

Editorial

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Coeditors-in-chief of *Sources. Materials & Fieldwork in African Studies* (2022-).

This fifth issue of *Sources* marks the first handover of our editorial leading team. After a transition of several months, Marie-Aude Fouéré and Ophélie Rillon, founders of the journal, have given way to Dorothée Boulanger and Chloé Buire as editors in chief in January 2023. Bastien Miraucourt remains the driving force behind the editing and publishing of our articles, including their digital ramifications (hosting of raw materials in open data repositories, construction of metadata, display of the sources as digital objects within the articles, etc.). The editorial board remains dedicated and mobilised and is progressively growing, welcoming colleagues from new horizons.

Because of its youth, *Sources* is not present so far on a major publishing platform, nor is it included yet in international indexes and directories of academic journals. Nevertheless, the journal is increasingly read and shared, and, given the number of article proposals we receive, our editorial line seems to be attracting more and more authors concerned with “highlight(ing) the places, moments, and agents of the (co-) production of knowledge that conventional academic writings usually minimize” (Fouéré, Rillon and Pommerolle 2020, §23).

A handover at the head of a journal is always a cause for celebration; it proves the academic vitality of a project and acknowledges a collective effort, which is still too often invisible amongst multiple academic responsibilities. It also tests the whole project’s capacity to adapt. We therefore take this opportunity to warmly thank Marie-Aude and Ophélie for trusting us, and letting the fruit of several years of work be nourished and directed by new hands. Above all, we thank them for creating such an open and benevolent space of intellectual companionship, not only within the editorial board, but also in the exchanges with the authors, with the proofreaders, with the teams coordinating the thematic issues and with the members of the reading committee.

We hope that this new phase in the development of *Sources* will also be an opportunity to strengthen the exchanges with those who read our articles. We will seek to intensify links with our partners on the African continent, first and foremost the UMIFRE teams that actively support the journal, but also the research and editorial teams with whom we work. This fifth issue also marks the conclusion of a

first editorial cross-fertilisation with the *Revue d'histoire contemporaine de l'Afrique* on the history of the Tutsi genocide in Rwanda.

If a journal is always a collegial adventure and a base for encounters, its *raison d'être* lies in the substance of the articles that we elaborate with the authors. Each issue opens up new possibilities, but also new challenges, in order to keep the promise of a journal where field data, the conditions of their production and the stakes of their interpretation can be approached together, without assuming any hierarchy between these different components of the construction of scientific knowledge. The articles in this *varia* issue underline the questions raised by our editorial project: Where do we draw the line between raw materials and the beginning of their interpretation (see, for example, the article by E. Ille and M. Salah, which explores the possibilities of StoryMaps, or that of C. Riffard on the “genetic” approach of literary manuscripts’ digitisation)? What are the conditions of reusability of our data, beyond the context of their elaboration or their first collection (see here the reflections of J. Pearce on photos taken on abandoned historical sites or of H. Bayoumi on more than a century of population censuses in Egypt)? To what extent is our research likely to interact with other media, other cultural forms (see the interview with C. Seignobos on the use of drawing in the scientific approach, or the round table presented by M. Le Lay on the question of theatrical representation)? What are the specific roles of local sources and research archives, not only in the creation of a more refined history of Africa, but also in a more accurate appropriation of this history by the communities concerned (see the reflection of V. Layne, from South Africa, or the translation into Kinyarwanda of the interview gathering P. Rutayisire, C.K. Mulinda and P. Gakwenzire)?

With *Sources*, Marie-Aude Fouéré and Ophélie Rillon believed that by placing empirical rigor at the heart of knowledge production and promoting its dissemination through open access, it was also possible to counteract the still highly unequal distribution of access of different scientific communities to the international academic publishing scene. It is clear that after three years of existence, we are struggling to include more colleagues working in African institutions, whether as authors, reviewers, thematic issue carriers or members of our committees. This is the epistemological and political task that will mobilise us in the years to come.

References

- Comités de rédaction de la *Revue d'histoire contemporaine de l'Afrique* et de *Sources : Matériaux et terrains en études africaines*. 2021. “Editorial : collaboration trans-revues RHCA et Sources sur l’histoire du génocide des Tutsi du Rwanda.” *Revue d'histoire contemporaine de l'Afrique* (“Annonces”). <https://oap.unige.ch/journals/rhca/announcement/view/15>.
- Fouéré, Marie-Aude, Ophélie Rillon, and Marie-Emmanuelle Pommerolle. 2020. “Why Sources? Empirical Rigour, Reflexivity, and Archiving in the Social Sciences and Humanities in African Studies.” *Sources. Materials & Fieldwork in African Studies*, no. 1: 23–42. <https://www.sources-journal.org/81>.