Defining Diaspora

This article, written by WARA Vice President Emmanuel Akyeampong, is excerpted with permission from a longer article entitled “Africans in the Diaspora: The Diaspora and Africa”, which appeared in the journal African Affairs (2000) 99:183-215.

The present flourishing of diasporic studies and journals underscores a conscious thinking about or intellectualizing of the diaspora. This development was greatly facilitated by several international conferences sponsored by UNESCO in the late 1970s on the “African Slave Trade” (1978), “Cultures of the Caribbean” (1978), and the “African Negro Cultural Presence in the Caribbean and in North and South America” (1980). Howard University provided the first institutional framework for the study of the African diaspora when it convened its First African Diaspora Studies Institute (FADSI) in 1979. This endeavour culminated in a seminal publication, Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora, which presented a conceptual framework for the study of the African diaspora as well as several stimulating case studies from Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas (Joseph E. Harris [ed.], Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1982).

Since 1989 an African Diaspora Research Project (ADRP) has existed at Michigan State University. Its activities are covered in a newsletter appropriately entitled Connexions. The 1999 annual conference of the American Historical Association in Washington DC featured diaspora and Atlantic history as its theme. The 1990s have witnessed the birth of new diasporic journals such as Diaspora and Exchange in addition to older journals like the Journal of Black Studies. Public Culture and the revived Transition are devoted to the history and current production of transnational cultures. And orthodox, non-diasporic journals such as African Affairs have become interested in the African diaspora. But what is the African diaspora?

The term ‘diaspora’ originally or historically was used to refer to the Jewish dispersion. Today, as William Safran points out, it shares space or is used as a metaphorical designation to describe alien residents, expellees, political refugees, expatriates, immigrants, and ethnic and racial minorities (William Safran, “Diasporas in modern societies: myths of homeland and return”, Diaspora 1(1):83-99, 1991). Safran provides a six-point list of criteria for defining diaspora that is worth quoting in full:

1. they, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original “center” to two or more “peripheral”, or foreign, regions; 2. they retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland – its physical location, history, and achievements; 3. they believe they are not – and perhaps cannot be – fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it; 4. they regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return – when conditions are appropriate; (5) they believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and its safety and prosperity; and (6) they continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship.

In Safran’s opinion, the Jewish diaspora represents the “ideal type” of diaspora, though other dispersions – Maghrebi, Armenian, Turkish, Palestinian, and Greek – may qualify for the diaspora designation.

However useful a prototype for diaspora, the Jewish dispersion was a unique historical event and should not define
INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

News from the WARA Headquarters.........................................................3
Letter from the WARA President..........................................................3
WARA in India?! ...................................................................................3
WARA Participation at ASA 2004............................................................4
WARC News .........................................................................................5
Report from the Director of WARC.......................................................5
CIEE Interacts with WARC.................................................................5
From Our Fellows.................................................................................6
Ewe Women Making and Marketing Music..........................................6
Senegalese Author Visits Brandeis.......................................................7
Bringing Together African Scholars.....................................................7
Feature Article.......................................................................................8
Defining Diaspora (cont. from pg. 1)......................................................8
Research in the Region........................................................................10
The West African Security Community and its Leadership Issues.........10
Commentary.........................................................................................11
Le Golfe de Guinée: un état des lieux...................................................11
On Review............................................................................................12
Between Faith and History: A Biography of J. A. Kufuor.....................12
Announcements and Opportunities......................................................13
Bouki Blues Festival 2...........................................................................13
United States Institute of Peace Fellowships.......................................14
The African Studies Quarterly..............................................................14
Pass on an Honorarium: An appeal from WARA member Allen Roberts.15
Islam in North Africa...........................................................................15
MSU Announcements..........................................................................15
WARA Officers and Board of Directors..............................................16
Institutional Members of WARA.........................................................16

This newsletter is published twice a year by the West African Research Association with the support of the Center for African Studies and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Florida. It is distributed to all members and associates of WARA. Material for publication in upcoming newsletters should be submitted to the editor at the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida. Please send an electronic version (preferred) or a hard copy of your submission. WARA has the right to reject items that do not comply with the goals and purposes of the organization and reserves the right to edit and/or modify any submissions for content, format or length. Opinions expressed in published articles, however, belong solely to the author(s).
Founded in 1989, WARA turns fifteen this year. In that brief period I think it fair to say that the development of WARA is nothing short of extraordinary. From the brainchild of a few visionaries in the late 1980s, it has developed into a crucial organization for the promotion of scholarship and collaboration in and between American institutions and West Africa. Yet WARA is today at a crossroads; much has been accomplished, yet so much more could be done.

Over the years programs have been added, so that WARA’s regular activities now include the following: grants to both pre-doctoral and post-doctoral research fellows; travel grants to West African researchers; awards to West African scholars-in-residence at American member institutions; roundtables and panels at the annual meetings of the African Studies Association; organizing — for the second time this year — annual summer institutes in Senegal for US-based college and university faculty; the pathbreaking effort through the African Languages Material Archives (ALMA) project to collect and disseminate materials published in West Africa in local languages. In addition to these regular and ongoing projects, WARA has organized two major international symposia in Dakar. In Senegal, the West African Research Center (WARC) regularly hosts visiting scholars, sponsors talks, provides important library and computer services to local scholars and students, and generally serves as a center of intellectual exchanges.

All of these activities have been realized thanks to the efforts of a large number of committed people, and with the participation of WARA’s members — both individual and institutional. The efforts of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) and the support of two funding sources — for which we are extremely grateful — have made much of this possible. The U.S. Department of Education’s Title VI program for American Overseas Research Centers, and the U.S. Department of State’s bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) have provided the core funds for the operation of the Center in Dakar and for the grants to scholars on both sides of the Atlantic. Virtually all of the available funds for WARA go directly into these core activities and missions. The administrative side of running all of these programs, it is fair to say, has been done on the proverbial “shoestring.” Support from various American universities — Howard University and the University of Wisconsin initially, Boston University and the University of Florida today — has been indispensable. And fortunately our US directors, Leigh Swigart and now Jennifer Yanco, have been highly adept at squeezing blood from stones.

If WARA is to maintain its activities, however, and most crucially if we are to expand them, further help is needed. A crucial

WARA in India?!

In January, I boarded a plane for India to attend the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) Directors’ meeting in New Delhi, hosted by CAORC and by the American Institute of Indian Studies. It proved to be a wonderful opportunity to learn more about CAORC and to get a better sense of how WARA fits into the big picture. It was an excellent meeting, and Dr. Pradeep Mehendiratta (Director General) and Purnima Mehta (Director of Operations) proved to be superb hosts. The formal meetings took place on January 5th and 6th at the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) in Gurgaon, a suburb of Delhi. The center is very impressive and includes an extensive research library, the Center for Art and Archaeology (with over 150,000 photos of Indian temple architecture), and ARCE (the Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology). Check out their website (www.indiastudies.org) to see the facilities. It was indeed inspiring to see what they have built up in over 40 years of operation. They also have offices and a guest house in Delhi proper, as well as regional centers in Chennai (Madras), Pune, and Calcutta.

