asa uk NEWSLETTER

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AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM ANNUAL REPORT 1998-1999

1. Summary of the Year

The year that has passed has been an active one for the Association. The Biennial Conference, *'Comparisons and Transitions'*, was most intellectually stimulating and well attended, attracting more than 250 participants and a record number of panels.

In May, *'African Readerships'*, organized by Stephanie Newell at Cambridge and jointly sponsored by ASAUK was a fully booked day packed with exciting speakers and panels.

At the moment of writing, *'Dimensions of Vulnerability'* (16th of September) organized by Angela Brown, at Coventry University and jointly sponsored by ASAUK bodes well to be a very interesting and well attended event.

More progress has been made on the issue of promoting electronic communication for the Association.. We look forward to announcing the details in the near future in the Newsletter.

As Secretary I annually monitor the membership of the Association and urge the current membership to redouble their efforts to recruit new members. Last year I noted with pleasure that the membership numbers had gone above 500 to 503. In 1995 the membership reached a high of 513, slipping to 508 in 1996 and to 497 in 1997. I am depressed to note that this year the total has once again dropped to 491. Again I must reiterate that while these are not major shifts in numbers, we must work hard to maintain the level at 500 members. I note that the greatest drop has been in student memberships which must be a matter of concern for the future of the organization. Again, I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that members of the Association must resolve to recruit non-members (both staff and students) in their respective associations and departments of the UK Universities. This will go some way to encouraging a new generation interested in supporting the work of ASAUK in promoting the academic study of Africa.

The financial health of the Association inspired the Council to agree to spend up to 5% of the accumulated surpluses annually to assist in the funding of colloquia, conferences and publications which were collective and not individual projects. This is to top up the £1,000 generously provided last year by the RAS. This year the Council laid out guidelines for the disbursing these funds and they were publicised in the *Newsletter*. Applications are made to the Council. Priorities in allocation of funds are to assist preparatory administration of a conference or workshop and travel or accommodation for participants from Africa. There are two deadlines for applications (the 30th November and the 15th of April) and successful applicants will be approved by the December and May Councils.

The year was spent in intense discussion with SCUSA. It has become increasingly apparent that having two organizations representing African Studies was a duplication of effort, time and resources. The membership of the Standing Committee on University Studies of Africa voted to

become the Committee on University Studies of Africa. CUSA and ASAUK have agreed that CUSA will merge its functions with ASAUK. (See below for organizational details).

2. Membership

	1998	*1999*
ASAUK Members (UK)	44	50
ASAUK Members (Overseas)	12	11
Joint Members (UK)	323	305
Joint Members (Overseas)	64	67
Student members (Joint UK)	47	43
Student Members (Joint Overseas)	47	5
Honorary Life members	4	4
Corporate Members (UK)	0	0
Corporate Members (Overseas)	1	1
Associate Members	6	5
TOTAL	**503**	**491**

3. The Council for the Coming Year (1998-1999)

Officers

President	Dr. John Lonsdale
Vice-President	Dr. Karin Barber
Hon. Secretary	Dr. Nici Nelson has agreed to stand again
Hon. Treasurer	Dr. Melissa Leach has agreed to stand again

Council Members

Retiring in 1999: Mr. James Currey*, Dr. Tim Allen, Dr. Reginald ClineCole, Dr. Richard Crook, Dr. Debby Gaitskill, Prof. Richard Hodder Williams*, Dr. Douglas Johnson*, Dr. Martin Lynn, Dr. Ian Scones
**indicates a co-opted member of Council*

Retiring in 2000 Dr. Tanya Bowyer-Bower, Louise de la Gorgendiere, Dr. Alfred Zack-Williams

Retiring in 2001 Dr. Mario Aguilar, Dr. Angela Browne, Dr.Ato Quayson

4. Administration

Administration ran its usual smooth course this year. The absence of the Secretary, Nici Nelson, between October and April, went unnoticed. Alfred Zack-Williams efficiently acted as secretary for that period. The Council would like to tender its thanks to him for his assistance.

