

Archives of Post-Independence Africa and its Diaspora

Introduction

Seventy participants from Europe, North America, and the African continent gathered on Gorée Island for the "*Archives of Post-Independence Africa and its Diaspora*", 20-23 June 2012. Located off the coast of Dakar, Gorée Island is best known for its infamous role in the Atlantic slave trade, underscoring the Diasporic theme of the conference. The participants were so immersed in the proceedings that power outages, though limiting, did not diminish the enthusiasm and engagement of the participants.¹

This academic conference was the outcome of collaborative efforts over a three-year period. Originally launched by Peter J. Bloom and Stephan F. Miescher as co-directors of the University of California (UC) African Studies Multicampus Research Group (MRG), this initiative grew out of a series of meetings in Dakar, Berkeley, Leiden, and Rabat. The project soon became a truly collaborative endeavor once we began working directly with the Center for African Studies at UC-Berkeley (CAS), the African Studies Centre, Leiden (ASC), CODESRIA, and

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the International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam (IISH). Our various collaborators included, Ebrima Sall, Bernard Mumpasi Lututala, and Olivier Sagna of CODESRIA; Percy Hintzen of CAS at UC Berkeley; Benjamin Soares, Mirjam de Bruijn, and Jos Damen of the ASC; and Stefano Bellucci of the IISH.²

Thanks to this extended series of meetings and encounters, we were able to build an interdisciplinary and transnational scholarly network culminating in the conference. A call for papers was circulated in September 2011, and the themes continued to develop at a roundtable discussion at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association in San Francisco, November 2011, and the CODESRIA 13th General Assembly in Rabat, Morocco, December 2011. In Rabat, we organized two panels focused on "Archival Practices" and "Theorizing the Archive" in Afri-

ca and the Diaspora. The insights from these papers along with the commentary by the commentators and respondents expanded the themes for the Gorée Island conference. These themes included Archival Absences and Surrogate Collections of the African State, Performing the Archive, Post-Independence Media Formations, Spatialization of Art and the Archive, and Administering the Archive. The discussion to follow provides a brief overview of how conference participants engaged with these themes at Gorée Island.

Archival Absences

In the aftermath of independence, African states were charged with administering the colonial archive within the emerging context of nation building.³ Intermittent social, political, and economic crises militated against responsible custodianship. By the 1970s, an array of collections had emerged and supplanted the primacy of national archives. While some well-funded government agencies established their own collections, non-governmental organizations, such as Oxfam, created archives that continue to serve as "surrogates of the state" (Jennings 2008). In

addition, scholars turned to archival holdings of multinational corporations whose collections frequently straddle the colonial and the postcolonial period. Private libraries and foundations created resource centers, several of which are located in Europe and North America, but others exist on the African continent, particularly important Arabic manuscript collections in Timbuktu (Jeppie and Diagne 2008).

Françoise Blum (CNRS, France) and Fabrice Melka's (CNRS) approach to the African archives of French unions draws on their examination of the correspondence of Gérard Espéret with various interlocutors in Africa. Espéret was head of the Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens (CFTC) [French Confederation of Christian workers], which became the Confédération française démocratique du travail (CFDT) in 1964. Blum and Melka addressed the *franco-african* quality of political activism in the context of unionization as a universal democratic right through their work as purveyors of the collection, known as the Fonds Maurice Gastaud, which is held at the French Confédération générale du travail (CGT) in Paris.⁴ Describing their working methods with a wide array of documents they focused on the nature and quality of correspondence as an important archival source in understanding the foundational political debates and figures for the late colonial and post-independence era in Africa.

These records of French labor unions emphasize how European corporate and national archival collections often serve as an important source for social history. Bianca Murillo (Willamette University, USA) presented aspects of her extensive research from the Unilever archive at Port Sunlight in the United Kingdom. This archive includes the files of the United Africa Company (UAC), one of the major European merchant companies in former British Africa. Jean Rahier (Florida International University, USA) examined the archives of colonial ephemera related to mixed racial identity in the Belgian Congo by reference to the history of the *Bulletin de l'Union des Femmes Coloniales* among other publications housed at the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Tervuren and the Catholic University of Louvain, both in Belgium. Toby Warner (UCLA, USA) analyzed the pre-history of the French colonial archive

by unearthing the forgotten travel notebooks of David Boilat, a mid-nineteenth-century Senegalese métis intellectual, now held at the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris. Further, the remarkable history of social work in South Africa, as reflected in the African and European settler colonial archives located at the University of Witwatersrand, was described by its lead archivist, Gabrielle Mohale (University of Witwatersrand, South Africa). She emphasized the nature of social work conceptions of identity and subjectivity.