We were treated royally, each of us being presented with a handsome portfolio and a rose at the opening of the meetings and being served most delicious meals and teas prepared at the center each day. A highlight of the meetings was a performance by musicians who had traveled from their villages in Rajasthan to Delhi for the occasion and who performed for us at the center. Among them were three musicians who had not only performed at the Festival of India, but also, among other international venues, at Carnegie Hall! On the first evening, AIIS put on a lovely reception for us at the Lodhi Estate and on Tuesday evening we were hosted by CAORC and Laila Mulgaokar, Field Director for the Library of Congress, for a lavish reception at her home in Delhi.

Monday and Tuesday were devoted to our formal meetings, which included reports from the various centers, a presentation on the American Overseas Digital Library (AODL) by Warren Dawkins, information on ECA reporting requirements, the CAORC multicountry Research Fellowship Program, and a discussion of how the present political climate is affecting social science research. Given that most of the centers are in majority Islamic countries, this is a very pertinent issue. We were honored, as well, to have Francine Berkowitz, Director of the Office of International Relations at the Smithsonian, and Marjorie Lueck of the National Science Foundation, in attendance.

I gave a presentation on WARA/WARC, with some history of the center, current activities, and lots of photos. A number of people expressed an interest in having WARC host the CAORC directors’ meeting — perhaps in 2006 — evidence that all the improvements that Wendy has made to the center have made it a truly appealing venue! We heard reports from each of the fifteen centers represented at the meetings. While some of the centers are relatively new and
News from the WARA Headquarters

(Letter from the WARA President)

start must be the expansion of our membership — individual and especially institutional. The many WARA members who have faithfully renewed their memberships over the years provide the core. In a multitude of ways, however, all Africanist scholars in the US and their institutions benefit regularly from WARA’s activities, and from the very existence of WARC in Dakar. WARC is a collective good from which we all benefit, and to which we should all contribute. I thus reiterate a plea I’ve made many times: please speak to your colleagues and work with your institutions to encourage them to become WARA members. And beyond this, as always, would happily welcome your ideas, suggestions, and participation in our joint efforts to continue and expand WARA’s mission.

Leonardo Villalon
President
WARA

(WARA in India?!)

others just getting started, most have relatively long histories, so there was much to be learned from them.

Following the formal meetings at AIIS, most of the participants set off together for a tour to Jaipur, Sanganer, and Sariska with noted scholar of Islamic architecture, Catherine Asher, as our guide. Not only was this a great opportunity from the tourism point of view, but it also provided the occasion to visit informally and compare notes with people from the various centers, as well as to meet individually with the CAORC director, Mary Ellen Lane and with Virginia Carey, CAORC Program & Finance Manager. This was extremely helpful to me as someone relatively new to CAORC. It went a long way towards bringing me up to speed on reporting requirements and other administrative matters, providing new ideas for activities and programs, and getting a sense of some of the challenges that centers are facing.

Jennifer Yanco
US Director
WARA

WARA Participation at ASA 2004

Panel: Migration, Identity, and Collaboration: West African Musicians in the U.S.

This panel explores the negotiation of identities, performance practices, and collaborations between West African immigrant musicians and Americans in the music scenes of Boston, New York City, and Philadelphia. Today, West African musicians are part of transatlantic networks where information, images, and sounds flow and change meanings at unprecedented speeds. One consequence of this global traffic is that imaginaries of the real and fantastical develop and change in different locales. In the urban Northeast, West African musicians mediate these imaginaries and identities as teachers, performers and members of their communities. Alternatively, Americans influence West Africans’ perception of themselves in the world, revising their “presentation of self.” How do West African musicians affect the communities and colleges where they teach and perform? What can examinations of “traditional” West African drumming and dance performances and collaborations with jazz artists reveal about the negotiation of identities? How does the role of the griot change in the U.S. and what shapes this change? The panelists address these questions through an interdisciplinary approach combining anthropology, ethnomusicology, and photography. Through interviews, fieldwork in the U.S. and West Africa, analyses of music and images, and reflexivity, we examine how West African immigrant musicians working in urban communities in the U.S. create support networks and impact the lives of their students, fans, American musicians, and scholars.

Panelists:
Leigh Swigart, Brandeis University
Patricia Tang, MIT
Timothy R. Mangin, St. Lawrence University
Vera Viditz-Ward, Bloomsburg University

Discussant: Ingrid Monson, Harvard University
Chair: Timothy R. Mangin

Roundtable: West African Migration to North America: Fostering New Research

We aim to bring scholars working in West Africa and in North America together to discuss the phenomenon of West African migration to North America in the late twentieth century. During this round table we will discuss theories and methods for the study of African immigration under shifting relations of politics, economics, and security apparatuses worldwide. We wish to examine the contemporary and historical social, cultural and political processes that underpin the formation of West African communities in New York City and points elsewhere in the US such as Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, D.C. We propose the following themes for discussion: What sorts of exile, refugee and migration characteristic the experience of West Africans, for example, among those who find that they cannot return to their home countries because they are mired in civil war? And what are the experiences of the many economic exiles, those who are unable to support processes of production and reproduction in their home countries, as they migrate abroad in search of wage labor and capital? How is it that certain cities become nodes in the migratory circuits of West African communities? How do West African migration orders reach their new destinations and how are they integrated into new spheres of influence, such as the global workplace, [North] American political life or the street? What is the quality of the sociogeography of African settlement and what does it mean for the conceptualization of American communities as this diaspora continues to settle in North America?

Beth A. Buggenhagen, University of Rochester
Awa Ba, Uppsala University
Linda Beck, Barnard College
Rachel Reynolds, Drexel University
Emmanuel Nnadozie, Truman State University
Allen Roberts, University of California, Los Angeles

Page 4
Feature Article

Kingdom) as “the leveler”. It erases all class distinctions African immigrants brought from their homelands. The educated and the semiliterate, the highborn and the lowborn, rub shoulders as they vie for the same menial jobs. “Success” in the immigrant community comes to depend on one’s exertions, and material accumulation is open to all. A Twi proverb states that ődeh ye, wonno wonni, sika ne asem (“high birth is not food; money is all that matters”) (C. A. Akrofi, Twi Mmebusem: Twi proverbs with English translations and comments Accra: Waterville Publishing House, pg. 60). Thus, the diaspora is also an important space to remake one’s self, even to overcome the social liabilities of birth. The successful migrant returns home as an “upper class” citizen, respected for her/his wealth. This longing for home, these dreams of a triumphant return, are captured in the phrase Ghanaians abroad often use for work: di paa (Twi: “to do menial labour”). This phrase is even used by some Ghanaians with desk jobs, as the return home and self-employment in the homeland remain the ideal. Many Africans abroad struggle to accomplish this feat of a successful return, and for many who discover to their chagrin that Western streets are not paved with gold, longing for home or nostalgia becomes an even more powerful memory and emotion. The celebration of “triumphant” returns in Mande culture, or the myth of the homeland, is critically examined in Manthia Diawara, In Search of Africa Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998.