Over the year Lindsay Allan ran the day to day office business of ASAUK with her usual efficiency and cheerfulness. Sadly, she fell ill in August of 98 and was away from the office until October, gladly fully recovered. Her presence during the Conference month (held at SOAS) was sorely missed, though an enthusiastic team of assistants willingly substituted and helped bring the Conference off in fine style. The Council of the ASAUK would once again like to acknowledge the central role played by Lindsay Allan in the effective running of the ASAUK and the RAS.

In May of this year Mel Balloch, Treasurer of the RAS carried out a thorough review of the work Lindsay does for both associations and the amount which ASAUK pays for her work. The financial relationship between the two organizations is in the process of being renegotiated. (See below under 'Relations with Other Professional Bodies').

5. Conferences & Symposia

- *14-16 September, 1998*, Biennial Conference: *'Comparisons and Transitions'* held at SOAS, University of London. The conference organizer, John Peel, with the help of the Council, succeeded in bringing together approximately 70 paper givers in 28 panels. More than 250 people attended. With the active cooperation of the African Centre, Ms. Shakura Nduhukire, Programme Organizer for the Arts, arranged an interesting cultural performance on Monday night featuring poetry and music by African Artists. The conference realized a substantial surplus.
- *15 May 1999, 'African Readerships'* organized by Stephanie Newell, jointly sponsored by ASAUK, the African Studies Centre at Cambridge University, the University of Kent and the Royal Africa Society attracted 80 participants with 13 paper givers.
- *16 of September, 1999, 'Dimensions of Vulnerability'* organized by Angela Browne at Coventry University African Studies Centre.

6. Relations with Other Professional Bodies

Royal African Society. As always, relations between the two associations are mutually useful, pleasant and beneficial. We continue to have joint members on each other's Councils. The Secretary of the ASAUK is a member of RAS Speakers and Publications sub-committee. RAS has generously agreed to increase the sum made available annually for conferences in the field of African Studies from £1000 to £2000. The monies are intended to assistant organizations running conferences and ASAUK is responsible for its distribution. A process is now in place to take bids, make selections and administer the money.

As indicated above the financial relationship between the two organizations must be re-thought. Effectively RAS has been subsisdizing ASAUK by assuming most of the costs of running the Office. A working party consisting of Lindsay Allan, the Treasurer of RAS, the President and Secretary met over the summer and suggestions have been drawn up to correct the situation. ASAUK has been asked to pay 5% of the administrative costs of the office in exchange for 10% of Lindsay Allan's time, a most generous arrangement on the part of the RAS. This level of payment will be retained for 3 years, and reviewed in midyear 2002. In order to raise this money, a number of measures have been mooted, such as raising ASAUK subscriptions, delegating more of the work currently done by Lindsay, and removing much of the work. Lindsay currently does for the Biennial Conference.

The Coordinating Council of Area Studies Associations. Our membership and participation in this coordinating body continues to be useful. It allows the Association to keep a finger on the pulse of HFCE initiatives and the developments in the pending Research Assessment exercise. We continue to monitor HFCE initiatives and to respond on behalf of African Studies.

The Standing Committee on University Studies of Africa. The Committee has changed its name to the Committee for University Studies of Africa. It will be divided into 5 regions, holding regional meetings. There will be one meeting a year. There will be a merger with ASAUK. The Chairperson of CUSA will be the Vice-President of ASAUK and the Deputy Chairperson/Secretary of CUSA will be an ex-official member of the ASAUK Council, as one of the co-opted members. It is hoped that in this way the good work of SCUSA will continue unimpaired but more efficiently.

The International African Institute. We remain an institutional member of the Institute.

Standing Conference on Library Materials in Africa. The Council has a co-opted member, Dr. David Killingray, who is our representative on SCOLMA Council in order the ensure an exchange of information between our two organizations.

Dr. Nici Nelson
Honorary Secretary
16 September, 1999

AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION
REPORT OF THE HONORARY TREASURER
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 1998

1. Attached are the annual accounts for the ASAUK, prepared from our books by Messrs. Uppal and Warr. Below is a summary of the principal figures for 1998 as compared with the previous year:

	1998	1997
Gross income	8,442	4,730
Expenditure	2,368	1,708
NET INCOME	*6,074*	*3,022*
Current assets	38,433	29,188
Current liabilities	4,882	1,711
NET CURRENT ASSETS	*33,551*	*27,477*

The accounts thus show a continued strong situation for the Association's finances, with a significant excess of income over expenditure during 1998 resulting in an increase in current assets.

