatives in interdisciplinary and international contexts.

When he is not working, Reed spends time on embroidery and wood-burning projects and has recently begun exploring the medium of stained glass. He enjoys cooking Louisiana-inspired meals, exploring local farmers' markets, and spending quality time with his dog. Reed is deeply committed to creating inclusive, accessible spaces for early-career scholars, especially those who are first-generation, international, or navigating academic spaces from the margins.

MEET THE SECRETARIAT.



KAELA THUNEY

SUMMER SUPPORT ADMINISTRATOR

Originally from Port Orchard, Washington, Kaela lives in Durham, North Carolina. She earned an undergraduate degree in African History from Western Washington University and completed her master's degree in history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Currently, Kaela is a PhD candidate in African history at the same institution. Her scholarship focuses on gender, education, and colonialism in West Africa and the Atlantic world, and she conducted research as a Fulbright scholar in Senegal in 2023. Her current project examines the relationship between missionary education for African women and girls and colonial expansion in Senegal and Sierra Leone during the 19th and 20th centuries.

When she is not working, Kaela spends her time expanding her LP collection, perusing estate sales, and playing or watching roller derby. As a first-generation graduate student, Kaela is passionate about mentorship and teaching and hopes to help other first-gen scholars navigate academia and to encourage the proliferation of scholarship about Africa globally.

MEET THE SECRETARIAT.



OUMAR BALARABE

SUMMER SUPPORT ADMINISTRATOR

Originally from the Republic of Benin, West Africa, Oumar is currently based in Ohio, where he is pursuing his doctoral studies at Ohio University. He earned a bachelor's degree in African studies from the Université d'Abomey-Calavi in Benin and completed a master's degree in African studies at Ohio University as a Fulbright Scholar. Oumar is a Ph.D. candidate in Higher Education and Student Affairs at Ohio University with a focus on African Higher Education. His research focuses on international student development, asset-based approaches to college student academic, social, and psychological engagement and well-being, and the experiences of marginalized students in African higher education. He is interested in how high-impact experiences and practices can contribute to student thriving in challenging learning environments.

In his downtime, Oumar enjoys listening to traditional Sahelian music, running, and spending quality time with family and friends. He also spends time mentoring other international African students, helping them navigate academic life in the United States. As a first-generation scholar and international graduate student, he is passionate about using education as a tool for empowerment and social change. He believes in the power of community, mentorship, and culturally grounded scholarship to build more just and inclusive systems of higher education.

MEET THE SECRETARIAT.



ANDIE CAMPBELL

SUMMER SUPPORT ADMINISTRATOR

Andie is originally from Grand Ledge, Michigan, and she currently lives in East Lansing, Michigan. She earned her bachelor's degree in Spanish from Michigan State University and recently graduated from Kent State University with a Master of Science in User Experience Design. Her academic and professional interests lie at the intersection of digital design and global engagement; she is passionate about creating inclusive, user-centered digital experiences that promote cross-cultural understanding and enhance accessibility.

In her downtime, Andie enjoys traveling to national parks and spending time outdoors. Hiking is one of her favorite activities, and this fall she is planning to visit Zion National Park in Utah.

MEET THE SECRETARIAT.



CAITLIN SCHOLL

SUMMER SUPPORT ADMINISTRATOR

Caitlin is based in Portland, Oregon, which is also her hometown. She attended Reed College as an undergraduate student, where she majored in English and wrote her senior thesis on the Sunjata epic. Caitlin is a PhD candidate in Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. Her dissertation explores the relationship between narrative form and economic form in the aftermath of the IMF and World Bank's structural adjustment programs, focusing on Mali, Cameroon, and Morocco, where she conducted research on a Fulbright grant.

When she is not working, Caitlin enjoys hiking and going on bike rides with her preschooler. She is also a fan of prestige TV.

MEET THE SECRETARIAT.

ASA WOMEN'S CAUCUS 50/55TH ANNIVERSARY

Luncheon & Lecture

Join the ASA Women's Caucus for a special anniversary celebration in Atlanta. In addition to special panels and a display in the exhibit hall, the Caucus is hosting a special luncheon to celebrate more than 50 years of scholarship, advocacy, and community. Tickets are available in advance online.

**Saturday,
November 22, 2025**

12:00 – 1:30pm

Atlanta Marriott Marquis

Luncheon Tickets: \$55-\$100

Nwando Achebe

Historian, Author

Women's Caucus Lecturer



Shailja Patel

Poet, Playwright

Special Guest Performer



ASA Women's Caucus



50TH ANNIVERSARY SCARF

Support the Caucus

ASA Women's Caucus
100 Limited Edition Scarves
\$50 each
On Sale Online Now!



ASA WOMEN'S CAUCUS TIMELINE 1970-2025



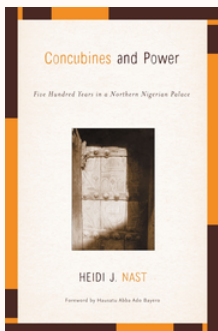
1975
Edna Bay and Nancy Hafkin edit
ASR Special Issue on women



1984
Caucus publishes a position paper on
clitordectomy and infibulation



1991
ASA Women's Caucus hosts a special two-
day conference on the "Status of Women's
Studies in Africa" with visiting scholars from
the continent



2005
First Aidoo-Snyder Book Prize
awarded to *Concubines and Power*
by Heidi J. Nast



2020
ASA Women's Caucus leadership publishers
Statement on the Ongoing Impact of the
COVID-19 Pandemic on Gender and Equity
in Academia



ASA Women's Caucus

OCTOBER 1970

(13th Annual Meeting) - Presentation of the
Resolution on Women to the ASA Board

DECEMBER 1970

First ASA News ad for the new Women's
Caucus with \$2 membership for faculty
and \$1 for students/unemployed individuals

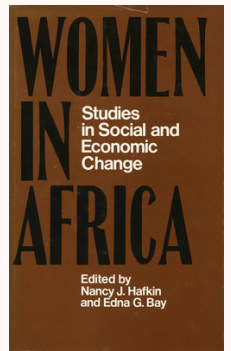
1972

Committee on Women publish findings



1976

*Women in Africa: Studies in
Social and Economic Change*,
is published by Stanford
University Press



1986

ASA Women's Caucus formally sponsors
nine panels at ASA 29th Annual Meeting



1998

Women's Caucus hosts film series at ASA
Annual Meeting *Through Women's Eyes:
Recent Films By and About African Women*

2009

Penny Schwartz Student Travel Award is
established in honor of Nancy "Penny"
Schwartz

2025

Robertson Fund is established to support
the ASA Dependent Care Grant among
others





THE ASA WOMEN'S CAUCUS: A COLLECTIVE HISTORY

BY KAELE THUNEY

The ASA Women's Caucus was founded in 1970, at a pivotal moment for women's rights in the U.S. This historical overview contextualizes the Caucus' work, and extols the many activists and scholars that have shaped the field over the past 50+ years. The 50th Anniversary celebration will culminate in Atlanta, where ASA Annual Meeting attendees will gather to celebrate the history, impact, and enduring legacy of the ASA Women's Caucus.

During the 1972 ASA Annual Meeting, supporters of women's studies gathered in the Independence Ballroom of the Sheraton Hotel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They were there to attend a panel entitled "AFRICAN STUDIES: WHERE ARE THE WOMEN?"

Participants ranged from anthropologist Carol Hoffer and historian Marcia Wright — the first woman to be hired as a history faculty member at Columbia University — to essayist and playwright Rashida Abu-Bakar, and Njansi Leslie of Northwestern University. Joseph Okapu of Third Press Publishing acted as discussant. The panel was chaired by Emily Card, a recent PhD in Political Science who had, along with other ASA members, been working to encourage a women's organization within the African Studies Association for at least two years. Organizers encouraged audience members to prepare comments and anecdotes, and to treat the meeting as a discussion of the opportunities and challenges faced by "women, both American and African, involved in African studies." The panel, which lasted three hours, was the only one at the 1972 conference to center on women or women's studies in Africa.