Thus, there have been several phases of the African diaspora, varying in time and space. Joseph Harris points to the primary, secondary, tertiary, and circulatory phases of the African dispersion:

The primary stage is the original dispersion out of Africa [especially through the slave trade]; the secondary stage occurs with migrations from the initial settlement abroad to a second area abroad; the tertiary stage is movement to a third area abroad; and the circulatory stage involves movements among the several areas abroad and may include Africa (Joseph Harris, “Introduction”, in Harris [ed.], Global Dimensions, pp. 8-9).

This article makes no pretense to a comprehensive coverage of these four phases of the African dispersion. An arbitrary division of a study of the changing nature of diaspora into the pre-nineteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries is offered in the following pages. [Editor’s Note: Please see the original article in African Affairs to read the “following pages” referenced here.] I examine the different “trajectories” or “routes” of the original African diaspora, for the resultant global dispersion of African communities would influence the direction of travel in the circulatory phase – especially in the twentieth century. I seek to tease out the identities and experiences of some Africans in the pre-nineteenth century diaspora in order to underscore the diversity of experiences in the diaspora. Even at the height of the international slave trade, free Africans also travelled in the Old and New Worlds. The nineteenth-century abolition of the slave trade and slave emancipation enhanced mobility, and “diaspora”, infused by “travel”, assumed more complex dimensions. Here I endorse the distinction Clifford draws between “diaspora” and “travel”. Travel does not necessarily imply dwelling and maintaining communities away from home. But diaspora is serviced by travel: in its origination, in its continuing reinforcement by new arrivals, and in the maintenance of links between the diaspora and the homeland (Clifford, “Diasporas”; and James Clifford, Routes: Travel and translation in the late twentieth century Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997). Travel was not necessarily autonomous or voluntary at this stage, as the military conscription of colonial Africans during the two world wars illustrates. Political, economic, and social turmoil and decline in post-colonial Africa underpin the current global dispersion of Africans from the African continent. What is most significant about this twentieth-century dispersion is the ties Africans outside Africa retain with their home countries – politically, economically, socially, and culturally. It is a tense, ambivalent, yet cultivated relationship, as both sides appreciate the material and cognitive value of the link but have been transformed by the experience of separation. Africans in the homeland and in the diaspora thus often differ in their evaluation of politics, economics, culture, and society. In this century, Africa and its diaspora exist in a closer physical union than in any previous period.

Emmanuel Akyeampong
Vice-President of WARA
Chair of the Committee on African Studies
Harvard University
the nature or essence of subsequent dispersions. As James Clifford argues, diasporic communities may exhibit two or more features of Safran’s criteria and, importantly, societies may wax or wane in diasporism (James Clifford, “Diasporas”, Cultural Anthropology 9(3):305-6, 1994). Diaspora communities may thus exhibit different aspects of Safran’s criteria at different points in time. To take the African diaspora in the New World as an example, from the sixteenth century Africans were certainly dispersed from the African continent to two or more foreign regions; they retained a collective memory, vision or myth of the homeland. David Scott highlights how, in the interwar period, Afro-Americans reclaimed in various inflections – Galvanism, Pan-Africanize, the Harlem Renaissance – “a past called Africa”, and placed it “in the foreground of their assertions of cultural identity and community” (David Scott, “That event, this memory: notes on the anthropology of African diasporas in the New World”, Diaspora 1(3):273, 1991). Racism makes people of African descent feel alienated in the Americas; some regard Africa as their true home and the place of their eventual return – witness Marcus Garvey’s “back to Africa movement”; and African-Americans are committed to restoring Africa as a place of safety and prosperity, especially through Pan-Africanism. These different diasporic responses have waxed and waned over time. Clifford consequently provides a more accessible definition of diaspora or diaspora communities:

It involves dwelling, maintaining communities, having collective homes away from home... Diaspora articulates, or bends together, both roots and routes [travel] to construct... alternate public spheres, forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identifications outside the national time-space in order to live inside, with a difference (pg. 308).

“In the contemporary global context in which African governments are dependent on Western financial institutions for the running of their economies, at the micro-level the economic survival and prosperity of families have become equally dependent on having family members in the diaspora.”

from the original conception of “overseas” to going outside one’s homeland or country. It has become entwined with the notion of going to “hustle” or seek one’s fortune – preferably in a country where one’s efforts are not witnessed or supervised by one’s kin. For the Ghanaians this could mean the Ivory Coast, Botswana, England or North America. In the contemporary global context in which African governments are dependent on Western financial institutions for the running of their economies, at the micro-level the economic survival and prosperity of families have become equally dependent on having family members in the diaspora. Menial jobs that an African would decline back in the homeland are eagerly sought in the West as valuable foreign currencies translate into comfortable incomes in devalued homeland currencies. Constraints on black social mobility in Europe, for example, have led to the description of London (or the United
the group has been used as a national symbol in order to reflect political and social progress (performances for political events, panafest etc.). Contemporary Ewe women, then, within more or less traditional performing groups, prove to forge and negotiate social and economic relationships (local, national, and international), where they comment on (through song texts, dance steps, and group presence or “staging”), and attempt to improve, social, political, and economic problems.

I greatly appreciate the pre-dissertation support from WARA that enabled me not only to research and define my dissertation topic in Ghana from July through October 2003, but also afforded me the opportunity to study Ewe language and drumming.

Julie Hunter
Graduate Student of Music
Brown University
(WARA Pre-Doctoral Fellow)

Senegalese Author Visits Brandeis

Brandeis University was pleased to welcome Senegalese author Aminata Maiga Ka for a month-long visit in October 2003. Sponsored by a WARA Residency Fellowship, and hosted by Jane Hale, a WARA member who teaches French at Brandeis, Madame Ka’s presence enriched a number of curricular and co-curricular programs at Brandeis.

French students at Brandeis read Madame Ka’s novels, La voie du salut and Le miroir de la vie. She visited French, Education, Latin American Studies, and Sociology classes, as both a guest lecturer and observer. She worked individually with students from various departments in individual conferences. French major Shanna Bokoff translated La voie du salut into English for her senior project, and was delighted to be able to work closely with the text’s author. Shanna also took Madame Ka to visit French classes at her former secondary school, Woodstock Academy in Connecticut, where she was hosted by Shanna’s former French teacher, Ms. Merry Burke.

Mme. Ka read from her books and spoke about her life and career as an author in West Africa in a well-attended university-wide luncheon forum. As a former professor of English and advisor to the Minister of Education in Senegal, she was particularly interested in learning how our university teaches language and culture. She was also a very popular guest at a kindergarten class at Eames Way School in Marshfield, Massachusetts.

Mme. Ka’s visit was planned to coincide with the African Studies Association’s Annual Meeting in Boston. She spoke about young people’s literature in Senegal today on a panel called “From the Canon to Popular Literature.” Brandeis University is grateful to both Aminata Maiga Ka and the West African Research Association for this rich cultural exchange.