Two additional papers within this context of archival absences examined the context for marginalia and rumor in Islamic archives in West Africa. Susana Molins Lliteras (University of Cape Town, South Africa) spoke about the Fondo Ka'ti Library, a private collection under threat by radical Islamic rebels in northern Mali at the time of the conference.⁵ Her contribution provided an analysis of marginalia that contains a family genealogy in a fifteenth-century Qu'ranic manuscript. Erin Pettigrew (Stanford University, USA), whose paper explored the context for rumor, focused on accusations of bloodsucking or organ-eating derived from colonial documents that she has consulted in the National Archives of Senegal and Mauritania. She described how access to archives, particularly family-managed libraries in Nouakchott along with her work with healers, led to an examination of how the secrets implied by the history of divination practices are handed on to practitioners. These papers examine alternative traces within traditional archives.

Similarly, Noémi Tousignant, John Mantou, and Guillaume Lachenal (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom, and Université Paris Diderot, France) explored questions of how to read archives "along the grain" following their logic of inscription in Ann Laura Stoler's (2009) words, when the grain appears to have crumbled. They presented three case studies about the histories and archival sites of medical science and care in Senegal, Cameroon, and Nigeria and examined traces created by scientific, medical and caring practices. These objects and imprints were once animated by the short-term memory of resident staff that enabling these institutions to function. The recovery of traces

makes possible certain kinds of stories about institutions, knowledge, and care.

The effect of changing institutional practices in archival settings was described by Brenton Maart (University of Cape Town, South Africa) in his discussion on the transfer of government documents as part cultural policies in post-apartheid South Africa. In the Eastern Cape, the Mthala provincial archive was reassigned as one of the three sites of the Nelson Mandela Museum. Maart lamented the near complete disintegration of this archive, as it was an important repository from the colonial period documenting the history of ideological oppression that wrenched apart the Xhosa community. Instances of the destruction of archives in the figure of absence became an important source of discussion throughout the conference given the frequently uneven, or non-existent, archival holdings on the continent leading researchers to seek out types of sources but also alternative methods.

Performing the Archive

Another site of inquiry under discussion included the archival context for performance on the African continent. As a living archive equally spoken and performed, it is defined by its relevance and immediacy in creating a space for reception and social action.⁶ A series of presentations that addressed the history of post-independence Pan-African festivals began with Dominique Malaquais's (CNRS) discussion of the initial stages of a multimedia digital archiving project on the Pan-African festivals of the 1960s and 1970s. The initiative includes the First World Festival of Negro Arts (*FESMAN*) staged in Dakar in 1966; the First Pan African Festival (*PANAF*) held in Algiers in 1969; Zaire '74 held in Kinshasa; and the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (*FESTAC*) held in Lagos in 1977. The project promises to make archival sources available through web platforms hosted by the South African-based *Chimurenga Magazine*, along with a number of exhibitions, colloquiums, and publications.⁷ In addition, Malaquais screened the film, *The First World Festival of Negro Arts* (dir. William Greaves, 1966, 40'), enriched by comments from Manthia Diawara (NYU, USA) about the depicted cultural style and its political implications of the era.

This subsequent discussion was supplemented by Diawara's keynote about recent interviews for his film project on the history of the political party *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (RDA).

In his presentation about the 1969 Pan-African Cultural Festival in Algiers, Sam Anderson (UCLA, USA) thematized the way in which various events became a source for postcolonial cultural politics both in Africa and within a broader transnational context. Brian Quinn (UCLA) described the 1966 *First World Festival of Negro Arts* in Dakar by reference to theatrical presentations at the event itself. In particular, he pointed to Seydou Badian's adaptation of the Shaka figure in "La mort de Chaka" as a starting point for understanding symbolic complexities implied by the transfer of cultural power through an exploration of the colonial archive.