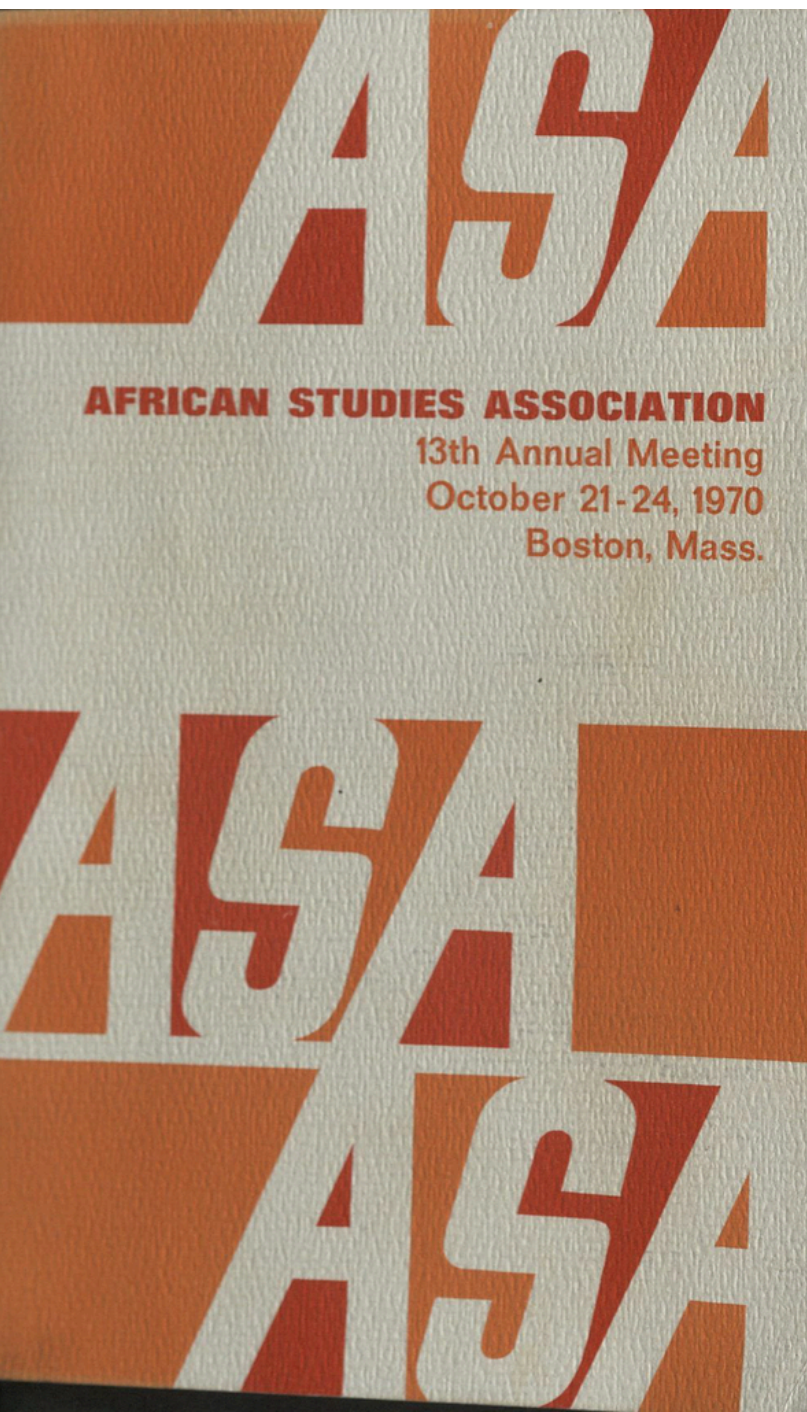
How can we begin to understand the history of an organization like the ASA's Women's Caucus? Discussions from the 1972 panel on women in African Studies form just one part of a conversation that has been taking place for fifty-five years, a result of the efforts of those advocating for women within the ASA.

Charting the history of any organization is a complicated undertaking, especially one with over fifty years of connections, activism, support, and a substantial archive and history to draw from. This task runs the risk of omitting important figures and triumphs in the name of fitting a page limit, and risks becoming a meandering list of names and dates rather than something dynamic and living.

With these considerations in mind, this article examines the history of the ASA Women's Caucus through a series of pivotal or otherwise compelling years, moments, and meetings. Each of these moments showcases the myriad ways that the Caucus has functioned as an advocacy group, community-building organization, and support system for scholarship by and about women

within the ASA. Rather than presenting an itemized account of every success, challenge, and significant moment or figure, this article is a collection of key moments around which to shape one version of the history of this organization.

There are, of course, moments missing; important events and periods that shaped the engagement of generations of scholars with women's studies and the Women's Caucus not covered here. This is a retrospective, exploring the Caucus and the collective commitment to the core tenets of gender equality, support, and engagement with scholarship by and about women in African Studies.



1970-72

The 1972 panel occurred within a dynamic period for women's studies and the advancement of women and gendered scholarship in the ASA. Two years earlier, at a meeting held before the 1970 Annual Meeting, the Board of Directors voted to endorse a 'Women's Committee' suggested by Card, then a graduate student at Columbia, who presented to the all-male Board four resolutions on the status of women in the organization. Card suggested measures for improving the visibility of women's scholarship and involvement in ASA, offering suggestions for additional information about women's publications in the newsletter or, alternatively, the creation of a "separate, women-oriented publication."

The suggestions written by female members of the ASA and presented by Card were informed both by the general environment of discrimination against women in academia in the 1960s and 1970s and the experiences of individual members. Card recalled during an interview how she had been passed over for various appointments and fellowships explicitly because of her gender. She noted that in 1968 that she "tried to teach at UCLA: I was told, 'we don't hire women.'" Other forms of discrimination were less explicitly stated. When applying for a Ford Foundation fellowship in the mid-1960s, Card was told that the award was not allowed to be granted to single women. Returning as a married woman the next year, Card was then informed that married women, too, were barred from receiving funds. Regarding women in African Studies during this period, Card recalled that "we were in a bizarre situation, nobody really knew what we were doing there: that's part of why I left for Women's Studies."

Before she left African Studies, though, Card and the other gathered members of the organization that would become the Women's Caucus set forth their demands, agitating for the equality of all women in the ASA. At the 1970 meeting, the resolution submitted on behalf of the Women's Caucus by Card was approved by a vote of present members. The resolution read as follows:

RESOLUTIONS ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

I. BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the African Studies Association goes on record as opposing discrimination on the basis of sex, marital status, and parenthood, and commits itself to removing all practices of such discrimination.

II. BE IT RESOLVED:

- 1. That the ASA emphasizes its determination to conduct its own affairs without discrimination against women, including the nomination of members of the Board, appointment of committees, and other personnel matters.*
- 2. That ASA meetings be held in places financially accessible to all Africanists, and that, in particular, meetings not be held in hotels which practice discrimination against women.*
- 3. That daycare facilities for children be established at annual meetings, staffed by both men and women.*
- 4. That an ASA committee of women members be created to examine questions concerning the status of women. The committee is asked to report to the ASA at its next annual meeting.*

III. BE IT RESOLVED:

That the ASA will work to end all discriminatory practices in foundations and university departments.

- 1. The ASA specifically condemns foundations and scholarship programs in which discrimination against women is practiced in the granting of awards by sex, age, and marital status.*
- 2. That the ASA will work to end discrimination in academic departments regarding such matters as nepotism rules, policies which discriminate against women in faculty appointments, promotions, salary, and tenure. We will also work to end discriminatory practices in the admission and support of students.*
- 3. That the ASA encourages universities to recognize and act on the need for day-care centers, non-discriminatory parenthood and family sick leave policies, and other such necessary arrangements which will allow all women-faculty, students, and staff— to participate fully in university life.*

IV. BE IT RESOLVED:

- 1. That the ASA, recognizing past neglect, encourages and supports research concerning the role and status of women in Africa and other societies.*

The language of inclusion and the rejection of discrimination articulated by the resolution-writers fit into broader discussions of gender equality in the 60s and 70s, particularly in the United States. Four years earlier, Betty Friedan and attendees of the third-annual Conference on the Status of Women met in Washington, D.C., establishing the National Organization for Women (NOW). NOW's foundational charter and Bill of Rights overlapped with the resolutions presented by Card, demonstrating how the demands of women in the ASA did not stem from the issues of only one institution (Card went on to work with NOW to pass The Equal Credit Opportunity Act into law in 1974). NOW's goals included maternal and childcare rights, financial considerations for single and married women, the protection of equal rights for women, and the elimination of "all discrimination and segregation by sex, written and unwritten at all levels of education, including college, graduate, and professional schools." -NOW Bill of Rights 1968. For the early proponents of women in the ASA, the concerns articulated by Friedan

and her organization were just as relevant a handful of years later, when Card presented the Women's Committee resolutions to the all-male ASA board.

ASA acted on some of the resolutions quickly, if somewhat unevenly. The 1971 Annual Meeting program noted a childcare center available at the Hilton in Denver, Colorado, seemingly fulfilling one facet of the resolutions. The program states that those who wished to take advantage of the available resource were "asked to contribute at least two hours to assist in the care of the children. Others, men particularly, are urged to sign up for a one or two-hour play period. Please sign up for a particular time at the Registration Desk." The 1972 meeting in Philadelphia adopted a similar model, while the 1973 meeting program suggested that parents seek out reputable sitters in the area, a list of which might be found at the registration desk. The 1974 and 1976 programs made no mention of childcare arrangements whatsoever.

The committee on women published their findings in the Summer 1972 edition of *ASA News*. Of primary concern to organizers was gendered discrimination in the job market, like that experienced by Card six years earlier, which persisted despite ostensible protections for women written into the amended Civil Rights Act. The committee reported that “statistics have indicated that women have not been hired in equitable numbers in comparison with the available supply of Ph.D.’s,” and informed readers about new legislation impacting hiring processes in the United States, which the committee asserted “would have long-term affects of considerable import to institutions and individuals affiliated with the Association.” (*ASA News*, July 1972) The report

experiences of women. The committee sought to build a coalition of ASA members for organizational reform and particularly to combat obstacles like hiring discrimination, financial barriers, and other factors that influenced women’s engagement in the field.

The summer 1972 article closed with the request that female ASA members “communicate with us over the summer with suggestions about implementation of any of our resolutions. Write either through the ASA offices or directly to Dr. Emily Card.” The conversations about women in the African Studies Association, it seemed, were just getting started.