Jane Hale
Professor of French
Brandeis University
(WARA Residency Fellowship)

Bringing Together African Scholars

As a beneficiary of WARA/WARC sponsorship to the 45th Annual Meeting of the ASA meeting in December 2002 at Washington, DC, I would like to both thank WARA for their generosity and congratulate them for taking a giant step towards the practical interaction of West African scholars across the continents.

My first encounter with WARA/WARC was at the 2nd International Symposium in Dakar 2002 which was excellent in every respect, particularly in the quality of paper presentations and social interaction. Consequently, I was invited as a participant for the WARA/WARC roundtable discussion at the ASA Meeting and presented my paper titled “Writing Story-texts on the Right to Reproductive Health: A Cross Cultural Experience between Nigeria and Senegal”. My experience at the ASA Meeting was also memorable. It was intellectually stimulating and in spite of the snow, I thoroughly enjoyed every moment. In particular our hosts, Leo Villalón, Leigh Swigart and Fiona McLaughlin showered Boube Namaïwa (a fellow colleague from Senegal who was also sponsored by WARA/WARC for the ASA Meeting) and me with the warm brand of WARA/WARC hospitality I experienced at Dakar. We were wined, dined, and danced throughout our stay.

Most importantly, WARA/WARC sponsorship of West African scholars to their ASA panels offers an unexpected opportunity for African scholars inside and outside Africa to interact. I sincerely hope that WARA/WARC will continue with this forward-looking initiative, so that other West African scholars will benefit from the experience as I have done. It seems to me that WARA/WARC is an organisation that combines the intellectual and social in a realistic manner. This wonderful invigorating spirit of WARA/WARC should be truly appreciated and emulated.

Ngozi L Nwodo
School of General Studies
University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus
(WARA Travel Grantee)
Le Golfe de Guinée: un état des lieux

L’accès à la mer et l’exploitation de ses ressources sont des atouts indéniables au double plan géostratégique et économique. Le Golfe de Guinée, en tant que domaine maritime adjacent de plusieurs Etats de l’Afrique central, est un de ces espaces auxquels s’attachent des enjeux protéiformes.

Du fait de sa géographie particulière, de ses potentialités et des desseins qu’il suscite, ainsi que de ses problèmes actuels, le Golfe de Guinée a une place particulière dans la stabilité et le bon voisinage de ses Etats côtiers, principalement dans l’Atlantique centre-oriental.


La question de la presqu’île de Bakassi est en voie de règlement. Les récentes cessions réciproques de territoires continentaux entre le Cameroun et le Nigeria augurent du bon dénouement de ce différend, sur la base de la décision de la Cour internationale de justice de la Haye et de la gestion sous-régionale du problème. Cependant, la question de la frontière maritime n’est pas sans difficulté possible, au regard de la position de São Tomé et Principe, et de ses îles en face du Gabon, du Cameroun et du Nigeria. De même les îles équato-guinéennes de Bioko, au large de Douala (Cameroun) et les îles Elbey et Corisco, au large de Cocobeach (Gabon) posent une difficulté de délimitation de la frontière maritime dans le Golfe de Guinée. La Commission du Golfe de Guinée (CGG) mise sur pied, en novembre 1999, concourt fort heureusement à la préservation de la paix dans la région.

Les ressources économiques des eaux du Golfe de Guinée (énergie, produits halieutiques) sont d’autres enjeux très importants. En fait, cette zone, sur terre comme en mer, recèle des potentialités stratégiques. Sous ses eaux, la nappe de pétrole est la principale richesse capable d’attiser les rivalités entre les Etats. Aujourd’hui, l’île de Mbanié est au centre d’enjeux entre le Gabon et la Guinée Equatoriale. Ce dernier pays qui vient d’accéder au rang de producteur, a une exploitation estimée à 25 millions de tonnes de brut à l’horizon 2005. Tandis que le Gabon prospecte davantage de nouveaux gisements (off shore) afin de maintenir sa production à un haut niveau. Les deux Etats ont engagé des pourparlers directs. Le problème est également porté au niveau de la Cour internationale de justice. Ce choix des modalités diplomatique et judiciaire a permis, jusqu’ici, d’éviter l’éclosion d’un problème.

De par sa géographie particulière, ses ressources stratégiques et ses différends en règlement ou en discussion (Bakassi et Mbanié), le centre du Golfe de Guinée est un espace maritime constitutif d’enjeux. Même si aucun des Etats côtiers ne représente véritablement une puissance navale militaire, encore moins un acteur d’envergure dans l’exploitation de l’océan mondial, il reste que cet espace contigu à l’Afrique central polarise une certaine attention du fait de son statut de réservoir énergétique [Voir Albert Didier Ogoulat, Géographie politique de la façade atlantique intertropicale (du Sénégal à l’Angola), Presses universitaires du Septentrion, Villeneuve d’Ascq, 1999].

Babacar Ndiaye
Docteur ès Lettres
Announcements and Opportunities

Bouki Blues Festival 2

The West African Research Association and the West African Research Center in Dakar, Senegal are soliciting papers for the 2nd Bouki Blues Festival to be held on January 5-12, 2005 at Cheikh Anta Diop University, Dakar, Senegal. This second Bouki Blues Festival will be devoted to the historical and cultural links between West Africa, the West Mediterranean world and the Western hemisphere.

The first Bouki Blues Festival (January 2002), was primarily devoted to the Mississippi-Louisiana area where African music survived under the name of Blues, a musical form that evolved in the urban milieu to give birth to Jazz and Rock ‘n’ Roll. Musicians and scholars from Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, and Mississippi took part in the week-long festival. The keynote speaker was the late Peter Aschoff, professor of anthropology at the University of Mississippi at Oxford (Ole Miss) and the guest star was the celebrated blues singer James “Super Chikan” Johnson from Clarksdale, Mississippi.

Papers should:
(1) address the cultural expressions of the Diaspora in comparison with their African origins to permit the greater public to see the similarities, adaptations, and variations created by distance, time, and local influences;
(2) promote a culture of peace and fraternity by showing, beyond the horrors of the slave trade and slavery, the results of the resistance and resilience of African culture exported to America, the Mediterranean world and elsewhere;
(3) address themes and methodologies which sustain the struggle against all forms of modern slavery.

Prospective Program:

Tuesday, January 4, 2005.

Wednesday, January 5, 2005.
10 AM: Gorée Island. Prayers and libations at La Maison des Esclaves
1 PM: lunch at Chevalier de Boufflers.
4 PM: Second Line with the women and the children on the streets of Gorée (n'goonal u Gorée). Animation: Dr Michael White, Assico Band of Gorée, Goumbé.
7PM: Petit Theatre of Gorée. Opening ceremony presided over by the President of the Republic of Senegal. Stage performance: Le retour de Bouki, a musical comedy by Charles Cheikh Sow.