2. 1998 was a biennial conference year, so levels of income and expenditure are both relatively high. The highly successful conference at SOAS was run with great economy, and itself yielded an excess of income over expenditure of nearly £3,000.

3. Net income comprises receipts from the conference and from subscriptions, minus our affiliation fees to the Royal African Society, conference expenses, and expenditures for the year on postage and stationery, accountancy, the ASAUK newsletter and a small level of bank charges.

4. No additions were made to the African Scholars' Trust Fund during 1998, the usual locus for depositing sundry donations and gifts made to the association. Nevertheless the fund still holds £585 carried over from 1997. Lack of applications meant these funds were not able to be spent, as intended, on assistance to African scholars travelling to the biennial conference.

5. The financial and administrative relationship between the ASAUK and the Royal African Society has been under discussion, and proposed minor changes to ASAUK financial and administrative arrangements are likely to follow. In this context it is encouraging to note the ASAUK's continued accumulation of assets, as this gives the Association both a degree of flexibility –and indeed obligation–to ensure a fair re-negotiation of arrangements with the RAS which has been so generous and supportive in the past.

6. Very many thanks must go, as usual, to Lindsay Allan for her continued hard work in running the everyday administrative and financial affairs of the ASAUK so smoothly and efficiently.

Melissa Leach
9 September 1999

Income & Expenditure Account For the Year Ended 31st December 1998

	1998		1997	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
Subscriptions received	6,062		5,986	
Less: Royal African Society affiliation fees	3,128		3,203	
		2,934		2,783
Conference receipts	15,782			
Less: Conference expenses	12,580		----------	
		3,202		
Symposia/Day workshop receipts	-		516	
Less: Symposia/Day workshop exp	-		344	
		-		172
Interest received		2,306		1,775
		8,442		4,730
EXPENDITURE				
Printing, postage and stationery	182		359	
Sundry expenses	84		71	
Audit and accountancy	617		588	
Bank charges	69		59	
ASAUK newsletter	676		631	
Donations	740		-	
		2,368		1,708
NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR		£ 6,074		£ 3,022

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 1998

	1998		1997	
	£	£	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash at bank and in hand	1,767		104	
Investments	36,251		28,981	
Other debtors	415		103	
		38,433		29,188
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Sundry creditors	4,882		1,711	
		4,882		1,711
		£ 33,551		£ 27,477
Financed by:				
ACCUMULATED FUND				
Balance at 1 January 1998	26,892		23,870	
African Scholars Trust Fund at 1 January 1998	585		585	
Net income for the year	6,074		3,022	
		33,551		27,477
AFRICAN SCHOLARS TRUST FUND		-		-
		-----		-----
		£ 33,551		£ 27,477

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Leeds University Centre for African Studies

Lionel Cliffe & Jane Plastow write: 'Like a phoenix +from the ashes the African Studies Unit has now metamorphosed and re-emerged as the Leeds University Centre for African Studies (LUCAS)! We are also delighted that we have acquired new premises, including a significantly larger library-cum-reading-room-cum-meeting-room in 11.13 of the Economics and Social Studies Building. We will shortly be appointing a new librarian/administrator so that the facilities can become fully operational and we can resume activities, the newsletter, seminar series, library services, etc.' The Centre marked its re-opening with seminar on 30 November celebrating the life of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere. It will be co-hosting the ROAPE conference in April (see 'Conferences Future' below).

Deadline Reminders

Members who are organizing conferences are reminded that the fund in support of workshops and conferences has been expanded (see *Newsletters* 4/14 & 5/17, and section 1 of the Annual Report above). The deadlines this year for applications for financial assistance are 15 April and 30 November.

The deadline for the submission of theses for the Audrey Richards Prize 2000 is 30 June. Theses which have been approved between 1 January 1998 and 31 December 1999 are eligible, but must be submitted by the successful candidate's supervisor (see the terms for the prize in *Newsletter* 5/17). Theses should be sent to Lindsay Allen, Hon. Secretary of the ASAUK, School of Oriental and African Studies, Thornhaugh St., Russell Sq., London WC1H 0XG.