A WOMEN'S CAUCUS is being formed within the African Studies Association to promote the goals outlined in the Resolutions on Women (see pp. 2-3) passed at the Annual Meeting. Through the Committee on the Status of Women (point 4, section II of the Resolutions), the Women's Caucus will bring the attention of the Association to those problems confronted by women in African studies.

Members of the African Studies Association are invited to join by paying dues in the amount of \$2/yr. (faculty) or \$1/yr. (unemployed and students). Mail to: Valerie Bennett, 45 Orchard Avenue, Waban, Massachusetts 02168. Members of the Women's Caucus will periodically receive a newsletter.

Announcement of the Women's Caucus featured in the December 1970 edition of ASA News.

acknowledged that much of their research had been focused on women in the United States: the committee faced “the need to locate those who are equipped to provide information about women in Africa. It is our view that research on women in Africa has not been sufficient to answer many important questions.” To this end, Barbara Callaway, recently hired as the first female political science professor at Rutgers University, requested that those interested in participating in a panel on women at the 1972 meeting contact her directly. Those responses formed the basis for the panel in Philadelphia.

Conversations around women in the ASA took place during a period of considerable debate and fraught tensions around race, gender, and belonging in the Association. Card and her fellow organizers, many of whom were young women, either graduate students or early-career professors, were concerned primarily with the place of women in African studies and in academia broadly, but also in encouraging discussions about the

1975

Three years later, in a report for the 1975 newsletter, historian Edna G. Bay highlighted the recent activities of Women’s Committee members. The Committee had recently become affiliated with the Federation of Organizations for Professional Women. Nancy Hafkin and Margaret Jean Hay had planned the Conference on Women and Development, held at Wellesley College. Members of the organization joined the Latin American Studies Association and the Asian Studies Association, lobbying in Washington, D.C., and New York for increased attention and support for African women and women's studies.

Objectives for 1975-76 included assisting the UN/ECS Women’s Research and Training Center, compiling a list of scholars researching African women, and establishing a scholarship fund for African women living in North America. The Caucus’s primary focus in 1975 had been on publications, and Bay noted that the

"NOW'S FOUNDATIONAL CHARTER AND BILL OF RIGHTS OVERLAPPED WITH THE RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED BY CARD, DEMONSTRATING HOW THE DEMANDS OF WOMEN IN THE ASA DID NOT STEM FROM THE ISSUES OF ONLY ONE INSTITUTION"

the forthcoming December issue of the *African Studies Review* would "consist of articles and book reviews on women in Africa."

True to Bay's word, the [December 1975 issue of ASR](#) featured eight articles about women from across Africa, as well as reviews of four books about women or gender studies: *Man and Woman among the Azande*, *Woman, Culture, and Society*, *Women in Politics*, and *Old Wives' Tales: Life Stories of African Women*. The reviewed titles were published within the last five years, and three were authored by women. Articles featured in the ASR special spanned disciplines and themes. Diane Barthel's "Rise of a Female Professional Elite: the Case of Senegal" opened the articles, while Audrey Wipper's exploration of the largest women's voluntary association in Kenya, the Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization, rounds out the section. Between these are a study on women's labor in Ethiopia by Judith Olmstead, a piece on women and national development, and explorations of the lives of women in Guinea-Bissau, wedding celebrations in Mombasa, and an article on African women in political science.

Bay and Hafkin wrote a brief introduction to the volume, reiterating the Women's Committee's dual commitment to the encouragement of women scholars and the promotion of scholarship about women. The

first point had driven the early work of members, while a "second direction was added at the annual meeting in 1973, when the Board of Directors announced its willingness to support the publication of articles by women." This culminated in a call for papers, intended to produce a special edition of *African Studies Review*. Excitingly, they received such a substantial number of submissions that the original project expanded into two: the 1975 ASR special issue and an edited volume, *Women in Africa: Studies in Social and Economic Change*, published by Stanford University Press in 1976. Although they did not seek papers fitting a certain theme, Bay and Hafkin noted that many of the articles focused on development-related issues and their impacts on African women.

The preface, written by Hafkin and Bay, acknowledged that publishing the edited volume addressed "two perceived problems associated with women's issues—the relative paucity of literature on African women, and the difficulty encountered by female scholars in having their work published." The book primarily features works written by female scholars, with all but two authored by women. Contributors included Iris Berger, James Brain, George Brooks, Jr, Margaret Hay, Barbara Lewis, Leith Mullings, Kamene Okonjo, Claire Robertson, Philomena Chioma Steady, Margaret Strobel, and Judith Van Allen.

Like the special edition of ASR, *Women in Africa* is interdisciplinary, showcasing the work of historians, political scientists, anthropologists, sociologists, and economists working across the continent. The subject matter ranges from women's work as spiritual mediums in East Africa to explorations of women's religious associations in Freetown, the political organization of Igbo women, and the influences of socioeconomic change on the lives of women in Ghana. The blurb from the December 1976 ASA News bulletin highlights the thematic underpinnings of the work: "the chief emphasis here is on change: on viewing African women as agents of change from the first arrival of Europeans to the present; and on seeking to change the perspective from which African women have been studied in the past."

1975 and 1976 represent pivotal years in the expansion of the Women's Committee, later the Women's Caucus, as the organization began to collaborate with other women's organizations and to facilitate opportunities for publication and visibility for female scholars. Whether it

was the growing popularity of women's studies, the notion that publishers would engage with works by women, or the Board's recognition of women's scholarship, books and articles about gender went to press with growing regularity in the late 1970s. December 1977 alone saw a call for articles that would eventually become Claire Robertson and Martin Klein's *Women and Slavery in Africa*, an announcement for articles about African women in *Women and Health*, and annotated bibliographies concerning women in the Middle East and North Africa and women and development in Sub-Saharan Africa.

This commitment to championing the work of women was not limited to the seventies. As the new decade began, the group returned to the resolutions laid out in 1970 to chart a path forward and to reinvest in their efforts to share publications by and about women. The Women's Committee continued grappling with how to bring women's work to the forefront, striving not only for the visibility of women's studies but also to put it on equal footing at the Annual Meeting.

Angela Davis, by Bernard Gotfryd. Taken 1974, United States



1985-86

On November 24th, 1985, almost exactly ten years after the publication of the ASR special edition, members of the Women's Caucus convened for their business meeting in the Royale Room of the New Orleans Regency Hotel. They had discovered a problem: conference scheduling had left many members feeling minimized or ostracized at the Annual Meeting, which was being held in conjunction with the Middle East Studies Association.

Women's Caucus members drew attention to scheduling conflicts that had pitted one of the four ASA Current Issues Roundtables, "The International Women's Decade: Nairobi and Beyond," against a talk sponsored by the ACLS and Social Science Research Council, forcing members to choose between attending the two events. During the business meeting, at least fifty members expressed concerns about the various scheduling conflicts and the integration of gender-related scholarship into the schedule. Members sought to circumvent similar issues at future conferences, particularly the ASA Annual Meeting being planned in Madison, WI, the following October. By the end of the meeting, it was decided that it was in the best interest of the organization "to explore possibilities of institutionalizing the Caucus's input in future ASA Conferences."

Over the next year, the Caucus put its plan for institutionalizing its meeting contributions into action. At the twenty-ninth Annual Meeting in Madison, overseen by program chair Linda Hunter, the Caucus sponsored nine different panels on women. The subject matter of sponsored panels ranged considerably, emphasizing research on health and healing, relationship with the state, the African family, urbanization, labor, and childcare needs, among others.

The 1986 panels provided space for scholars to engage in interdisciplinary discussions of gender and Africa, making space for women's studies in the ASA and helping fulfill some Caucus goals. The panel 'Women, Politics, and Social Change' featured papers about women as social actors across the continent: Nina Mba presented a paper titled "Women and Politics in Southern Nigeria," while Dina Sheikh el Din Osman from the University of Khartoum spoke about the relationship

between gender, law, and underdevelopment. 'Women and the State in Africa,' held the following afternoon, was chaired by Catharine Newbury and featured papers by Jane L. Parpart, Mba, Jane Guyer, Janet MacGaffey, and Almaz Zewde. Their work explored themes of militarism, marriage laws, and women's autonomy. Other panels sponsored by the Caucus emphasized themes of family law, women's social mobility, and the cultural construction of gender. Discussants for the 1986 sponsored panels included Claire Robertson, Felicia Ekejiuba, Karen Hansen, Sharon Stichter, and Cheryl Johnson-Odim.

Like the articles of 1975-76, the 1986 conference raised the visibility of scholarship by and about women in African studies, encouraging discussions between scholars from diverse subfields and disciplines. In the decades to come, the Caucus would continue to sponsor panels with the goals of visibility and collaboration in mind. The 1988 Women's Caucus Newsletter lists panels for the upcoming meeting in Chicago, along with contact information for those interested in joining. The Chicago Annual Meeting included roundtables on sexuality, feminist theory, and the strategies of women, a panel on historical sources, "Women and Forms of Resistance in Africa," and "Incorporating Women into World History and the Histories of Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America," among others. The 'institutionalizing' of the Caucus in ASA, to adopt language used at the 1985 business meeting, led to further opportunities to showcase knowledge by and about women at Annual Meetings, paving the way for expansive new scholarship on women and Africa.