Thursday, January 6, 2005.
Cheikh Anta Diop University, Khaly Amar Fall auditorium. Colloquium on the theme: “Mediterranean and Trans-Atlantic Emotions.”
9-9:30 AM: Keynote speech: “Bouki-Sorokou Ba, the meaning of a symbol” by Pascal Baba Coulibaly, anthropologist, former Minister of Culture of Mali.
9:30-10 AM: Coffee break
10-12:30 AM: Panel 1: “The historical and cultural links between West Africa and the Western Mediterranean area.”
1 PM: Lunch at WARC.

Friday, January 7, 2005.
9-10:30 AM: Khaly Amar Fall auditorium. Panel 2: “The historical and cultural links between West Africa and the Western hemisphere.”
10:30-11 AM: Coffee break
1 PM: lunch at WARC.
7 PM: Dakar. Piscine Olympique. Sahelian night: Kumbaan (Mauritania), Tocatiña (Cap Vert), Toumani Diabaté (Mali). Guest star: Baaba Maal (Senegal).

Saturday, January 8, 2005.
10 AM: First group departs for Jiloor Jijaak. Check in and lunch at Ndangaan.
3 PM: Jiloor Jijaak. Traditional wrestling. Circumcision dance.
7 PM: Dakar. Piscine Olympique. Afro-American night: Dr. Michael White (Louisiana), WA Flash (Senegal), Bobby Rush (Mississippi). Guest star: Viviane Ndour (Senegal).
8 PM: Jiloor Jijaak. Yandé Codou Sène, Mbaye Ndiaye, Toumani Diabaté.

Sunday, January 9, 2005.
9 AM: Second group departs for Jiloor Jijaak. Check in and lunch at Ndangaan.
4 PM: Place du village. Traditional wrestling.
8 PM: Ngoyaan, Papa “Blind Boy” Niang, Bobby Rush.

Interested researchers should forward a one- to two-page proposal by September 10, 2004 to boukibluesfestival@yahoo.fr or:
Bouki Blues Festival / The West African Research Center / BP 5456, Dakar-Fann / Dakar, Senegal
Phone: (221) 865 2277 / Website : www.warc-croa.org

Notification of acceptance will be mailed by September 30, 2004. For booking assistance (air ticket, hotel, meals, conference, and all festival events), please contact us by e-mail.

Spring 2004
Dear colleagues and friends,

I am pleased to be able to write to you again about activities and plans at the West African Research Center in Dakar. The first quarter of 2004 was an active period for WARC. In terms of programming, our Lecture Series has taken on new life as a committee was established by AROA to take primary responsibility for establishing lecture schedules. Due to this new initiative the Departments of Sociology, History and Letters at the University of Cheikh Anta Diop have become contributing participants in identifying speakers for the series. However, we are still interested in setting up talks by visiting scholars! The AROA committee sets up two conferences per month, leaving time and space available for the serendipitous visitor or those of you who write ahead and graciously offer your time.

In February, we had a month-long program focused on the Atlantic Diaspora in recognition of the American tradition of “Black History Month.” WARC showed several films, including an interview of James Baldwin, a video from the “This Far by Faith” series produced by Blackside Productions, and a wonderful documentary done by American artist Mushana Ali which documented her Fulbright year as artist-in-residence in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, during which time she shared space and produced art with street youth of Abidjan. Poignantly, the film was shot just a year and a half before political strife rocked the country. Also during this month, Professor Boubacar Barry spoke on his travels in Atlantic Diasporic communities, I presented a paper on my research on African Americans of mixed Malagasy and West African origins, and Moulaye Keita presented on Haratin Identity in Mauritania and Senegal. Charles Sow, the Director of the Library at WARC, presented on a poem that he and I have worked on from the volume “Weevils in the Wheat” (Purdue, Barden and Phillips: 1976) which appears to be a phonetic rendition of a poem in Wolof in pankk form. Sow also pointed out similar examples from literature on Cuba.

During March there were two signature events. First was the lecture of Professor Anne Adams, on a Fulbright this year at Legon in Ghana (from Rutgers), who presented on “Toni Morrison as Viewed from Outside the United States,” which was very well attended. In fact, graduate students from UCAD lined up outside the doors in order to follow her presentation. Another event of significance for WARC which took place in March was an Art Exhibition and reception sponsored by our new partner, the Dakar Women’s Group. This expo featured 10 Senegalese artists and five women artists from the group, which is an association of professional women resident in Dakar, many of them diplomats from other countries. This event was wonderful in enhancing WARC’s public image in Dakar.

As always, we are thrilled to see visitors who are coming back to WARC after an absence in the U.S. Among these were WARA members Ghislain Lydon, Timothy Mangin, and Brett O’Bannon. This spring we also expect visits from Leigh Swigart, Jeanne Toungara, and former WARC Director Eileen Julien.

The travel grants increase in popularity, and we regret that our funds do not at all match the demand. Out of 52 proposals received this year, we were only able to give two awards. Nevertheless, we are sure that building a track record such as this will be key to increasing funds in the future. Finally, I’d like to mention our appreciation for the American Cultural Center in Dakar, which has again proved to be a great friend and supporter through our colleague Michael Pelletier. Through collaboration and planning, WARC will be the recipient of a technical visit from a consultant supported through USIS. This Visit will have as its goal setting the groundwork and basis for a procedures manual for the Center, as well as documenting internal processes as they exist from day to day for better institutionalization of WARC. USIS has also responded favorably to our request to submit a proposal to support a local fundraiser (Dominique Jenkins, Rotary Fellow) who will assist in strengthening ties with the Dakar Women’s Group, DHL and Mobile, as well as improving WARC outreach activities in general.

At the beginning of April, I had the singular experience of being a guest on the RTS Television Programme “Diaspora Culture,” which allowed me the chance to talk about WARC, WARA and AROA to a national, if not international, audience. So, I am happy to say that our association is increasing its audience, and that other projects, such as the Koulik Blues Festival, are sure to build on that. The Festival is planned for January, 2005. Be sure to visit our website to learn more about upcoming plans!!

Wendy Wilson Fall
Director of WARC

CIEE Interacts With WARC

The Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) administers study abroad programs for fall and spring semesters, as well as the academic year, at the Baobab Center and Université Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar, Senegal. CIEE students have been regular followers of WARC-sponsored activities; in several of the panel discussions and film screenings that WARC has organized in celebration of Black History Month, the audience has been mainly comprised of CIEE students. There were discussions on topics such as “Visiting the Diaspora” presented by Professor Boubacar Barry; “The Imaginary and the Idea of Return” by Dr. Wendy Fall, and more. Students attended the cultural events that WARC organized at the Gorée Institute, entitled “What Happened to the Enslaved Africans after the Transatlantic Slave Trade.” And naturally, our students use the WARC research facilities regularly. One student is currently doing an interesting comparative project on the prison systems in Senegal and the U.S. and another student has been working on the idea of democracy in Senegal. For more information, visit http://www.ciee.org/isp.

