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AFRICAN DIASPORA 11 (2018) 1–2

**African
Diaspora**

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Editorial Introduction

We are happy and relieved to present the anniversary issue of *African Diaspora* (2008–2019). This double issue (volume 11) does not so much look back on the ten preceding issues as it looks forward and tries to get a grip on what ‘African Diaspora’ is and could become as a societal phenomenon, a scholarly field, and an editorial project.

To start with the latter, this anniversary issue opens with an editorial section composed of two interviews with previous editors who were instrumental in the creation and past success of *African Diaspora*, as well as two short, personal editorial statements by editors who joined the editorial team over the last years: Nauja Kleist and Tanja Müller.

The first interview with Kristine Krause and Rijk van Dijk harks back to the very beginning of the journal – to the time when Rijk as editor-in-chief and Kristine as a junior academic found themselves inspired and encouraged by co-editors Emmanuel Akyeampong and Francis Nyamnjoh and their outspoken transnational and interdisciplinary perspective on Africa and its diasporas. Following the first number which was, in many ways, programmatic in nature volumes two to nine have put ‘diaspora’ to work, so to speak, as a conceptual lever, a heuristic tool, and a dynamic actors’ category in order to explore Africa’s ongoing deterritorialisation and global interconnectedness.

These perspectives, accompanied by reflections on the situatedness of the journal and its editors, are also brought up in the interview with H  l  ne Neveu Kringelbach. For H  l  ne, the journal’s commitment to welcome and accommodate African scholars’ contributions as well as those of junior academics, both in English and in French, were major considerations to join the journal’s editorial team. In hindsight, *African Diaspora* has lived up to these expectations but its strong moorings in Europe – locus of the publisher and most of the editorial team – and its failure to substantially and sustainably engage editors based in Africa or the Americas, is a point of concern for all three interviewees. More generally, in order for *African Diaspora* to live up to its ‘global’ aspirations, it arguably should consider addressing the emerging theme of ‘planetary futures’ (climate change, the Anthropocene, etc.) in relation to Africa and its diasporas as well as opening dialogues with diasporic activists within specific post-colonial settings around the world.

In her personal editorial statement, Tanja M  ller also asks attention for “political diaspora in a broad sense”: on the one hand political remittances

and diasporic political entrepreneurs, and on the other hand emerging forms of ‘transnational lived citizenship’ often situated in everyday practices of belonging in urban contexts. Based on her work with Somali associations and intellectuals, Nauja Kleist also espouses the ‘politisisation’ of diaspora “as a position and a claim”. Furthermore, she invites future authors of *African Diaspora* to embrace and explore the full complexity of diaspora as a social, political and cultural phenomenon steeped in everyday transnational practices and imaginaries of belonging and boundary making.

These editorial reflections are followed by eleven invited contributions in three different sections. The first section ‘Keywords in African Diaspora’ is this issue’s modest contribution to a possible state of the art. The five keywords selected by the editorial team for this anniversary issue include Africanisms (Palmié), Afropolitanism (Ede), Conviviality (Heil), Mobility (Kleist), and Worlding (Beeckmans). This ‘project’ to explore the scholarly domain of African diaspora through a mixture of classic and topical keywords will be continued in the forthcoming issues. The second section ‘The future of African Diaspora’ will also carry on as a subsection albeit more limited than the five essays by leading scholars in this anniversary issue. Deborah Thomas, Paul Zeleza, Sarah Fila-Bakabadio, Lauren Wagner, and Jayne Ifekwunigwe reflect on or instantiate what they consider relevant for the future of African diasporas as a societal phenomenon. Together with the ‘Keywords’, the ‘Future’ contributions will inspire and guide our work as editors. Finally, the photo essay is a third new section this anniversary issue introduces. Christian Vium was invited to present some of his work on undocumented African migrants in Paris accompanied by a set of poignant ethical reflections on photography as an instrument of documentation and aesthetisation.

Apart from being excited that the anniversary issue has succeeded in inviting key authors to mark the occasion, we are confident that this will also signal a new start for the future direction of the journal. We hope that its publication will attract a range of new submissions speaking to the thematic lines, the concerns and aspirations touched on in this anniversary issue. In the meantime, two forthcoming special issues herald the relevance and urgency of *African Diaspora*: Victoria Bernal is putting together a special issue on “African digital diasporas: technologies, tactics, and trends”, while Marie-Laurence Flahaux and Marie Godin co-edit a special issue on “Returning, circulating, staying put: Complex family strategies among African migrants”.

Enjoy *African Diaspora* now and in the future.

The editors

Karel Arnaut, Nauja Kleist and Tanja Müller