1991: Status of Women Conference

ASA News in March 1992 outlined two sets of activities undertaken by Women's Caucus members in 1991: recurrent and unusual. The recurrent activities were matters of usual business — the publication of three newsletters, the coordination of meeting panels, the organization of the annual Women's Caucus Brunch, and the launch of a Publication Drive "to provide African universities with articles and books on African women." The Caucus sponsored panels at the 1991 meeting, including "Market Women and Microenterprise Development: Themes and Considerations, Women and the Urban Environment, Gender and Aging in Africa; Women and Politics in Africa, and Feminist Conceptualizations of African Women: Politics and Literature." The unusual undertaking, spearheaded by historian Claire Robertson, was described in the 1991 St. Louis Annual Meeting program.

This short paragraph represents a substantial amount of work undertaken by women's studies representatives at institutions across the US and Africa. Announced in the March 1990 edition of ASA News, the conference ultimately welcomed twenty-four scholars from across Africa; a list of participants details attendees from fifteen different countries across the continent. The conference was made possible not only by funds from the Women's Caucus but with financial support from the MacArthur and Ford Foundations; the latter of which had denied funding opportunities to female researchers only twenty years earlier. Coinciding with the Publications Drive directed by Caucus member Karen Hansen, the Caucus provided materials to the university

ASA WOMEN'S CAUCUS CONFERENCE: "THE STATUS OF WOMEN'S STUDIES IN AFRICA, 1991"

The ASA Women's Caucus is sponsoring a special two-day conference (Nov. 22 and 23) on "The Status of Women's Studies in Africa, 1991." Participation is by invitation and registration only. Thirty women from Africa and 30 Women's Caucus members based in North America are attending. The convenor is Claire Robertson, Ohio State University.

"ANNOUNCED IN THE MARCH 1990 EDITION OF ASA NEWS, THE CONFERENCE ULTIMATELY WELCOMED TWENTY-FOUR SCHOLARS FROM ACROSS AFRICA; A LIST OF PARTICIPANTS DETAILS ATTENDEES FROM FIFTEEN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES ACROSS THE CONTINENT."

libraries and women's studies programs of the African conference participants.

On day one of the conference, participants presented on the state of research about women "in their countries and regions: Research on Women in Southern Africa, Research on Women in Eastern Africa, Research on Women in Northern/Islamic Africa, and Research on Women in Central and West Africa." The next day, the group held workshops on women's studies curricula in African universities. Members of the Caucus partook in discussions concerning funding, grant proposals, syllabus writing, and "Africanizing the women's studies curriculum," among other topics. Plans for the event included not only the two-day conference, but also a brief speaking tour in conjunction with interested women's studies programs in the United States. Claire Robertson sent letters requesting assistance in arranging hosts and campus resources for visiting scholars, listing at least eighteen participants from African institutions interested in visits.

The majority of these visits went well. Many visiting

scholars and host institutions were interested in maintaining contact with one another and encouraging networks of transnational women's studies research and collaboration. Robertson notes in a post-conference summary that many African faculty and researchers were "very appreciative of the suggestions made for continuing efforts at exchange that came out of their visits... it seemed to most of us that some of the good results envisaged were indeed accomplished by the tours." Dr. Alice K. Siachitema from the University of Zambia had corresponded with Denison University's Director of Women's Studies, Annette Van Dyke, prior to her November visit to Denison. Dr. Siachitema visited both Denison and Ohio Wesleyan University's Women's Studies programs during her visit, presenting her research to the students and faculty of both schools. A note sent by Dr. Siachitema to Dr. Van Dyke after the trip expressed gratitude for Van Dyke's hospitality during the trip, and for introducing her to other colleagues in the Women's Studies department there.

In other instances, the visits did not go as the Women's Caucus intended, leading to assertions of mistreatment from visiting scholars. Robertson received word, passed on anonymously to host institutions, that there were allegations of exploitation from some participants. She notes that in one troubling case, "a participant was asked to give 15 talks in four days for one institution, some of these entailing giving back-to-back classes for instructors. For this, she was paid \$300." Robertson reminded tour hosts that \$150 was the going rate for a moderately well-known scholar to give a single talk in the US in 1991. Furthermore, she stated, "these women were visiting scholars, who should have been treated and paid on the same scale as any visiting scholar." Another complaint referenced the numerous obligations

Conference attendees from African institutions who took part in campus tours before the 1991 meeting

conference participants are:

Elizabeth Ardayfio-Schandorf
Staneala Beckley
Jacqueline Ekambi
Zeinab El Bakri
Samia Al Hadi El Nagar
Walu Engundu
Almaz Eshete
Deborah Etoori
Rudo Gaidzanwa
Mere Kisekka
Takiywa Manuh
Matseliso Mapetla
Monica Munachonga
Maria Musoke
Ibitola Pearce
Kay Raseroka
Kathleen Siachitema
Ndeye Sow (AAWORD)

Ghana
Sierra Leone
Cameroon
Sudan
Sudan
Zaire
Ethiopia
Uganda
Zimbabwe
Nigeria
Ghana
Lesotho
Zambia
Uganda
Nigeria
Botswana
Zambia
Senegal

required of the visiting scholars, which left some unable to engage with the Women's Studies programs at their host institution. Robertson notes that in one particularly egregious instance, "the chair of the women's studies program just couldn't find time to even greet the speaker, which minimal standards of politeness demand, much less discuss the program with her. (Three of our participants head women's studies programs of their own.)" For the organizers of the 1991 "Status of Women's Studies in Africa" conference, these incidents demonstrated the negligence of the academy, particularly regarding the time and labor of African women.

Despite some troubling allegations of mistreatment, many participants expressed overall positivity about the conference. The conference itself seemed to have been successful; a write-up was provided in *ASA News*, noting that the conference papers were to be compiled and published in an anthology. Robertson closed her note optimistically, referencing the continuing efforts at exchange among host institutions and visiting scholars and expressing her hopes that the "long-term arrangements coming out of these tours prosper!"

2005: Aidoo-Snyder Prize, Penny Schwartz, Robertson Fund

The start of the new millennium saw renewed efforts on the part of the Women's Caucus to invest not only in scholarship and research by and about women, but to make the Annual Meetings more financially accessible to women, a point first underscored in the 1970 Resolutions on Women. Caucus members worked to establish funds and prizes aimed at highlighting women's scholarship during the first decade of the 2000s. These prizes encouraged the visibility of women's scholarship within the ASA, while also allowing scholars to attend and engage with others in the field at the Annual Meeting.

The first major undertaking in this direction, the Aidoo-Snyder Book Prize, was announced in the April 2005 edition of *ASA News*. According to the Caucus, the prize was to be awarded annually to an "outstanding book published by a woman that prioritizes African women's experiences." Named for Ghanaian novelist Ama Ata Aidoo and Margaret Snyder, Caucus member and the founding director of the United Nations



Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the award honors both scholarly monographs and literary arts in alternating years. The scholarly prize is awarded to Caucus members working in African studies, while the creative book prize is awarded to authors of "the best original creative, non-academic work by an African woman (or women) that prioritizes African women's experience... the committee invites nominations of novels, plays, short stories, and poetry from publishers or authors." This prize lends to increased and ongoing visibility for scholarship about women, while the \$500 remuneration for winners puts the Aidoo-Snyder on equal financial footing with other prizes awarded to ASA members.

The first scholarly prize was awarded to geographer Heidi Nast for her book *Concubines and Power: Five Hundred Years in a Northern Nigerian Palace*, published in 2005. In a review for *Africa Today* in 2006, Barbara Cooper noted how the book provides a sociospatial, methodologically unique approach that allows for a centering of non-elite in Nigerian history, including eunuchs and concubines. Closing her review, Cooper hailed the book as an "intriguing model for a more spatial approach to the reconstruction of history, and it offers a fresh and urgently needed rethinking of gender, power, and the state in Africa."

The first creative prize was awarded posthumously to Zimbabwean author Yvonne Vera, whose novel *The Stone Virgins* (2002) was honored the year after her sudden death in April 2005. The novel garnered acclaim, particularly among readers drawn in by Vera's lyrical prose and stark reckoning with gendered violence and trauma. In an obituary written for *The Guardian*, Helon Habila noted that Vera's work had been increasingly recognized in the years leading up to her death; "She

had won a string of international awards, including the Tucholski prize awarded by Swedish PEN (2004) and the Macmillan writer's prize for Africa, for *The Stone Virgins* in 2002. She was also the 1997 winner of the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best Novel, Africa region, for *Under the Tongue*." (Helon Habila, "Yvonne Vera." *The Guardian*, 27 April 2005) *The Stone Virgins* had been especially embraced by the reading public. Haliba highlighted how Vera interrogated "the unequal relationship between men and women before and after the Zimbabwean independence struggle, deliberately breaking thematic taboos and dealing unflinchingly, yet compassionately, with violent and traumatic themes, such as rape, incest, abortion and infanticide." A full list of the Book Prize winners can be found [on the Caucus website](#) — twenty-three works and counting, spanning scholarly disciplines and fields, works by poets, novelists, political scientists, historians, and geographers, all of which emphasize the lives, experiences, and thoughts of women.