The resonance of the colonial archive for the post-independence Panafrikan festivals was powerfully analyzed by Tamara Levitz (UCLA) in her presentation of musical stylizations at the 1931 Colonial Exhibition in Paris (see also Levitz 2006). For Levitz, the colonial exhibitions were part of an emerging sonorous atlas. It became a source for releasing not only recorded music, but the presence of voices and an expanding context for storytelling that has enabled continuities with Pan-African festivals since the 1960s. In a complementary fashion, Sheron Wray's (UC Irvine, USA) examination of dance improvisation accented the historically intertwined nature of West African performance traditions as a series of bodily techniques embodied by various kinds of African American dance performance that is part of her own performance practice.⁸ It is the intersection between music and dance as featured in a festival setting that foregrounds how the staging of performance has become an integral part of the post-independence African state.

Three papers focused on the role of song and music as an essential dimension to state power. Nancy Masasabi (Maseno University, Kenya) presented her work on the significance of patriotic song in Kenya after the death of Jomo Kenyatta. She described how these songs functioned as a resource for nation building during Daniel Arap Moi's presidency, particularly their relationship

to his preoccupation with the Nyayo philosophy of peace, love, and unity to rule. By distinguishing between "art" music and "traditional" performance, Masasabi described how ethnic identities have been archived as part of patriotic songs in the service of nation building.

In a similar manner, Nate Plageman (Wake Forest University, USA) focused on Ghanaian highlife as a means of understanding Ghanaian history and the stakes of creating an online archive that seeks to catalogue this important musical legacy. By foregrounding the prominence of highlife from the 1950s to the 1970s, this archive could offer a corrective to the standard narrative of Ghana's post-independence history privileging political events. Preservation loomed large in Plageman's discussion, while also pointing to methodological questions of how to make a vanishing source accessible to a wider public.⁹ Finally, the paper by Mhoze Chikwero (University of California, Santa Barbara, USA) addressed how an examination of songs may form an archive to reconstruct grievances and aspirations of colonized people in South Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe). In Zimbabwe, songs do not only form a bridge between the first and the second *Chimurenga* (resistance to colonial conquest and liberation struggle) but also offer a "usable past" for nation building. The notion of usable pasts *pace* Ranger (1976) was picked up on by Martin Mourre (Université de Montréal, Canada) who argued for the archival resonance of Thiaroye, the site of the 1944 massacre of Senegalese troops outside of Dakar (Senegal), by presenting various artistic expressions of this historical event in Senegalese high schools and other venues to foreground a context for a contemporary "ethnographic reception" among local audiences.

Post-Independence Media Formations

In the independence era, film, print, and radio were conceived as an extension of state power. Several papers examined the multi-directional quality of post-independence media challenging established practices of "mass media." New digital techniques in particular may reposition the relationship between intellectual property rights holders and citizens. Recent scholarship has begun to examine the context for new media in Africa (De Brui-

jnet et al. 2009; Burrell 2012), given the ubiquity of mobile communication devices and the Internet, while also validating the persistence of radio (Gunner et al. 2011), as well as the contemporary resonance of late colonial and early independence African film and radio (see Bloom et al. forthcoming).

From this standpoint, Érika Nimis (Université du Québec, Montréal, Canada) addressed the stakes of digital access. She demonstrated how digitization has allowed for increasing accessibility, along with forms of re-appropriation by a new generation of contemporary African photographers from South Africa, Algeria, and D.R. Congo. In his presentation, Olusola Isola (University of Ibadan, Nigeria) celebrated the introduction of new digital technologies, particularly social media, as a more democratic form of access allied with the changing structure of ownership in Nigeria. Social and new interactive media, he argued, limits government intervention. He asserted that new media, given its presence on the Internet, may be a more accountable custodian of public archives than a state apparatus that merely ignores the archive unless it is seen to be a political liability.

Prisca-Nadège Bibila-N'Kouma (Centre d'Études et de Recherche sur les Analyses et Politiques Économiques, Congo-Brazzaville) contributed to an understanding of the utility of alternative media archives through her examination of mobile phones as a privileged site of communication in Brazzaville, enabling new kinds of virtual archives. Her discussion, among others, supported the argument that disarray in a number of African archival settings may be addressed through new communication technologies that circumvent state control.

Another example of how political prerogatives over determine questions of preservation and access was addressed by Jennifer Blaylock (University of California, Berkeley, USA) in a presentation that described the deteriorating state of the 16mm film archive of the Ghana Information Services Department. Politically sensitive films remain hidden in this archive. Such films, marked with an "X," denote that they were not for public viewing. In her discussion of one of these films, *Freedom for Ghana* (dir. Sean Graham, 1957), she explores the

logic of the archive and censorship restrictions relative to successive government administrations.