Kristen de Oliveira
Manager; Publications and Production
Council on International Educational Exchange
Ewe Women Making and Marketing Music

Ewe women make, negotiate, market, and perform music within diverse times and places. While Ewe women play a significant role as musical and social leaders at local and national funerals, festivals, ceremonies, and cultural events, researchers rarely describe the experiences of women making music in Ghana. Consequently, during this past summer, with support from The West African Research Association, I investigated the lives of Ewe women singers, drummers, and dancers in Southeastern Ghana (including research in Woe, Keta, Konu, Klikor, Affao, and Accra). As many Ewe women work as farmers, sellers, and traders, they have for a long time formed and participated in market sellers’ associations, traders’ unions, and other agricultural organizations (haborbowa) where they create, market, and sell particular products. Through collaborative organizations, they attempt to control all aspects of their work. During my research period, I began to consider that with the emergence of more women’s agricultural organizations (often influenced and inspired by changing government funding, ideas, and policies), we also find women’s musical groups, where music, like other “products”, is created, organized, bought, and sold. Within my dissertation, I will look at the ways in which women’s cultural organizations, like agricultural or economic organizations, provide a place where women have gained and negotiated status, power, and authority in Ewe villages since independence. As women often participate in several cultural and agricultural groups, I will consider how they define their individual, national, social, and ethnic identities through their roles as members, group directors, song leaders, song assistants, dancers, master drummers, drummers, and social and linguistic translators.

The Kpegisu Women’s Drumming Group in Klikor represents not only a location for women of all ages to learn, practice, display, and re-create traditional Ewe drum and dance forms (such as Kpegisu, Husago, and Bobo in Ghanaian and Togolese communities), but also one where they continue to take on roles as musical and social leaders. (Interestingly, kpegisu, the women’s primary drum, is considered a warrior drum for men). More specifically, the Kpegisu group leader, Cecilia Kpogli, directs the 31st December Women’s Movement in Klikor; consequently, Kpogli has initiated and organized large-scale, community-based social, agricultural projects through kente weaving, cassava farming, and gari (ground, dried cassava) processing. While many women are involved in several groups, they all, according to Kpogli, attempt to raise the view and position of women in Ghana. Thus, the women’s movement, inspired by Nana Konadu Rawlings (the wife of former Ghanaian president Jerry Rawlings), expresses a set of political ideals. These ideals, in which women participate in the possibilities of social and economic independence, began spreading throughout towns and villages in Ghana in the 1980s.

The Klikor groups, as well as the entire movement itself, attempt to redefine existing gender assumptions, roles, and opportunities in Ghana. Above all, as the performers often note, their group represents an effort for women to show that they, in their own words, “can do what men can do”, as it provides a visible symbol of women creating and organizing themselves socially, culturally, and politically. Although most people do not consider women to be drummers in Ghana (that is, women who drum not only gankogui, atoke, or axatse – bells and rattles – but also membrane drums), many contemporary Ewe women, especially those who come from families of musicians, possess extensive knowledge surrounding drum rhythms, techniques, and forms. Several drummers from the Kpegisu group explained that their mothers, aunts, and grandmothers were drummers; and, before the existing Kpegisu group formed in the 1990s, many of the older members played in a Ganugagbe (broken pot) group where at least one woman would perform on an old pot.

However, even though Ewe women have drummed in the past, social and musical positions for women as drummers prove sparse (time, tradition etc.). More specifically, women’s groups in Ghana (ones in which women form most of the group membership and hold primary leadership positions, such as Akpatau or Ninonkororo groups), often incorporate male patrons, composers, and drummers. (I will continue to consider, within my dissertation, the specific gene elements, or classifications, of “women’s” and “men’s” groups, styles, or repertoires). Several Klikor drummers, including Manavi Doku and Wonder Hiatepe, also take on roles as master drummers alongside men in mixed groups. Consequently, the Kpegisu group represents a specific – in this case national – attempt to challenge larger, accepted definitions of women’s social positions; and, in turn,
Pass on an Honorarium: An appeal from WARA member Allen Roberts

Many of us who are WARA members receive honoraria for offering talks, funds that we might like to pass on (via WARA) to an African colleague who could then use the money toward airfare or some other academic expense that the generally lower salaries at African universities won’t permit. In turn, the donor could write the gift off her/his income taxes and feel good at the same time! Checks should be made out to WARA, indicating “West African scholar fund” on the memo line, and mailed to:

West African Research Association
BU African Studies Center
270 Bay State Road
Boston, MA 02215

You will receive a note indicating that you have made a tax deductible contribution to WARA.

Allen F. Roberts
Professor of World Arts & Cultures and French
Director, James S. Coleman African Studies Center
University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

Islam in North Africa

In January 2004, David Robinson published “Muslim Societies in African History” with Cambridge University Press. This is a paperback edition designed for introducing undergraduates to the subject of Islam in the northern half of the continent.

“Examining a series of processes (Islamization, Arabization, Africanization) and case studies from North, West and East Africa, this book gives snapshots of Muslim societies in Africa over the last millennium. In contrast to traditions which suggest that Islam did not take root in Africa, author David Robinson shows the complex struggles of Muslims in the Muslim state of Morocco and in the Hausaland region of Nigeria. He portrays the ways in which Islam was practiced in the ‘pagan’ societies of Ashanti (Ghana) and Buganda (Uganda) and in the ostensibly Christian state of Ethiopia – beginning with the first emigration of Muslims from Mecca in 615 CE, well before the foundational hijra to Medina in 622. He concludes with chapters on the Mahdi and Khalifa of the Sudan and the Murid Sufi movement that originated in Senegal, and reflections in the wake of the events of September 11, 2001.” (Cambridge Univ. Press description). For contents, see http://www.books.cambridge.org/052153366X.htm.

David Wiley
Director, Center for African Studies
Michigan State University

MSU Announcements

MSU and UCAD – MSU and UCAD specialists in intellectual property led a workshop in Dakar at the end of March 2004, which involved university faculty, representatives from other West African countries, UN personnel and others. The goal was to create an office and program of intellectual property rights in Dakar. Faculty from the two institutions have also been working together around issues of women in aquaculture, the commercialization of fruits and vegetables, natural products research, and remote sensing. Ibra Sene, David Robinson, and Tom Coon, Associate Dean of Agriculture, have been coordinating this partnership.

New Website – MSU has a new website on MSU Collaboration with the University of Mali, constructed by Professor John Staatz, Agricultural Economics, who has worked in Mali for many years. http://www.msu.edu/user/staatz/university_of_mali/index.htm

“The Internet and Women’s Democratic Organizing” is a continuing project in West Africa at MSU as a project of the African Studies Center and MATRIX. The Project seeks to facilitate women’s social and political activism and regional networking through Internet technologies. Three-week workshops took place in May 2000, 2001, and 2002 with participants attending from Ghana, Senegal, Nigeria, and Mali. See http://www.matrix.msu.edu/iwdo/ for a description of the workshops and the participants.