Another prize was then established by the Women's Caucus to facilitate meeting travel for students participating as discussants or presenters. The [Penny Schwartz Student Travel Award](#) is open to students, contingent on their membership in the ASA and the Women's Caucus. Named after longtime Caucus member and anthropologist Nancy "Penny" Schwartz, the fund was established by Schwartz's friends with a modest bequest from the Schwartz estate. Past winners have included Abiola Victoria Ayodokun, PhD candidate in the Gender Studies program at the University of Ibadan, who presented two papers at the 2022 Annual Meeting, and Beth Ann Williams, whose work in Kenya and Tanzania emphasizes women in spiritual discourses in the second half of the twentieth century. Graduate student Halimat Titilola Somotan won the award in 2018, using funds to present her paper "The Transformation of Lagos and Contestations Over Belonging, 1946-1955" at the Annual Meeting. The creation of this prize underscores and helps fulfill some of the foundational motivations of the Women's Caucus: financial and academic investment in research conducted by and about women, opening space at the Annual Meeting for women.

The newest funding associated with the Women's Caucus and its members is the recently announced Robertson Fund, which will support the ASA Dependent

Care Grant, the Robertson Engagement Grant, and the Student Volunteer Attendance Stipends in perpetuity. Established in July 2025, the Fund will help fuel these important projects that will, in turn, ensure that ASA members can engage with the Annual Meeting at a variety of levels. The Fund will provide grants to parents to support childcare during the Annual Meeting, ensure that first-time attendee graduate students and junior faculty have the resources to attend and fully engage Annual Meetings, and encourage local student volunteers to assist with the Women's Caucus Marketplace. Like previous prizes and funds, the Robertson Fund further facilitates increasing equity within the ASA, lending to a more inclusive Association and increased accessibility and equality at Annual Meetings.

ASA Executive Director Alix Saba emphasized in the Fund press release how Robertson's contribution helps realize "a founding goal of the ASA Women's Caucus in 1970, as stated in the Resolutions on the Status of Women... the ASA is honored to invest in ASA families and achieve this longstanding objective through the Robertson Fund." As a founding member and critical actor in the history of the Women's Caucus, Robertson has provided resources that will help champion women's scholarship, honoring the generations of hard work undertaken by Women's Caucus members globally.

2015-2020

During the 2015 Annual Meeting, members of the Women's Caucus once again organized a panel on women in the ASA. Whereas the 1972 panel had served as a springboard for thinking about how to center women and women's scholarship in the ASA, the 2015 panel reflected on that goal and other work undertaken by organizers and Caucus members over nearly half a century.

The 2015 Women's Caucus Co-Conveners, Nwando Achebe and Judith Van Allen, submitted a proposal for Board approval of this session, outlining the significance of such an undertaking. As noted by the conveners, the work of the Women's Caucus was "to promote scholarship about women and gender within the ASA, to ensure the greater inclusion of African women in scholarship and organization, to promote an

active role for women at all levels of ASA leadership, and to maintain scholarly and activist links with women in Africa." Considering that 2015 was the 40th anniversary of the formalization of the organization, and the 45th year since members of the ASA had approved the Resolutions on Women, Van Allen and Achebe thought it timely to reflect on the resolutions and to "discuss the significant success of these goals over the last 40 years, and the impact that success has had on the organization itself." Both conveners were well situated to champion such a panel on women in the ASA; Van Allen had been part of the foundational discussions for the Women's Caucus in the 1970s, while Achebe had been a founding member of Obioma Nnaemeka's Association of African Women Scholars as a graduate student in 1995.

In its final iteration, the panel was called "The History of Women in the African Studies Association." Chaired by Van Allen and Achebe, it also included comments from Akosua Adomako Ampofo, Edna Bay, Iris Berger, Judith Byfield, Dorothy L. Hodgson, Gwendolyn Mikell, Mary Osirim, and Claire Robertson. Each participant reflected on their engagement with the Women's Caucus and their experiences within the organization and in African studies more broadly, contributing to a discussion about the place and accomplishment of women in academia over forty-plus years.

Some of the recollections shared by the 2015 panel members might have been familiar to Card or other participants who spoke at the Annual Meeting in 1972. Judith Byfield recalled starting her undergraduate career only four years after Dartmouth had begun allowing female students, and how Women's Studies, Native American Studies, and African/African American Studies

"ROBERTSON'S CONTRIBUTION HELPS REALIZE A FOUNDING GOAL OF THE ASA WOMEN'S CAUCUS IN 1970, AS STATED IN THE RESOLUTIONS ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN"

were commonly referred to as 'Victim's Studies' at the institution. During graduate school, she studied with Marcia Wright — incidentally, one of the scholars featured in the 1972 panel — although Wright worked primarily in East Africa, she was the only historian at Columbia studying women in Africa.

Byfield's comments at the 2015 panel spoke not only to the frustration of her early attempts to study African and women's history, but also to how the support of her advisors and colleagues helped encourage her scholarship as a graduate student and beyond. She notes that works by Women's Caucus members helped form a basis for her engagement with the field, drawing particular attention to how Claire Robertson, Jean Hay, and Iris Berger's books informed her trajectory as a scholar. Her engagement with women's studies and networking with other scholars with similar interests led to panel invitations and conference opportunities, including one organized by Wright at the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians, which featured Byfield along with Claire Robertson and Jean Hay. Overall, Byfield concluded, her experiences with the Women's Caucus and its members, which had started during her graduate career, had been incredibly affirming. Other members and participants shared similar sentiments about their time with the Caucus and the significance of such an organization within the ASA.

Like the 1972 panel, the one held in 2015 was meant to serve as an ongoing conversation about women in the ASA. The conveners invited not only significant leaders from within the organization and the ASA



more broadly but also sought to include “a much longer list of women who have been part of this history, asking them to come to the roundtable prepared to share in the creation of a collective memory and history.” From this collective discussion, the conveners hoped to jump-start a historical project on the history of the Caucus from the perspective of its leaders and members.

2015 was not the end of the hard work of the Women's Caucus: in the last ten years, its members have continued their commitment to equality within the ASA and the visibility of women's scholarship. During the global COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing lockdowns, Women's Caucus co-conveners Harmony O'Rourke and Anita Plummer, along with Beth Ann Williams and Tshepo Masango Chéry, compiled an analysis on the impacts of the virus on women in academia, along with recommendations for how department chairs should proceed in light of the unprecedented circumstances. The ASA Board of Directors adopted the statement and the Caucus's recommendations unanimously in Fall 2022, per an article in *ASA News*. Caucus members championed online events during these lockdowns, which facilitated further accessibility of the Annual Meeting, particularly for underfunded colleagues and students. The Caucus's statement notes how “As a community, we are not only grappling with the effects of the Covid pandemic on our personal lives; we are also trying to understand and manage the short and long-term implications of the pandemic on our professional lives. This statement outlines challenges widely felt by women, with an emphasis on women of color and the particular risks they face within the field and academic institutions.” The statement in its entirety and links to the recommendations put forth by the Caucus can be [found online today](#).

Today

The Caucus also continues to host its longstanding lecture series as part of the Women's Caucus Luncheon at the ASA Annual Meeting. Announcing the 2025 lecture, the Caucus drew attention to the event as “an annual celebration of community, open to every ASA Annual Meeting attendee... For the 50/55th Anniversary Celebration, we wish to underscore the inclusion of new and lapsed members, men and queer folks, and our most financially precarious colleagues.” The lecture has served to highlight important figures in the field, drawing attention to the interdisciplinary nature of scholarship on women and emphasizing Caucus members' investment

in the foundational goals of sharing women's scholarship. Naminata Diabate, Wanguri wa Goro, Loubna Serraj, Zukiswa Wanner, Fatimah Tuggar, Patricia McFadden, Minna Salami, and Alondra Nelson all presented at recent luncheons with lectures ranging from girlhood and feminist theories of gender to interrogations of hierarchy and power in academic space, among other topics. Some of the virtual talks, given during the height of global COVID-19 lockdowns, were streamed free to the public, underscoring the Caucus's commitment to academic accessibility and the sharing of knowledge. This year, in celebration of the 50/55th anniversary, the lecture will be given by two-time co-convenor and incoming ASA President Nwando Achebe. More information about her talk can be found [here](#). The Caucus is honoring this important milestone at the Annual Meeting in other ways, including a display about their history in the exhibition hall. Other projects are also in progress, including an oral history on the organization overseen by Jessica Reuther of Ball State University.

The resolutions that form the core tenets of the Women's Caucus'— investment in works by and about women in Africa, the disavowal of discrimination, and the facilitation of member participation at the Annual Meeting through things like childcare services, travel grants, and social support— are just as critical in 2025 as they were in 1970. Through the continued support of funds and resources established by members and supporters of women's studies, the Women's Caucus continues to pursue the goals of equality, opening spaces for women and scholarship about women within the African Studies Association.

As the organizers of the 1972 panel intended, this article is one piece of the dynamic conversation about women in the African Studies Association, meant to serve as an open door and an invitation into discussions about the rich history of this organization. The ASA Women's Caucus members have continued to pursue the organization's commitments for over half a century since Card met with the all-male Board to present the Resolutions on Women. Like the 1972 and 2015 panels, this anniversary year provides room for reflection and conversation. These events serve as an invitation to partake in the ongoing discussion of the organization: to share talking points, recollections, and stories of the Caucus, contributing to the collective memory and history of this important institution within the ASA.