Meetings, Lectures and Events

24 January–13 March: University of Cambridge African Studies Centre's Research Seminar Series. Theme: Southern Africa, with Frank Carey, Ola Uduku, Hilary Sapire, Christopher Williams, Jeremy Krikler, Bheki Peterson and Jan Hogendorn. The seminars will take place at Centre for Family Research (next to the African Studies Centre) New Museums Site, Free School Lane, Cambridge. All are welcome to attend. Details of talks on website: www.african.cam.ac.uk

Conferences Future...

Conference listings may appear twice: one short and one long, the second notice appearing in the nearest quarterly number prior to the conference date. Organisers are invited to keep the Newsletter up-to-date with any changes or additions to earlier notices.

UNITED KINGDOM

9-10 April: *'Economic Development in Sub-Saharan Africa'*, to be held at The Centre for the Study of African Economies at the University of Oxford. The theme will be 'Opportunities in Africa: Micro-evidence on firms and households'. The keynote address will be given by Chris Udry. Contact: Sandra Mallinson, Africa Conference, CSAE, Department of Economics, Manor Road Building, Manor Road, Oxford OX1 3UL (United Kingdom); email:

sandra.mallinson@economics.oxford.ac.uk. For more information about the conference as it becomes available consult the web site at http://www.csae.ox.ac.uk.

5 May: *'New African Diasporas'*, University College London, co-sponsored by the ESRC Transnational Communities Research Programme, Migration Research Unit (University College London), St. Antony's College (Oxford University), Centre of African Studies (University of London). This one-day colloquium is intended to produce a volume for the new Global Diasporas series published by UCL/Routledge. The workshop will be organised around three main themes: Dispersal and Expansion, Transnational Identities and Activities, Return and the Meaning of 'Home'. Contact: Dr. Khalid Koser, Department of Geography, 26 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AP; tel: +44-(0)171-380 –564; fax: +44-(0)-171-380-7565; email: kkoser@geography.ucl.ac.uk.

1 July: *'South Africa Past, Present & Future'*, St. Mary's College, Twickenham, UK. The theme is taken from a book of the same title which is to be launched on the day. The theme is taken from a book of the same title which is to be launched on the day. The book and the conference involve historians and geographers considering recent developments in the South African historiography, critical approaches to global 'development' discourse and practice and the theoretical implications of political transition. Speakers are Tony Binns, Alan Lester, Cheryl McEwan, Etienne Nel, Jenny Robinson, Hilary Sapire, Christopher Saunders and David Simon. A panel discussion will be chaired by Saul Dubow. Costs will be £45 waged and £30 unwaged, including coffee/tea and buffet lunch. Contact: Alan Lester, Geography Department St. Mary's College, Waldegrave Road, Twickenham TW1 4SX, UK; email: lestera@smuc.ac.uk; tel: +44-(0)181-240-4077.

28-30 November: *The Review of African Political Economy* holds its millennium conference *'Africa: Capturing the Future'* at the University of Leeds. The conference will cover a wide variety of themes concerned with Africa's contemporary and future politics including class & civil society, gender, 'empowerment' & participation, and regionalism. Fees are £150 residential; £90 per day; £110 unwaged residential; £50 unwaged per day. Some scholarships are available on application. To book or offer a paper, please write to: ROAPE Conference, PO Box 678, Sheffield, S1 1BF. Further information on the panels can be found at http://www.roape.org/conference.html; Dr. Graham Harrison, Department of Politics, University of Sheffield, Elmfiel, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU; tel: +44-(0)114-222-1686; fax: +44-(0)114-273-9769.

INTERNATIONAL

8 January–8 May: *'International Policies, African Realities'*, an electronic roundtable co-sponsored by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Africa Policy Information Center (APIC), Washington, D.C. The objective of the Roundtable is to provide an electronic space in which Africans, North Americans and others can discuss what policy perspectives and understandings of African reality should shape international engagement with Africa. The Roundtable will will be divided into four month-long sessions, each session focusing on a specific theme. The themes include in order: Economy and Development, Democracy and Human Rights, Peace & Security, Education & Culture. Contact: Karin Santi (karin@africapolicy.org) or APIC, tel: +1-202-546-7961; fax: +1-202-546-1545; email: apic@igc.org.