New Study Abroad Program in Mali on Ethics and Development for Summer 2004 – MSU’s Dr. Steve Esquith, Department of Philosophy, will lead this first offering July 9 - August 15, 2004. The students will study: 1. The ethical complexity of development issues in Mali, 2. The richness of Malian culture, language and society, 3. The causes and consequences of poverty in Mali, 4. Some of the current development programs in Mali, 5. The responsibilities of citizens in developed countries for the success of development programs in countries such as Mali. For details, see http://www.studyabroad.msu.edu/programs/maliethics.html

Volume Available – Democracy and Development in Mali. Edited by R. James Bingen, David Robinson and John M. Staatz at MSU, (2000, Michigan State University Press). During the past 25 years, Michigan State University faculty and students have built a history of scholarly research on Malian society, economy, and politics and applied development in Mali. These works have resulted in a significant number of working papers, reports, and conference presentations.

David Wiley
Director, African Studies Center
Michigan State University
United States Institute of Peace Fellowships

The United States Institute of Peace invites applications for the 2005-2006 Senior Fellowship competition in the Jennings Randolph Program for International Peace. The United States Institute of Peace is an independent, nonpartisan institution created by Congress to strengthen the nation’s capacity to promote the peaceful resolution of international conflict. Twelve to fifteen fellowships are awarded annually to scholars and practitioners from a variety of professions, including college and university faculty, journalists, diplomats, writers, educators, military officers, international negotiators, NGO professionals, and lawyers. The Institute funds projects related to preventive diplomacy, ethnic and regional conflicts, peacekeeping and peace operations, peace settlements, democratization and the rule of law, cross-cultural negotiations, nonviolent social movements, U.S. foreign policy in the 21st century, and related topics. This year the Institute is especially interested in topics addressing problems of the Muslim world, post-war reconstruction and reconciliation in Iraq, and responses to terrorism and political violence. Projects which demonstrate relevance to current policy debates will be highly competitive. Fellows reside at the Institute in Washington, D.C., for a period of up to ten months to conduct research on their projects, consult with staff, and contribute to the ongoing work of the Institute. Books and reports resulting from fellowships may be published by the USIP Press. The fellowship award includes a stipend of up to $80,000, travel to Washington for the fellow and dependents, health insurance, an office with computer and voicemail, and a half-time research assistant. The competition is open to citizens of all nations. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. All application materials must be received in our offices by September 15, 2004. For more information and an application form, please visit the Institute’s website at http://www.usip.org/fellows, or contact the Jennings Randolph Program, U.S. Institute of Peace, 1200 17th Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036-3011, USA; phone: 202-429-3886; fax: 202-429-6063; e-mail: jrprogram@usip.org.

John Crist
Program Officer

Jennings Randolph Fellowship Program
The United States Institute of Peace (USIP)

African Studies Quarterly
The Online Journal for African Studies

The African Studies Quarterly (ASQ), published by the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida is:
- The first interdisciplinary, fully refereed on-line journal of African Studies
- Accessible to scholars worldwide
- Provides rapid publication of timely issues

ASQ accepts:
- Original scholarly manuscripts from all academic disciplines
- “At Issue”: Articles of opinion on public policy, academic debate, and issues of moral, philosophical, or artistic concern
- Contributions that maximize the interactive and graphic capabilities of the World Wide Web
- Reviews: Books and multimedia

ASQ invites submissions from all Africanist scholars in the U.S. and abroad. Please visit our website for submission guidelines and to see materials available for review. http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/.
Between Faith and History: A Biography of J. A. Kufuor, by Ivor Agyeman-Duah

Between Faith and History is a biographical essay that recounts the political journey of John Agyekum Kufuor to the Presidency of Ghana. Since the passage of time allows a degree of reflection, most scholars would agree that political biographies are best written long after such actors are off the political stage. This observation notwithstanding, the biography of President Kufuor is significant for the very reason that the author, Ivor Agyeman-Duah, avoided extended discussions of party platforms and policy analysis. In fact, the narrative ends with a restatement of J. A. Kufuor’s 30th December 2000 presidential victory speech; the author makes central to the narrative the story of Kufuor’s “long journey” to political leadership in his New Patriotic Party (NPP) and ultimately to the presidency of Ghana.

The nation’s intermittent post-independent political history of constitutional rule makes the described political journey a useful thesis to the biography. The author throws light on values inherent in the constitutional process as he reflects on his subject’s commitment to democratic parliamentary rule. Kufuor’s enthusiasm to engage in this ever-so-elusive process was attributed to his upbringing as well as to the nature of his education. In the first half of this eight-chapter book, the author describes Kufuor’s formative years. Mother Ama Dapaah played a central role in the making of the future leader.

Born in 1903 into an illustrious family, Madam Ama Dapaah grew to understand her Kumase environment. She fought hard to challenge the attempts of usurpers and influential men to deprive her of family land and cocoa farms. Her experiences shaped the values that she inculcated in her children. They were expected to work hard, encouraged to set higher standards for themselves, but were reminded to respect traditions. In fact, Madam Ama Dapaah had hoped that her younger son, J. A. Kufuor, “would one day become Apagyahene” – a traditional Kumase mmamadwa created by “Asantehene Osei Tutu Kwame Asibe Bonsu (d. 1824) for his son Owusu-Gyamadua.” However, Madam Ama Dapaah did not limit all her energies to domestic concerns, for she also showed active interest in the nation’s opposition politics in the form of making substantial financial contributions to the National Liberation Movement (NLM) and later to the United Party (UP). We are told that at her Apagyafie in Kumase, Madam Ama Dapaah received such national opposition figures as Baflour Osei Akoto, Dr. J. B. Danquah, and Professor K. A. Busia. Thus, while a mother’s hope that one day her younger son would inherit a traditional Kumase stool did not materialize, those contacts with national political luminaries engendered a positively unpredicted outcome. For example, it was Dr. K. A. Busia in 1959, who interested the young Kufuor in the study of constitutional law. The late Victor Owusu, another prominent party personality, became Kufuor’s practicing association at the Komfo Anokye Chambers in Kumase. Furthermore, Kufuor served in the Second Republic as Victor Owusu’s deputy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Progress Party (PP) government that Dr. Busia headed as Prime Minister. In other words, by virtue of his family associations, and by his own personal accomplishments, the author argues that John Agyekum Kufuor became a part of the system that is now described as the “Busia-Danquah Tradition.” His appearance onto the current political stage is, therefore, not by any sudden flight.

The biography culminates in Kufuor’s ascent to the presidency of Ghana in the year 2000. The previous national election losses in 1992 and 1996 taught the NPP very difficult lessons. For this party, which the historian Paul Nugent once described as best suited to be in the opposition, the central question in 1992 was whether a more youthful leadership was needed or whether it was sufficient to rely on recognizable opposition names and personalities to challenge the National Democratic Congress (NDC). By virtue of his public opposition to military regimes, and especially because of his bold criticism of the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) as having created in Ghana a “culture of silence,” Professor Adu Boahen emerged as the obvious voice for the NPP. While great enthusiasm was generated in support of the return to civilian rule, there was no official victory to be celebrated by the party. Notwithstanding Professor Adu Boahen’s view that the 1992 verdict was “stolen”, there was the unmentioned factor that the party did not have sufficient time to heal internal divisions that resulted from its own contest for the selection of the presidential candidate.