A woman holds a protest sign that reads "A Woman's Place is in The Revolution" up at the Hands Off protest outside the Utah State Capitol in 2025.

ASA DEPENDENT CARE GRANT

**Realizes a founding goal of the
ASA Women's Caucus in 1970,
as stated in the Resolutions on
the Status of Women**

ASA ANNOUNCES THE

ROBERTSON FUND

ROBERTSON ENGAGEMENT GRANT

**Supports first-time Annual
Meeting attendee graduate
students and junior faculty**

STUDENT VOLUNTEER ATTENDANCE STIPENDS

**Engages students local
to the Annual Meeting
with the ASA Women's
Caucus**

**Established in 2025
through a generous gift from
Dr. Claire Robertson**

AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES THE ROBERTSON FUND

PISCATAWAY, New Jersey – The African Studies Association is pleased to announce the establishment of the Robertson Fund to support the ASA Dependent Care Grant, the Robertson Engagement Grant, and the Student Volunteer Attendance Stipends.

The Robertson Fund will provide ASA Dependent Care Grants to support dependent care for ASA members attending the Annual Meeting. The grant will realize a founding goal of the ASA Women's Caucus in 1970, as stated in the Resolutions on the Status of Women. The ASA is honored to invest in ASA families and achieve this longstanding objective through the Robertson Fund. The Robertson Engagement Grant will support first-time attendee graduate students and junior faculty Annual Meeting attendees starting in 2026. The Student Volunteer Attendance Stipends will engage local student volunteers who will support the ASA Women's Caucus Marketplace.

The Robertson Fund was made possible by a generous gift from Dr. Claire Robertson. Dr. Robertson is Professor Emerita of History and Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies at The Ohio State University, where she taught from 1984 to 2012. She received her MA from the University of Chicago in early modern European history and her Ph.D. in 1974 from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in African history. She has published over sixty articles and six books on women and slavery, African women and trade, education, socioeconomic structure, genital cutting, racism in the military, life histories, with particular reference to Ghana and Kenya, and Atlantic World histories, among others. She received the African Studies Association Best Book Award (formerly the Herskovits Book Prize) for *Sharing the Same Bowl: A Socioeconomic History of Women and Class in Accra, Ghana* (Indiana University Press, 1984), and the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association's Peggy Koppelman Book Award for *Transnational Sisterhood and Genital Cutting: Disputing U.S. Polemics* (University of Illinois Press, 2005), co-edited with Stanlie James. Dr. Robertson is a founding member of the ASA Women's Caucus and former co-convenor.

Please find complete information on the ASA Dependent Care Grant, the Robertson Engagement Grant, and the Student Volunteer Attendance Stipends on their respective pages on the ASA website. If you wish to support this work or honor Dr. Robertson and the Women's Caucus with a gift, the fund is available in the [ASA Donation form](#) or you may contact the ASA Executive Director for alternative gift information.

About the ASA

Established in 1957, the African Studies Association is the flagship membership organization devoted to enhancing the exchange of information about Africa. The ASA is based in the United States and aims to cultivate a better understanding of the continent, by providing access to path-breaking research and facilitating interdisciplinary exchanges with African scholars and institutions. The ASA Annual Meeting fosters global networks by convening people with scholarly and other interests in Africa, and ultimately broadens professional opportunities in the field. The organization publishes two leading journals on Africa, *African Studies Review* and *History in Africa* and promotes an informed understanding of Africa to educational institutions, the public, businesses, media, and other interested communities.



ASA MEMBER NEWS

Celebrating the incredible accomplishments throughout our global community.

Recent Member Publications

Redie Bere, The Nordic Africa Institute, *Supranational Institutions and Peacebuilding In Africa: The African Union and Regional Economic Communities* (Routledge, 2025).

Michelle Bumatay, Florida State University, *On Black Bandes Dessinées and Transcolonial Power* (Ohio State University Press, 2025).

Karine Coen-Sanchez, University of Ottawa, "Navigating Identity and Policy: The Afro-Caribbean Experience in Canada." *Social Science* 14 (3), 163 (2025).

Corrie Decker, UC Davis, *The Age of Sex: Custom, Law, and Ritual in Twentieth-Century East Africa* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2025).

Roy Dorone, Winston-Salem State University, *Biafra: A Military History*, (Indiana University Press, 2025).

Lucia Edafioka, Vanderbilt University, "The Indian Madras Cloth and Elite Self-Fashioning in the Bight of Biafra" *Journal* 18 (2025).

NJordache Ellapen, University of Rochester, *Indenture Aesthetics: Afro-Indian Femininities and the Queer Limits of South African Blackness* (Duke University Press, 2025).

Mohammed El-nasir Al-amin, Kwara State University, Nigeria, "A comparative Aesthetics: A perspective on Ilorin Waka and Japanese Waka" *African Association for Japanese Studies Journal* (2025).

James J. Fisher, Tufts University, *The Past's Haunting of the Present: Musical Memorializations of Patrice Lumumba and Thomas Sankara, West African Popular Culture, Music as Cultural Text - Performance Traditions in West Africa and its Diasporas* (Springer International, 2025).

Casey Golonski, University of New Hampshire, *God's Waiting Room: Racial Reckoning at Life's End* (Rutgers University Press, 2025).

Barry Hallen, Independent Scholar, *Yoruba Art and Aesthetics: Methodologies and Their Consequences* (London: Bloomsbury, 2025).

Andrew Heffernan, University of Ottawa, "Climate Disinformation is a National Security Threat. Canada and the US Must Confront it Together" Conference of Defence Associations institute, (2025).

Andrew Heffernan, University of Ottawa, "A Call for Wildlife Conservation Policy Evolution: Climate Change and Community-based Natural Resource Management." *Climate and Development*, (2025).

BIAFRA

A Military History



ROY DORON

Corey Holmes, Howard University, *Golf, Cigars, and Scotch: Balancing Fatherhood, Friendship, and Fine-Living* (WaveCloud Corporation, 2025).

Corey Holmes, Howard University, "The Unfinished Dream: MLK's Global Vision and Today's Black Struggle." *African Leadership Magazine*, (2025).

Kristi Kenyon, University of Winnipeg, "Lymphatic filariasis as an indigenous illness: the local context of a global disease." *SSM - Qualitative Research in Health* 8 (December 2025).

Martin Klein, University of Toronto, with **Stephen Rockel**, *Life Histories of Enslaved Africans and their Descendants in Africa* (Ohio University Press, expected October 2025).

Corinne Kratz, Emory University, *Rhetorics of Value: Exhibition Design and Communication in Museums and Beyond* (Duke University Press, 2025).

Brian Kwoba, University of Memphis, *Hubert Harrison: Forbidden Genius of Black Radicalism* (UNC Press, 2025).

Seulgie Lim, Bates College, "Redefining Gender Equality: A Senegalese Conversation with Islam". *Africa Spectrum*, 60(2), 287-308, (2025).

Lokangaka Losambe, University of Vermont, *The Routledge Handbook of the New African Diasporic Literature*, 1st Edition (Routledge, 2024).

Asad El Malik, University of Witwatersrand, *Find Home Again: My Journey from the United States to South Africa* (2024).

Babacar Mbaye, Kent State University, *Music as Cultural Text: Performance Traditions in West Africa and Its Diaspora* (Springer Nature, 2025).

Hyacinth Mgbenkemdi, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, "State/Trait Anxiety as a predictor of Depression among Retired Civil Servants." Nigerian Psychological Association. 2025. With Eze Ogonnia, Ufoma Douglas, Paschaline Amarachi Aneke, Clara Ayuk.

James Mittelman, American University, "The decline of research freedom and what to do about it". *Global Change, Peace & Security*, 36(2), 193-198 (2025).



Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, University of Calgary, *Beyond the Coloniality of Internationalism: Reworlding the World from the Global South* (CODESRIA Book Series, 2024).

Sheila Petty, University of Regina, *Habiba Djahnine: Memory Bearer* (Edinburgh University Press, 2025).

Sheila Petty, University of Regina, co-edited *African Film Festivals and Transnational Flows of Living Cultural Heritage* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2025).

Joan Ricart-Huguet, Loyola University Maryland, "Senegal: Between Democratic Consolidation and Political Instability." *African Affairs*, (2025).

Joan Ricart-Huguet, Loyola University Maryland, "Endogenous Colonial Borders: Precolonial States and Geography in the Partition of Africa." *American Political Science Review*, 119 (1) (2025).