30 March-1 April: The German Society of Africanists (Vereinigung von Afrikanisten in Deutschland) will be holding its biennial conference, *'Afrika 2000'* at the Universitiy of Leipzig.

Panels will be held in English and in German. Contact the organizers: Robert Kappel & Adam Jones at the Institut für Afrikanistik, Universität Leipzig, Burgstrasse 21, D-04109 Leipzig, Germany; tel: +49-(0)341-9737037; fax: +49-(0)341-9737048; email: kappel@rz.uni-leipzig.de; jones@rz.uni-leipzig.de; website: http://www.vad-ev.de.

27-30 May: The Canadian Association of African Studies will be meeting with the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Alberta, Edmonton. Further information about the Conference is obtainable from Ms Loy Denis, Canadian Association of African Studies, c/o CETASE, Université de Montreal, C.P. 6128, Succ. Crentre-Ville, Montreal, Quebec H3C 3J7, CANADA; tel: +1-514-343-6569; fax: +1-514-343-7716; email: denm@cetase.umontreal.ca To receive information for participants re registration, fees, accommodation, sightseeing trips, etc., please contact the Congress Secretariat by email: congress@hssfc.ca.

...*Conferences Past*

'Dimensions of Vulnerability', the ASAUK Biennial Symposium, held at Coventry University on 16 September 1999, attracted more than seventy delegates from Senegal, Uganda, Tunisia, South Africa, the UK and other European countries, academics as well as persons from policy-making communities. Fifteen papers were given in panels organised around five major topics: conflict, war & vulnerability; farmers' vulnerability; the Great Lakes Region; economic vulnerability; and disasters & vulnerability. Speakers highlighted the vulnerability of those exposed to war and conflict, climatic uncertainties and fluctuating wages and market prices. Their accounts described the traumas, as well as the persistence, of those driven from their homes, faced with crop shortfalls or living on the streets. In addition many presentations explored practical programmes and political strategies by which peace might be secured, the vulnerable protected, and asylum seekers offered justice. Mechanisms for vulnerability reduction at community, state and international levels were discussed by speakers. The symposium also provided the forum for the Royal African Society Mary Kingsley-Zochonis Annual Lecture, given by Rev. Dr John Waliggo, professor of History at Uganda Martyrs University and a Commissioner for the Uganda Human Rights Commission on 'Right to peace: suffering and hope in war-torn northern Uganda.' The African Studies Centre at Coventry is extremely grateful for the financial support of ASAUK and the Royal African Society for funds assisting in the administration of the conference and for travel for participants from Senegal and Tunisia.

Research and Discussion Group of Democracy & Development in Africa.

The Research and Discussion Group of Democracy and Development in Africa is a multidisciplinary research and discussion group involving not only scholars, but on-site international development workers as well as those interested in the issues involved who come from a variety of educational and experiential backgrounds. This field of interest is relatively large and embraces a large number of multidisciplinary studies, notably law, social sciences, communications. Here are a number of questions that we will be focusing upon: How can the West promote democracy (civil societies and African populations themselves) in Africa and establish and reinforce the rights of the state? Most importantly to guarantee fair voting practices? What new solutions can we propose for resolving the problem of the debt and inequality of economic exchange? How can a developing nation sell their primary resources at normal prices for exportation? In default, what can we do to limit the consequences of these inequitable practices? How can we understand the contradictions between what is said by

westerners (democracy, human rights, etc.) and what is done (tolerating dictatorships) in Africa? How can we realise a stronger collaboration between social organisations and inter-city partnerships in Africa and the West? The group will be addressing everyone who wants to exchange experiences, analysis, and propositions. The people will need access to the internet and will need to have the ability to converse in English or in French. We would like to have participants worldwide. If you are interested please e-mail a summary of your interests and how you would like to get involved to: Alphonse Cilumba (President of Quebec-Canada-Africa Axis); aqca@hotmail.com; tel: 1-514-525-7481; fax: 1-514-387-4244.

Quebec-Canada-Africa Axis is a research group that seeks to establish a link between the North and South and increase the ability of the African continent to become economically independent.