By redressing the situation much earlier before the 1996 election, the new and more youthful NPP presidential candidate, J. A. Kufuor, became more able to focus on party unity as well as paying attention to campaigning in the regions. Even though the NDC won parliamentary majority as well as the presidency that year, the NPP made progress by emerging as the leading opposition party in parliament. Ivor Agyeman-Duah is of the view that the NPP wins in the 2000 elections were not a surprise for two reasons. The first was that the NPP had a leader in the person of J. A. Kufuor who had become more comfortable in his role, and within the context of a united party, the presidential candidate campaigned indefatigably both home and abroad to explain the party’s agenda.

Many Ghanaians may claim to know the Kufuor story. Yet, this biographical essay is still important because of the author’s candid presentation of the individual aspirations and anxieties, party strategies, as well as the difficulties faced by the political actors. This narrative becomes more enjoyable if readers picture the actors in the context of other published works. In particular, two essays by the historian Paul Nugent come to mind: The Flight-Lieutenant and the Professor: The Road to Ghana’s Fourth Republic, and Big Men, Small Boys and Politics in Ghana: Power, Ideology and the Burden of History: 1982-1994. Certainly, these books will contribute to the discussion, especially regarding the politics of the Fourth Republic. As for Ivor Agyeman-Duah, he has, through the story of J. A. Kufuor, stressed the importance of the political process as a critical part of the democratic system. It comes as no surprise then that Professor Ali Mazrui wrote the forward to this narrative.

David Owusu-Ansah
Professor of History
James Madison University
This article is an ongoing study in which I am assessing Nigeria’s leadership self-perception in West Africa, given its human and material potential vis-à-vis the enduring centrifugal tendencies in the subregion. These tendencies are engendered by (a) the subregion’s colonial past, (b) contemporary major power politics, and (c) the enduring international anarchy. My task here is to consider all factors named above as dependent variables whose mitigating capacities can be mitigated not only by Nigeria’s ability to judiciously harness its material and human potentials, but also develop a national cultural environment that will enable it to actualize the leadership aspirations. In other words, I am arguing that for Nigeria to sustainably translate its leadership or hegemonic potentials and aspirations in West Africa into reality, it must develop a model of value beyond its population size, material resource endowments, and military capabilities. This model must counteract the centrifugal forces embedded in the enduring legacies of colonialism (which tie the subregion’s countries to their former colonizers), the increasing ties of neocolonialism in the subregion, as well as the usual problem of international anarchy.

It has been possible for regional organizations to get involved in managing international peace and security since the end of the Cold War. This may be a welcome development in the contemporary trend in global governance and desire for subsidiary arrangements, given the fact that the human and material capabilities of the UN are severely constrained in the wake of proliferative and apparently intractable conflicts world-wide.

The political situation in the West African subregion in the past two decades can be aptly described as a widespread disorder. As can be recalled, by the mid-1990s, five West African countries were engulfed in conflict, of which the violence in Liberia and Sierra Leone was the most devastating. The survival of the states and regimes in the subregion has been threatened to a level where the area has constituted a security complex, as Buzan used the term in 1983. It is primarily for this reason that the subregion’s preeminent organization, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), is currently serving more as a security community alongside its primary function as an economic grouping.

However, as Christopher Clapham noted in 2002, regional security management raises critical issues of power and resources, which are ultimately unavoidable from the problem of hegemony. In other words, not only is it impossible to conceive regional security management in isolation from the distribution of power among its members, but the very idea of a regional security community raises issues of leadership, which, in turn, raises the question of resources. It is at this point that Nigeria’s real and potential leadership role in West Africa comes in.

Relative to the other countries of the subregion and, indeed, the whole of tropical Africa (except South Africa), Nigeria stands out as a preeminent power. Comparing Nigeria to its immediate neighbors, Anthony Williams in 1991 noted that Nigeria’s power far outweighs that of the other West African states, separately or in combination. Nigeria’s preeminence in West Africa derives primarily from two factors: one is the size of its population and the other is its vast natural resources, particularly fossil oil and the enormously diversified vegetation and geological make-up. It should, therefore, not be surprising that Nigerians as a whole, in spite of their internal differences, have never concealed their self-image as the political and economic giant of Africa. In other words, Nigeria sees its leadership role in Africa and, in fact, in the Black world as a whole, as an historic mission, a sort of "manifest destiny."

There is no doubt that Nigeria has, on different occasions, shown its commitment to the actualization of this self-perception in Africa in general and West Africa in particular. Nigeria’s most recent demonstration of subregional leadership has been the formation of ECOMOG, its financing and contribution of troops to the ECOWAS Monitory Group (ECOMOG), which enabled the organization to interfere in conflicts in the subregion. In spite of these contributions, among others, there is no gainsaying the fact that, given the amount of resources that are available to it, Nigeria has yet to maximize its potential as far as the translating of these resources into sustainable regional leadership status is concerned.

The essence of the argument in this paper is that while material resources may be a useful tool in enhancing a hegemony’s military and diplomatic capabilities, the endurance of a contemporary hegemonic order will be determined primarily by the hegemony’s domestic behavior and practices, which must have a universal appeal to the other countries in that state system.

Ben K. Fred-Mensah
Department of Political Science
Howard University

"...[N]ot only is it impossible to conceive regional security management in isolation from the distribution of power among its members, but the very idea of a regional security community raises issues of leadership, which, in turn, raises the question of resources. It is at this point that Nigeria’s real and potential leadership role in West Africa comes in."
WARA Officers and Board of Directors

Officers:
**President:** Leonardo A. Villalón, *University of Florida*
**Vice President:** Emmanuel K. Akyeampong, *Harvard University*
**US Director:** Jennifer Yanco, *Boston University*
**Secretary:** Eileen Julien, *University of Maryland*
**Treasurer:** Catherine Boone, *University of Texas at Austin*

**Past President:** Edris Makward, *University of Wisconsin and University of the Gambia*
**Past US Director:** Leigh Swigart, *Brandeis University*

Board:
Robert Baum, *Iowa State University* (serving until 2005)
Debra Boyd, *Winston-Salem State University* (until 2005)
Gracia Clark, *Indiana University* (until 2005)
Barbara Cooper, *Rutgers University* (until 2004)
Mohamed Mbodj, *Manhattanville College* (until 2004)
Martha Saavedra, *University of California - Berkeley* (until 2004)
Godfrey Uzoigwe, *Mississippi State University* (until 2004)
Wendy Wilson-Fall, *WARC Director* (ex-officio)

**Institutional Members of WARA**
- Boston University
- Brandeis University
- Columbia University
- Concordia University Wisconsin
- Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE)
- Emory University
- Harvard University
- Johns Hopkins University, Paul H Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS)
- Kalamazoo College
- Michigan State University
- Rutgers University
- University of California - Berkeley
- University of California - Los Angeles (UCLA)
- University of Florida
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- University of Kansas
- University of North Florida
- University of Wisconsin - Madison
- Western Washington University
- Yale University

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