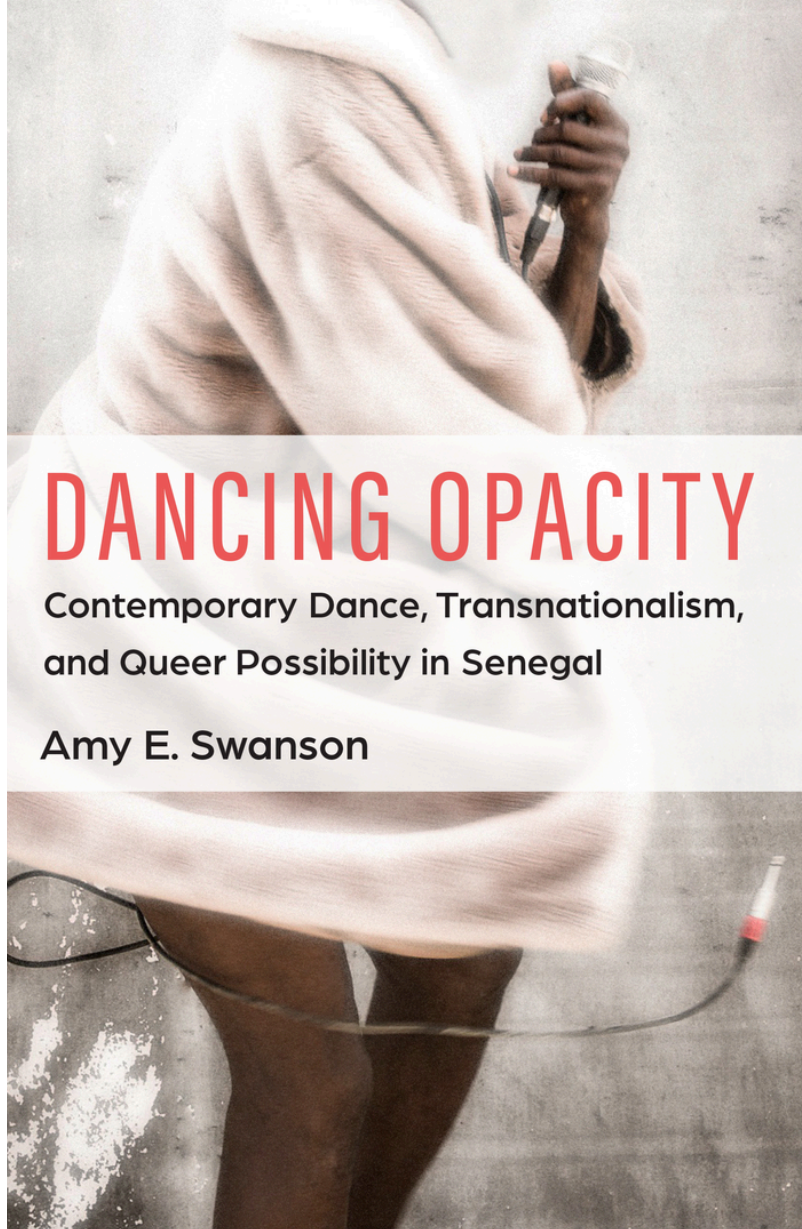
Ayo Sekai, Universal Write Publications, *The Little Black Book: Tools For Culturally Grounded Research* (Universal Write Publications, 2025).

Steffan Spencer, Clark Atlanta University, *The Ge'ez Book of the Trinity: A Fifteenth-Century Homily from Monastic Ethiopia* (Palgrave MacMillan, expected November 2025).

Amy Swanson, University of Oregon, *Dancing Opacity: Contemporary Dance, Transnationalism, and Queer Possibility in Senegal* (University of Michigan Press, 2025).

Ernestina Wiafe (Ed.), Kansas State University, "Exploring African Education, Innovative Solutions, and Diverse Perspectives for a Globally Competent Citizenry," *Educational Considerations* Vol. 50: No. 3 (2025).

Scott Youngstedt, Saginaw State University, *Negotiating Mistrust: Patients and Healers Across Traditional, Islamic, and Biomedical Health Sectors of Niger* (University of Pennsylvania Press, Expected 2026).



Member Announcements

Oluwatobiloba Adewunmi's, University of Illinois, research team was awarded a \$25,000 Meaning Making Research Initiative grant by CODESIRA for their project titled "Hydro Power, S(hr)inking States? Politics of Renewable Energy, Just Transitions and Urban Transformations in the Lake Chad Region".

Dotun Ayobade, Northwestern University, was promoted to Associate Professor of Performance Studies and Black Studies at Northwestern University.

Jean Borgatti, Clark University, is overseeing an exhibition on African Art at the Fitchburg Art Museum until March 2026.

Jean Borgatti, Clark University, has been awarded a writing fellowship at Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, Germany.

Luke Boyle, Arizona State University, was recently awarded the ACLS/Mellon Dissertation Innovation Fellowship for PhD research on participatory research exploring urban futures from the margins of African cities.

Joyce De-Graft Acquah, University of Cape Coast, was awarded the Journal of International Women's Studies Fellowship, 2025

Joyce De-Graft Acquah, University of Cape Coast, received the International Peace Research Association Foundation Peace Research Grant, 2024-2025.

Joyce De-Graft Acquah, University of Cape Coast, was promoted to Senior Resrach Fellow at the Department of Peace Studies.

Laura DeLuca, University of Colorado-Boulder, was selected to Director the Global Seminar Bali: Social Innovation, Sustainability and Social Entrepreneurship.

Mohammed El-nasir Al-amin, Kwara State University, successfully defended their dissertation.

Mohammed El-nasir Al-amin, Kwara State University, won the best International presentation at the International College of Humanities Conference for "Gendered performance Aesthetics and Epistemic features in Ilorin Oral Arts: Advancing Inclusive Growth through Cultural Resilience."



Amanda Grant, University of Wisconsin-Madison, was awarded the national Beinecke Scholarship.

Susan Iseyen, Princeton University, has been selected as a Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies (PIIRS) Graduate Fellow and will receive a dissertation fellowship for the academic year 2025-26.

Mubanga Kalimamukwento, University of Minnesota Twin Cities, won the Cheryl A. Wall Graduate Student Paper Prize (2025) for "Ukazi: An autoethnography of Zambian Girlhood and Womanhood" - Black Women's Studies Association.

Maren Larsen, University of Basel, Worlding Home: An Urban Ethnography of Peacekeeping Camps in Goma, DRC (Indiana University Press, 2025).



Yao Lu, University of California Davis, received the 2025 American Sociological Association Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant.

Hyacinth Ejike Mgbenkemdi, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, was promoted to Professor of Clinical Psychology and appointed Head of Department of Psychology.

Hyacinth Ejike Mgbenkemdi, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, was appointed as the Member Reconstitution of Calendar Editorial Board and Member Reconstitution of Ceremonial Committee.

Innocent Ngulube, University of Malawi, was awarded the Cadbury Fellowship.

Emmanuelle Chimnonyerem Okorafor, University of California, Riverside, advanced to candidacy.

Emmanuelle Chimnonyerem Okorafor's, University of California, Riverside, first podcast was recorded at the University of Madison, Wisconsin in April 2025 by the Tejumola Olaniyan Reading Group and foundation led by Dr. Catherine Cole and will be aired at the ASA 2025 conference.

Nnenna Onyima successfully defended her dissertation.

Nnenna Onyima, University of Virginia/Middlebury College, successfully defended her dissertation.

Nnenna Onyima, University of Virginia/Middlebury College, was hired to the position of Assistant Professor of French and Francophone Studies at Middlebury College.

Elizabeth Perrill, UNC Greensboro, has been named the Smart-Tillman Distinguished Professor in Art History.

Elizabeth Perrill, UNC Greensboro, recently curated the iNgqikithi yokuPhica / Weaving Meanings: South African Telephone Wire Art from South Africa at the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico, which is up until March 2026.

David Riep, Colorado State University, was named the Director of the Africa Center at Colorado State University, accompanying his promotion to Professor.

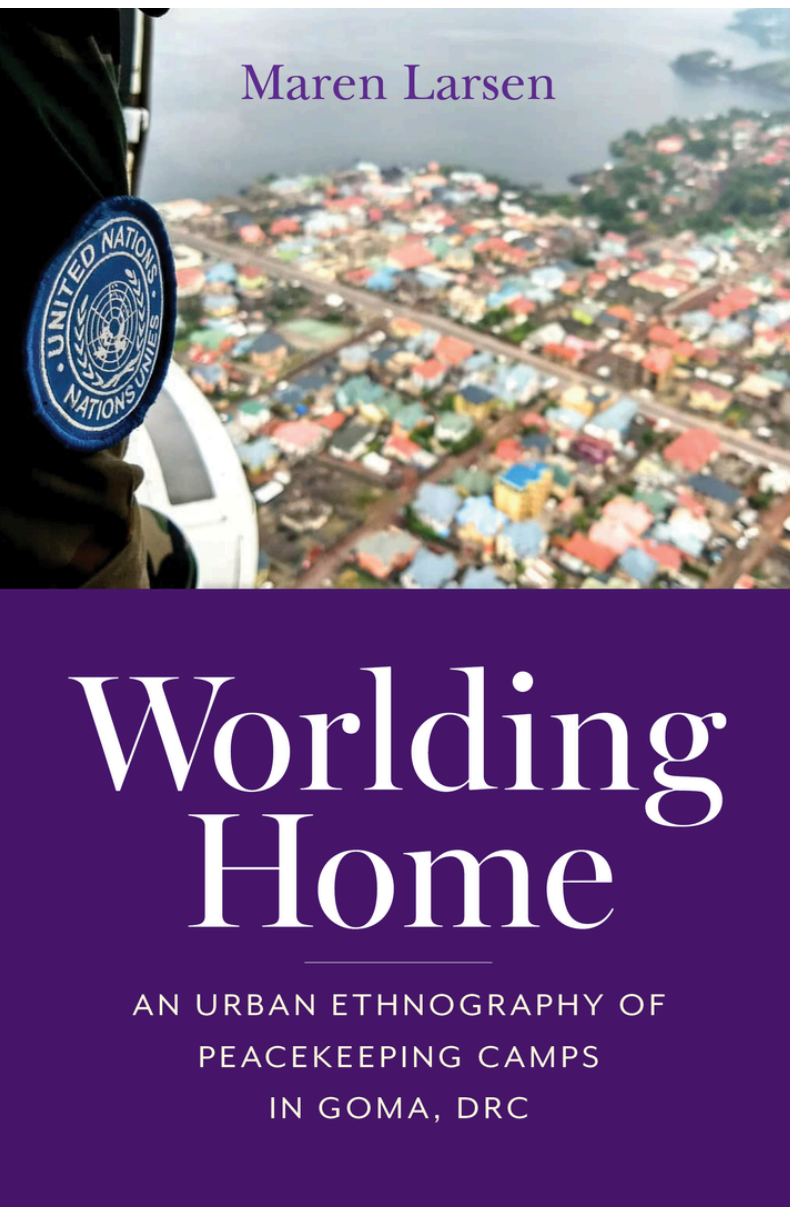
Gerald Rizzo and the **Afriterrra Cartographic Library** recently identified an original hand drawn map from the Capuchin mission (circa- 1645) marking the interior location of "Regno di Dongo".