By the same token, Francis Fogue (University of Ngaoundere, Cameroon) presented a fascinating account of his archival research at Radio Garouain in Northern Cameroon, established in 1958, and provided insight into this Fulani region along with attendant national political tensions. In the 1980s, rivalries between President Biya and his predecessor, Ahmadou Ahidjo, resulted in the destruction of archival holdings at Radio Garouain. Some documents remain in private collections, allowing for contemporary reconstructions.

Within the realm of popular sports, Susann Baller (University of Basel, Switzerland) examined the history of football (i.e., soccer) in Senegal focusing on an archive of match reports. This type of research addresses the nature of informal and formal archives as a widely popular public attraction, which has contributed, she argued, to the professionalization of football. Sporting records as an archival context lead us to reconsider the relationship between popular attractions and the significance of the archive. These contributions, along with Ferdinand de Jong's (University of East Anglia, United Kingdom) paper on the negative archive of Cheikh Amada Bamba as a postcolonial saint in Senegal, reveal how film and social media are captive to government prerogative. It is the private sphere, including the NGO sector, which may be the most reliable source for reawakening an archival consciousness.

Spatialization of Art and the Archive

In the independence era, public monuments, temples, cemeteries, and other edifices have served as important sites of nationhood and state power that speak to a reterritorialization of the public sphere. The broader context of monumentalizing the state addresses the effect of branding and creating a context for tourism both within Africa and from without. Several papers accented how public heritage sites function as selective archives of memory, which aestheticize and assert contested narratives allied with national identity. In her keynote address, Sokhna Guèye (IFAN, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegal) examined monuments on

Gorée Island as a commemoration of the Atlantic slave trade. Taking as examples the well-known Maison des Esclaves (House of Slaves) and the Musée de la Femme Henriette Bathily with its emphasis on the role of the *signares*, Gueye pointed to the creation of a tourist imaginary organized in relation to the history of the Atlantic slave trade.

In similar fashion, Melanie Boehi (University of Basel, Switzerland) connected two territorial landmarks as part of a differential tourist imagery: the Adderly Street flower market and the Kirstenbosch National Botanic Garden that became monuments constitutive of identity in Cape Town, South Africa. While tourist brochures have celebrated the "colored" female sellers of the Adderly Street flower market, Boehi showed how flower sellers were subjected to apartheid policies. Moreover, these women have been engaged in the production of their own history by declaring their market a heritage site. Boehi suggested that floral spaces can be studied as material manifestations of the past and may serve as archives of the urban sphere.

Monuments such as Heroes Acres in Harare, Zimbabwe, completed in 1996 to commemorate the *Chimurenga* struggle against settler colonialism, have served as sites of contestation. As Norah Makoni (University of Science and Technology Bulawayo, Zimbabwe) explained, controversy about the monument emerged because of its partisan nature, given that it mainly served as burial grounds for men, and a few women, closely affiliated with the ruling ZANU PF party. As a result, this national shrine has polarized the collective memory and national identity of Zimbabweans. Along a similar trajectory, Arsène Elongo (Université Marien Ngouabi, Congo-Brazzaville), described the legacy of French colonial and postcolonial Congolese national monuments of various figures that provide an ideological context as living archive directly moored to contemporary political realities. A comparative discussion of King Sobhuza II Memorial Park in the kingdom of Swaziland and the Mungo Reunification Bridge in Cameroon by Nicodemus Fru Awasom (University of Swaziland, Swaziland) brought to light founding national figures and unresolved ethnic conflict.

In Awasom's analysis of King Sobhuza's statue, he described the regal predators included by his side, that of a bull and lion, which serve to reinforce his role as the symbolic father and, nearly in the sphere of the uncanny, the biological parent of the nation. Awasom contrasted the centrality of Sobhuza's role as founder of the nation with the collapse of the Cameroonian Mungo Reunification Bridge in 2004 following the explosion of a fuel tanker. The bridge was first constructed in 1969 to commemorate the unification between French Northern and British Southern Cameroons. Its current state of disrepair, Awasom contended, demonstrates how independent Cameroon continues to be contested by rival communities (see Awasom 2000). Finally, the spatialization of politics through national monuments, tourist attractions, and the refashioning of communities are shown to serve political narratives moored to state power.