James Currey Publishers and Hans Zell to Team Up

A new partnership has been announced between James Currey and Hans Zell that will ensure that there is at least a modest measure of continuity for the Hans Zell Publishers list of African studies reference resources, following the discontinuation of the Hans Zell imprint under Bowker-Saur/Reed Business Information. A small range of new titles will be published as an imprint of James Currey Publishers, and, additionally, James Currey has also taken over stocks and distribution of four recently published Hans Zell backlist titles. The first title to be published by James Currey under the Hans Zell imprint will be the continuation of Bernth Lindfors's *Black African Literature in English*, and the new volume will cover a further five-year period, 1992-1996. The four volumes published to date provide comprehensive coverage of critical writing, and bibliographical material, interviews, etc. on anglophone black African literature. The 1992-1996 volume is scheduled for publication in August 2000. For more information: Hans Zell, Hans Zell Publishing Consultants, 11 Richmond Road, PO Box 56, Oxford OX1 2SJ, UK; tel: +44-(0)1865-511428; fax: +44-(0)1865-311534; email: hzell@dial.pipex.com; web site: http://www.hanszell.co.uk/; or James Currey, James Currey Publishers, 73 Botley Road, Oxford OX2 0BS,UK; tel: +44-(0)1865-244111; fax: +44-(0)1865-246454; email: jamescurrey@dial.pipex.com; web site: http://www.jamescurrey.co.uk.

New African Journal

The African Research and Documentation Centre, Uganda Martyrs University, Kampala, is bringing out a new journal, *Mtafiti Mwafrika*. All research on African reality will be considered: culture, business practices, accountancy, African values, philosophy, human resource management, and many more. For details contact Gladys Kirungi, ARDC, Uganda Martyrs University, P.O. Box 5498 Kampala; tel: +256-(0)481-21894; fax: +256-(0)481-21898; email: umu@imul.com. Subscriptions for six issues a year are: in Africa, US $42; outside Africa US $47.

Theses Recently Accepted at UK Universities

The Newsletter depends on supervisors and successful candidates to supply us with details of new theses.

Mutua, Eddah Mbula, 'Aspects of information flow and strategies of communication among women's groups in rural Kenya: the case of Central Division, Machakos District', PhD,

Department of Information and Library Studies, University of Wales Aberystwyth (November 1999).

Recent and Forthcoming Publications

Listings of recently published or forthcoming books by ASAUK/RAS members. Members are invited to send in details, including number of pages, ISBN numbers, price and publication date (where known).

Peter Alexander, *Workers, War & the Origins of Apartheid* (Oxford: James Currey) 256pp. ISBN 0-85255-766-3 (cloth) £40.00; 0-85255-765-5 (paper) £14.95 (March).

Jones Huw M. & Meurig G.M. Jones, *A Gazetteer of the Second Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902* (Milton Keynes: The Military Press) ixpp + 286pp, 2 figures, 7 maps. ISBN 0-85420-180-7 (cloth) £45.00; ISBN 0-85420-175-0 (paper) £25.00 (1999).

Jones, Sue & Nici Nelson (eds), *Urban Poverty in Africa: From Understanding to Alleviation* (London: Intermediate Technology Publications) 272 pp. ISBN 1-85339-474-2 £15.95/$27.50 (November 1999).

Richard Rathbone, *Nkrumah & the Chiefs: The Politics of Chieftaincy in Ghana, 1951-60* (Oxford: James Currey). ISBN 0-85255-771-X (cloth) £40.00; 0-85255-770-1 (paper) £14.95 (March).

Rimmer, Douglas & Anthony Kirk-Greene (eds), *The British Intellectual Engagement with Africa in the Twentieth Century* (London: Macmillan). ISBN 0-333-69593-3, £45.00 (March).

Appointments, Academic Links and Exchanges

Centre of African Studies, University of London: Goolam Vahed, lecturer at the University of Durban-Westville, South Africa, arrives at the Centre for three months beginning January on an Oppenheimer Academic Fellowship, researching 'Indian Islam and the meaning of South African citizenship: a question of identities. Four scholars on the East African Visiting Scholarship Scheme will be at the Centre from January to March. Kibet Ngetich, Sociology & Anthropology Department, Kenyatta University, Kenya, researching 'Ethnic relations in Kenya: opportunities and constraints in inter-ethnic harmony in Njoro Division, Nakuru District'; B.K. Chacha, adjunct lecturer, History Department, University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, Kenya, researching 'Ecological degradation in Kenya: the impact of British American Tobacco Company's contract farming on the ecology of marginal areas of Kuria District of south-western Kenya, 1969-1989. Ngassa Dindi, lecturer in Law, Institute of Finance Management, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, researching 'Emerging international standards on legal prevention and judicial control of corruption and the lessons to Tanzania'. Dominica Dipio, Makerere University, Uganda, researching 'The narrative structure of African films: a tool for cultural appreciation.'