Albert Sharra, University of Witwatersrand, has been appointed as an Honorary Fellow by the University of Edinburgh's Centre of African Studies.

Ayantü Tibeso, UCLA, defended her dissertation, "Jirra: Oromo Knowledge-Making Through a Generational Lens."

Yekatit Tsehayu, University of Florida, successfully defended their dissertation, "Women In Islamic Revivalist Movements: Yetemarech Ethiopian Muslim as Agents of Change."

Ernestina Wiafe, Kansas State University, received the Graduate Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities, and Discovery (RSCAD) Grant.





FILM & MEDIA

#ASA2025

ASA FILM & MEDIA ROOM: M105 (Marquis Level)

ASA KEYNOTE:

Sembène-Kelani Film Prize Screening and Q&A

The Fisherman, directed by Zoey Martinson

12:00 - 3:15pm

Saturday, Nov. 22, 2025

M108 (Marquis Level)



VII-O-10 & VIII-K-32 The Man Died: Screening & Director Discussion

with Awam Amkpa

Part I, Film Screening

1:30 - 3:15pm, Friday, Nov. 21

Part II, Film Discussion

3:45 - 5:30pm, Friday, Nov. 21

SESSIONS:



IV-AN-13 A Stain of Red: From First Period to Advocacy

3:45 - 5:30pm, Thursday, Nov. 20



VI-T-10 The Waste Commons: New Provocations of Work in the African Anthropocene

10:15am - 12:00pm, Thursday, Nov. 20



X-O-15 Sonic Intimacies of the Swahili Coast

10:15 - 12:00pm, Saturday, Nov. 22



XI-N-22 & XII-N-23 En Route to Europe, We Burn or Die: Screening & Director Discussion with Nouredine Jebnoun

Part I, Film Screening

1:30 - 3:15pm, Saturday, Nov. 22

Part II, Film Discussion

3:45 - 5:30pm, Saturday, Nov. 22

STATE OF THE ASSOCIATION

During the 2025 Spring Board Meeting, the ASA Board of Directors voted on the action items listed below. The 2025 board members are:

Elizabeth Schmidt, *President*
Nwando Achebe, *Vice President*
Gretchen Bauer, *Past President*
Timothy Longman, *Treasurer*
Rachel Jean-Baptiste, *Member*
Mucha Musemwa, *Member*
J. Jarpa Dawuni, *Member*
Jacqueline-Bethel Tchouta Mougoué, *Member*
Claudia Gastrow, *Member*
Jennifer Hart, *Member*
Anita Plummer, *Member*
Lisa Lindsay, *Member*
James Yékú, *Member*
Seulgie Lim, *Emerging Scholars Representative*

2025 Board Decisions

- The ASA membership passed the 2025 ASA Bylaws in a referendum with a 95.9% vote in favor.
- The Board of Directors voted to co-sign the ACLS Statement Regarding the White House Review of Smithsonian Institution Museums.
- The Executive Committee approved the establishment of the Robertson Fund.
- The Board of Directors voted to establish a Directors Fund. The first funded program will be professional development stipends for junior faculty.
- The Executive Committee approved the establishment of the ASA Christie and Chinua Achebe Fund.



Ghana in Uncertain Times

5th Ghana Studies Association
Triennial Conference

Conference Dates

**July 22–24,
2026**

Location

**Kwame Nkrumah University of
Science and Technology, Kumasi**

CFP Submission Deadline

1 December 2025

Registration Fees

Register in Advance

GSA Member Regular	\$100
GSA Member Student	\$30
Non-Member Regular	\$120
Non-Member Student	\$40
1 Day Pass	\$35
1 Day Pass Student	\$10

Call for Proposals

This year's interdisciplinary gathering of local and international students and scholars of Ghana's past and present will engage a wide range of issues related to the theme, "Ghana in Uncertain Times." Between the last GSA Triennial Conference in Tamale and now, the country, and indeed the world, has experienced significant transformations with uncertain ramifications for government and the public alike. At the same time, Ghanaians have been conceptualizing and managing uncertainty for decades, if not centuries. The conference provides an opportunity for scholars of Ghana to wrestle with uncertainties past and present, and to suggest how Ghana and Ghanaians chart paths through the uncertainties of the future.

Submissions may be in any discipline or area of study, and may be submitted by established scholars, early career faculty, graduate students, and independent scholars and professionals.

Proposals can be in the form of:

(1) Individual papers, (2) Pre-constituted panels, (3) Roundtables, (4) Special sessions and workshops, or (5) Films (documentaries, short-films, features), digital media, artworks, audio-visual presentations or performances.

Submissions must include title(s), abstract (200 words), presenter name(s), email, affiliation(s), and short bios (no more than four sentences). Please indicate if your presentation will be in-person or virtual.

Send proposals to GSATriennial2026@gmail.com with the subject line "Triennial 2026," no later than 1 November 2025. A notice on the status of all proposals will be sent in February of 2026.

Questions?

GSATriennial2026@gmail.com

More Information

Visit us at <http://ghanastudies.org>



(VI-U-17) V. Y. MUDIMBE: A FOUNDATIONAL AND TRANSFORMATIVE HISTORICO- RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHICAL MIND— A KONGO ACADEMY TRIBUTE

68TH ASA ANNUAL MEETING, ATLANTA, GA

FRIDAY, NOV. 21, 10:15 AM – 12:00 PM

This session commemorates Professor Mudimbe's seminal contributions to African intellectual history and offers a critical examination of the enduring impact of his thought on African studies, while also honoring his legacy as a distinguished humanist scholar.

PRESENTERS:

Adrien N. Ngudiankama, MPhil (King's College) and PhD in the Sociology of Health (Institute of Education, University of London), is a scholar of religion, peacebuilding, and migration in Central Africa and African diasporic communities. He is the founder of Kongo Academy, the Baptist chaplain at George Washington University, and the North American representative of the Church of Christ in Congo; his recent works include *Kimbanguism 100 Years On* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2023) as well as numerous scholarly articles and webinars on Central African religions and epistemologies.

André Siamundele, Lincoln University, is a scholar of Francophone and Postcolonial studies whose interdisciplinary research spans Afro-Francophone literature, culture, history, and politics, and who has published extensively on questions of identity in Africa and the Diaspora while contributing to the development of international and global studies programs, study abroad initiatives, and world languages pedagogy.

Salikoko S. Mufwene, Edward Carson Waller Distinguished Service Professor, University of Chicago, is a native of DRC. His research area is evolutionary linguistics, focused on the phylogenetic emergence of languages and language speciation, especially the emergence of creoles and other cases of the indigenization of European languages in the colonies, as well as language vitality. He has published extensively. He is a fellow of the Linguistic Society of America, the American Philosophical Society, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and held the Chaire annuelle Mondes francophones at the Collège de France, 2023-24.

Isidore Ndaywel è Nziem, is a distinguished Congolese historian and linguist, renowned for *L'histoire générale du Congo: De l'héritage ancien à la République démocratique*, who has taught at leading universities across Congo, France, Canada, and Brazzaville, held prominent positions including commissioner-general of the 14th Francophone Summit and honorary director of the National Library of the DRC, and has maintained long-standing scholarly collaborations with V. Y. Mudimbe.

JOIN KONGO ACADEMY IN MYASA

AND READ MORE AT KONGOACADEMY.ORG/



Sports Africa

ASA & SPORTSAFRICA

TRIVIA NIGHT

Wednesday
Nov. 19
at
6:00 PM

**ATLANTA MARRIOTT
MARQUIS**

International 1/2

Food, Drinks, & Trivia
following the Emerging Scholars
Network PIPES Workshop

PRIZES AWAIT OUR TOP TEAMS!

Registration suggested at africanstudies.org