Physical Archives

There has been a growing need to preserve local collections across the African continent. These may include archives of professional organizations, genealogical imagery, personal photo albums and manuscripts (tin-trunk literacy), customary regalia and court records, vinyl records and other recording formats.¹⁰

In the Zambian National Archives, as Marja Hinfelfaar (National Archive of Zambia) and Miles Larmer (University of Sheffield, United Kingdom) explained, systematic record collection and archiving was interrupted with the introduction of the one-party state, under the United National Independence Party (UNIP), in 1972. Since then, documents from ministries have only been collected haphazardly, kept in a transit facility, and remain unavailable to researchers. Historians of postcolonial Zambia have been forced to become archivists by creating their own archives of private papers by former politicians, other autobiographical writings, and most prominently the UNIP archive.¹¹ Such initiatives, laudable as they are, are mainly driven by the research interests of foreign scholars, and may not address the concerns of Zambians seeking to learn about their own history.

A similar case was presented by Olutayo Adesina (University of Ibadan, Nigeria). Since the 1970s, the National Archives of Nigeria has experienced a continuing decline due to lack of funding and poor management. This situation has led to an officially approved commercialization project to generate funds for maintaining the institution. Moreover, the commercialization has created a "black market" of archival material. If users are willing to pay, archival files will be delivered to their doorstep. For Adesina, there is no doubt that African national archives are an endangered species. The current crisis might be addressed by fully digitizing collections in order to make them newly accessible. A more encouraging assessment of ongoing state practices in maintaining and developing archival collections was presented by Mwayi Lusaka (National Museum of Malawi, Malawi) in her discussion of the history of the Malawi National Library and Museum as bulwark of nation building.

Jean Allman (Washington University, USA), in her presentation, asked whether the postcolonial archive simply reproduced its colonial predecessors. In Ghana, the national archives housed in the central repository of Public Records Administration and Archives Department in Accra are fragmentary, accidental, and dispersed, as systematic record management ceased with the coup against Nkrumah in 1966, and many government agencies under subsequent military and civilian regimes failed to release their files. For the period of Nkrumah's rule, Allman identifies a "transnational shadow archive" that points to new history writing opportunities that are less determined by the archiving of the colonial state. Based on the example of the surprising relationship between Nkrumah and the former Nazi test pilot Hanna Reitsch who had established a flight school in Ghana, Allman shows how this shadow archive allows a reconstruction of this crucial period in Ghanaian history that is quite different from one drawn from official records.¹²

Some papers dealt with archival collections located outside the African continent. Dag Henrichsen reported about the challenge of simultaneously rectifying existing colonial archives and building up new post-independence collections at the Basler Afrika Bibliographien, the Namibia Resource Centre and Southern Africa Li-

brary in Basel, Switzerland, where he currently serves as head archivist. While this archive systematically collects published works in and about Namibia, recent initiatives have consisted of acquiring private papers of colonial European academics and journalists, as well as visual ephemera of post-independence origins. The latter contains a large collection of posters, dating from the emergence of the liberation struggle, and everyday objects including shopping bags.¹³

Two papers addressed private West African collections of photographs. Walter Gam Nkwi (University of Buea, Cameroon), as relayed by Mirjam De Bruijn (ASC and University of Leiden, The Netherlands), elaborated on the role of memory in relation to family photos, kept in albums or hanging on walls, from the Bamenda Grassfields. These photographs are not disembodied images of the past but refer to inscriptions of their sense of self and the past along with social relations. Sylvester Okwunodu Ogbechie (University of California, Santa Barbara) described an archive project documenting the photographs of the Ezechime clan, who hail from nine towns in mid-Western Nigeria. As this multi-ethnic clan has used iconography to mediate questions of philosophy and identity, its archive consists of thousands of family albums with over 300,000 photographs dating back to 1900.

Finally, Jamie Monson (Macalester College, USA) presented alternative archives that commemorate the construction of the East African TAZARA railway by workers from China, Tanzania, and Zambia. Her contribution addressed the diverse meanings of photo albums containing the same photographs among retired workers in China and in East Africa, as well as how Chinese-made machines form a material memory of technological mobility across the global south in the Cold War context.