Awards, Prizes and Fellowships

Amaury Talbot Prize for African Anthropology 1999: The Amaury Talbot Prize for 1999 of about £500 will be awarded to the author or authors of the work which, in the opinion of the

judges, is the most valuable work of African anthropology submitted. Only works published during the calendar year 1999 are eligible. Works relating to any region of Africa are eligible, but preference will be given in the first place to Nigeria, and in the second place to any other part of West Africa or to West Africa in general. All applications, together with two copies of the book, article or work in question, should be set by 29 February 2000 to: Amaury Talbot Prize Coordinator, Royal Anthropological Institute, 50 Fitzroy St., London W1P 5HS. The Institute undertakes the academic administration of the Prize on behalf of the Trustees, Barclays Bank Trust Co. Ltd. Entries will not be returned to candidates.

Postscript: 'A Tax Office in the Gambia. . .' or, Whose Millennium?

Those who did not head for the hills in Wyoming (or go skiing in Montana) to await the End-of-Civilization-as-We-Know-It in relative safety will not have been disappointed by the failure of the Doom Watch countdown on the wall-to-wall television coverage on New Year's Eve/Day. Nuclear power plants did not shut down, inter-continental ballistic missiles were not automatically launched, cash machines continued to dispense cash, and e-mail chattered on ceaselessly (I know, I sent some myself after midnight).

The only serious casualty of the Millennium Bug seems to have been 'a tax office in the Gambia' who by 10 PM GMT were reported to be having trouble with their computers. Not quite the New Barbarism so widely predicted and expected. No one explained why a tax office in the Gambia (or anywhere else) would be open so late on New Year's Eve for anything other than sinister purposes. It was later acknowledged that perhaps the problems were unrelated to the Millennium, and we still await a follow-up report to find out whether Gambians are being taxed more, less, or not at all.

The lead up to, and falling away from, millennial reporting has brought the spotlight of the British press on to, of all places, Timbuktu. A centre of trade and learning some thousand years ago, more recently a byword for remoteness, Timbuktu is now On-line. This is not a story to dispel Millennium Angst, however. As one teacher remarked, she never had thought of herself before as being isolated. It was only after logging on that she discovered how remote from the rest of the world she really was. Is global shrinking only virtual? As the world links electronically, will we re-discover how large it is?

Meanwhile, historians who have insisted – relentlessly, correctly but tediously – that the beginning of the 21st Century, and the Third Millennium, is next year rather than this, have found a surprising ally. Fidel Castro has announced that Cuba's Millennium celebrations will begin on 1 January 2001. But perhaps this is not so surprising. Cuba is the last Marxist country, and Marxism is founded on the belief in the forces of history. Having suffered some major predictive failures of late, will this renewed strict adherence to historical reckoning mark a Marxist millennial comeback? (*Phil Space*)

Note to Contributors

The *Newsletter* solicits short reports (of around 2-300 words) on recent conferences, announcements of forthcoming conferences, symposia and workshops (giving topic, date, venue, and contact address), announcements of the awarding of grants, fellowships and prizes, news of appointments and visiting fellowships, publication announcements of books by members, and brief articles or notices on matters of importance to Africanists in the UK. All items for inclusion in the *Newsletter* should be sent to Douglas H. Johnson, Editor, ASAUK Newsletter, James Currey Publishers, 73 Botley Road, Oxford OX2 0BS (fax: (+44) (0)1865-246454), or e-mail: 106155.3441@compuserve.com (please send as text, not as attachments). *Deadlines* are *31 December* (for the January Newsletter),. *Deadlines* are *31 December* (for the January Newsletter), *25 March* (for April), *25 June* (for July), and *30 September* (for October). Any opinions expressed are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the ASAUK.

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