Digital Archives

Conference participants reflected on the challenges faced by archives on the African continent in relation to the digital revolution. This transformation implies shifting scholarly practices and questions who benefits from the structure of these digital innovations. The extent to which these efforts have privatized African archives was also evoked. Many commented on the growing digital divide

between the global North and Africa. Ogbechie also pointed to the emerging digital divide within Africa itself, as the vast majority of donor initiatives, such as those sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation, have focused on digitizing archival holdings of institutions based in South Africa to the exclusion of other parts of Africa.

On the African continent, there have been a number of significant digital archive initiatives. Khadiatou Diallo (UNIVAL and ISRA at Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire [IFAN], Senegal) examines recent efforts of digitization of early historical collections at IFAN including the BIENS CULTURELS and FACT IST projects with international funding structures. Larmer and Hinfelfaar presented another example of digitization. With the support of British grant, they succeeded in digitizing the Zambia UNIP archives, now accessible from London. Based in Paris, Anaïs Wion (CNRS, Centre d'Etudes des Mondes Africains, France) presented the ongoing collaborative international Ethiopian archives manuscript project in which historians and philologists have been digitizing a wide array of Ethiopian manuscripts since the twelfth century. As a member of this team of researchers, Wion described the history of how these documents have been scattered as a result of historical events.¹⁴

For many African archives located in Europe, digitization has been a priority in order to make collections more widely available, especially to researchers on the African continent. Guy Thomas (University of Basel, Switzerland), head of archives and library at mission 21 (Basel Mission), referred to the open archive initiative, which seeks to make archival collections about Africa more accessible by digitizing their finding aids. Mission 21 has been a pioneer in digitization, as its rich collection of historical photographs now includes more than 30,000 images, which is currently available online.¹⁵

An early attempt to collect and preserve African newspapers, serials, and ephemera has been the Cooperative African Microform Project (CAMP), founded in 1963 as a result of discussions between the U.S. African Studies Association, the Midwest Interlibrary Center (now the Center for Research Libraries), and African libraries. In 2012, due to the rise in

digital information and preservation formats, CAMP renamed itself Cooperative Africana Material Projects. Jason Schultz (University of California, Berkeley) examined recent capacity building efforts between CAMP and African archives. He argued that issues concerning access, collection, and preservation of African archival material reflect the legacy of colonialism and capitalism, as ultimately African archives form a commodity exchanged unequally between the global North and South. Schultz noted that advocacy by CAMP librarians and scholars must continue to challenge the rising tide of commodification of African archival holdings. Similarly, Francis Garaba (University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa) warned that current initiatives in digitizing the archives of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa have led to the commodification of a cultural heritage that mainly benefits the global north.¹⁶ Once digitized, institutions in the global South tend to lose copyright control. Finally, digitization is not the solution for preservation as digital resources remain fragile, vulnerable, and in constant need of attention for long term storage.

Jonathon Cole (University of California, Berkeley) offered an overview of digital humanities initiatives that show the potential application of Internet technologies for rethinking the African archive. These technologies provide avenues for increased collaboration through tools such as Google Docs, and for participation in the archival process through online collections such as *Voyages*, which is the trans-Atlantic slave trade database, and *Slave Biographies*, which maintains information on slave lives in the New World, along with open-access platforms such as *Omeka* and *Kora*. *Omeka*, Cole suggests, could be used to hold private collections of letters, cards, photos, as well songs, poems, and other "tin-trunk literacy" materials. But there are questions about copyright infringement, cultural imperialism, heritage plundering, and equitable access to Internet sources. A related initiative introduced by Francesco Correale (CNRS) was the BiVIOS project, a virtual library of unpublished Western Sahara sources that seeks to make accessible archival access in Europe and Africa thus circumventing dominant representations of this region. Plageman has also been concerned with similar issues about access, power, and control of these

emerging digital archives in his discussion of a proposed Ghanaian highlife music web-based archive.

Finally, Jos Damen (ASC) and Stefano Bellucci (IISH) organized two workshops about the role of non-state archives and new archival methods such as encoded archival description. They emphasized the importance of cultural heritage preservation. Workshop participants addressed numerous case-specific examples that included the preservation of a Senegalese prison archive, also discussed in illuminating detail in the contribution by Ibra Sène (Wooster College, USA), privacy issues related to medical archives as complemented by the research reported by Tousignant et al. described above, and how the context for digitizing archives is subject to significant political and cultural variations.

Conclusion

Lastly, a central theme of the conference focused on how more democratic and open forms of archival access remain an elusive goal but is being taken up as a priority in the international academic community. Two sets of closing remarks were presented by Anne Hugon (Université de Paris I, France), in French, and by Percy Hintzen, in English, marking the bilingual proceedings for which there was intermittent simultaneous translation provided by CODESRIA.

Hugon's discussion accented archival methods of contravention through strategies of counter politics and an ethics of contamination (which are described in greater length in her publication included with this report). Percy Hintzen's closing remarks, on the other hand, revolved around unpacking the syllogistic reasoning structure of "How can we know what we know." Intended as a provocation with regard to understanding the underlying structure of state power and the political uses of the archive, Hintzen drew on Donald Rumsfeld's ignominious 2002 dictum used to fabricate the threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction. It was the power of the so-called "known knowns" that Hintzen pointed to as the maligned logic of nation states to withhold and selectively interpret evidence from the archive. Hintzen's remarks focused on the ultimate manipulative potential of the archive as an instance of the concentration of power. No matter how complete or competently digitized, Hintzen contended, archives

that are ultimately aligned with a hegemonic alliance of state and private interests may simply be a diversion of detailed scholarly effort. His interest in thematizing the archive through an epistemology of power and the invisible, citing the interventions by Manthia Diawara and Duncan Yoon (UCLA), drew a cacophonous response among participants precisely because of his challenge to processes of verification and the integrity of the archive itself as index of scholarly intervention. His emphasis on the point that affect, identity, and the political may in fact contradict the logic of archival traces was then taken up by Ebrima Sall in his final remarks. Sall expressed the need for future collaborative efforts beyond the dint of an archival reckoning as part of a collective form of action on the African continent itself with its international partners. The final conference dinner was held in a restaurant overlooking Gorée Island harbor. Those planning to return to Dakar at the end of the proceedings were serendipitously delayed because of the overreaction by police to disperse a small protest by Gorée Island residents for the ongoing power outages leading to the suspension of the ferry for a few hours.

Notes

1. Two previous conference reports have been published Jos Damen and Benjamin Soares <http://www.ascleiden.nl/?q=content/conference-report-archives-post-independence-africa>, as well as by Brenton Maart <http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/gazette/current/?id=72&t=int>. Further, a complete set of abstracts and the conference program may be found at <https://sites.google.com/site/archivesconferencedakar/alphabetized-links-to-papers>.
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3. For critical assessments and alternative approaches, see Hamilton et al. 2002; Barber 2006; Stoler 2009; Peterson and Macola 2009.
 4. For an important formulation of *L'état franco-african*, see Dozon 2002a, 2002b, 2003.
 5. The political events in Mali were also taken up in an impromptu session in which Susanna Molins Lliteras, Benjamin Soares, and Mirjam de Bruijn discussed the current situation in Timbuktu given their familiarity with the region. Benjamin Soares later published a *New York Times* editorial entitled, "Mali's Tomb Raiders," 8 July 2012. Manthia Diawara offered commentary about the situation in Mali during his keynote address, but also published two articles in the online journal *Slate Afrique*, see <http://www.slateafrique.com/auteur/531> (accessed 1 June 2013).
 6. See Ebron 2002.
 7. For FESTAC, see Apter 2005. In fact, Malaquais's article "Anti-Teleology: Re-Mapping the Imag(in)ed City" has served as an important point of reference relative to the conference theme (Malaquais 2011).
 8. See her article "Misnomer: Reflections on Dance Performance," in Bloom, Manuh, and Miescher 2009/10.
 9. Plageman's recent book on the history of highlife (2013) includes links to the website, www.ethnomultimedia.org, which features an archive of audio, video, and still images.
 10. For tin-trunk literacy, see Barber 2006; Mboj-Pouye 2013.
 11. See Larmer's work on the former Zambian politician Valentine Musakanya (Larmer 2010a, 2010b).
 12. See Allman 2013.
 13. See Henrichsen et al. 2009.
 14. Some of these records are now available at: www.cn-telma.fr/publication/zekra-nagar-ema/.
 15. See www.bmarchives.org.
 16. The Aluka project on the history of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa has triggered some important debates. See: Isaacman, Premesh, Nygren 2005; Premesh 2007.
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