



# NEWSLETTER

---

Volume 6 Number 21

October 2000

*ASAUK 2000  
Africa: Past, Present & Future*

The Association's first biennial conference of the millennium was held at Trinity College, Cambridge and by all account it was a rousing success. There were 29 panels consisting of 75 papers. Given the all-embracing theme, contributions too reflected this inclusive approach including the vexed issue of economic development, power and conflict in colonial and post-colonial eras, kinship and family structure, urban religious movements, literature and cultural theories, transport and rural access, civil society democracy and oral tradition, Africa's street children, gender and conflict, conflict resolution and sustainable peace and human rights. The Presidential Address, 'Africa: the hopeful continent', was a direct challenge to the air Afro-pessimism now pervading writings on Africa, and in particular the caption of Richard Dowden's 'The hopeless continent' which appeared in *The Economist* in May this year. Delegates left enthused by this inspiring address.

It was quite pleasing to see the strong contributions from NGOs. The association has now set up a sub-committee on human rights to be convened by Martin Hill of Amnesty International. Members who are interested in working on or for human rights protection in Africa could contact Martin at [mhill@amnesty.org](mailto:mhill@amnesty.org) (see article below). However panels on science, health and the diaspora were poorly represented. We need to encourage Africanists working on health issues such as malaria, nutrition, HIV/AIDS to join our association. With regards to the diaspora, the links connecting Africa and the diaspora need to be explored through scholarly papers. At a time of dwindling aid budget, it is important to see the role being played by what is now referred to as 'the new diaspora' in sustaining African economies via remittances. There are now a large number of self-help groups and NGOs run by Diasporic Africans, such as the African Foundation for Development, and we need to encourage members of these groups to take up ASAUK membership. The association will welcome suggestions from readers on how these links can be fostered.

At the AGM Karin Barber, the Vice-President was elected President; Nici Nelson, the long-serving Secretary was elected Vice-President; Richard Hodder-Williams was re-elected Honorary Treasurer, and Alfred Zack-Williams was elected Honorary Secretary. (*Alfred Zack-Williams*)

### *Audrey Richards Prize*

The three prize winners of the Audrey Richards Thesis Prize were announced at ASAUK's biennial meeting at Cambridge. 1st prize: Ruth Watson (Oxford), 'Chieftaincy politics and civic consciousness in Ibadan history, 1829-1939'. Joint 2nd prizes: Annette Czekelius, (SOAS) 'Artistry and effectiveness in language use: the evaluation of ways of speaking among the Berba of Benin'; Jessica Schafer (Oxford), 'Soldiers at peace: the post-war politics of demobilised soldiers in Mozambique, 1964-1996'. The publishers who contributing some £700 worth of books for the prize were: Cambridge University Press, Carfax (now in Taylor and Francis), James Currey, Edinburgh University Press, Macmillan-Heinemann, Oxford University Press, Pearson Education (incorporating Longman). The prizes will be awarded after the AGM of the Royal African Society on 30 May 2001 (details to be announced).

### *Distinguished Africanist Award*

The ASAUK announces the inauguration of a 'Distinguished Africanist Award' to recognise those whose work has with distinction promoted the cause of academic African studies in the United Kingdom. The intention is to pay tribute to the people who have done so much to enhance and illuminate our understanding of Africa. The ASAUK will normally confer publicly up to two awards at each biennial conference. In the first instance, however, in order to launch the award in timely and splendid style, we propose to make up to six awards in the next two years: three to be announced at the inter-conference AGM in May 2001 and three at the September 2002 ASAUK conference.

Nominations for the first round of awards must be received by 1 January 2001, with a list of the candidate's major publications or other supporting material. Nominations will be considered by a panel consisting of the ASAUK's four honorary officers, who will seek ratification of their decision at the May Council meeting. Nominations should be sent to Mrs Lindsay Allan, ASAUK, SOAS, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG.

### *Human Rights and the ASAUK*

At the AGM on 13 September this was raised under an AOB item by Dr Martin Hill, a Council member. He reported that the Council had asked him to bring to the AGM's attention the Council's decision at its 11 September meeting to form a working group to make proposals to the next Council meeting in December on how human rights issues could be brought into the ASAUK's activities. Following on ASAUK President John Lonsdale's address about 'hope and involvement' with regard to the serious issues facing Africa in this new millennium, the range of possibilities could include encouraging more talks or seminars on human rights issues or crises, publishing articles and announcing events in *The Newsletter*, undertaking activities in collegial support for academics in Africa who have become refugees or political prisoners, and any other issues relevant to the association. Martin Hill is coordinating this working group, which will consist mainly but not exclusively of Council members. He requests ideas and communications from interested ASA members to help the working group prepare its proposals. These should be sent to him by the end of November at [mjdhill@aol.com](mailto:mjdhill@aol.com). He added that the issues are complex and difficult and that the working group will ensure that human rights activities

undertaken by the association would be conducted in accordance with the best standards of academic inquiry, independence and ethics, and would be designed so that they did not obstruct the broader activities of the ASA or its members.

### *Africa Journals Online*

The International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) is pleased to announce the launch of African Journals Online, AJOL 2000. This service continues and expands the AJOL pilot project, which began in 1998. AJOL offers free online access to the contents of scholarly journals published in Africa. Its objectives are to: provide access to research undertaken and published in Africa; increase knowledge about African scholarship; strengthen African journal publishing. New features include: more journals (at the moment 36 titles are on site, with the aim to have 50 journals, in English but excluding South Africa); more subjects (agricultural sciences, health, social sciences in addition to science and technology); abstracts of articles as well as tables of contents (TOCs); back files maintained for up to five years; key word search of journal contents; links to full text (if available on the Web). The document delivery service is continued, with proceeds being returned to the journals. For more information and to use the service, go to <http://www.inasp.org.uk/ajol>. Take advantage of the special introductory offer of free photocopies for the first six months.

### *Meetings, Lectures and Events*

**5 Oct:** The first meeting in the series '*The World Development Report on Poverty: What does it mean for us?*' will take place between 1 pm and 2.15 pm on Thursday 5 October at ODI's new offices at 111 Westminster Bridge Road, SE1 7JD – a short walk from either County Hall or Waterloo station (buses 211 or 507 from Victoria Street); nearest tube station Lambeth North (Bakerloo Line). The speakers will be Simon Maxwell, ODI Director and Roumeen Islam. Confirmation of attendance and any enquiries will be welcomed by Hanne Galteland at ODI ([h.galteland@odi.org.uk](mailto:h.galteland@odi.org.uk); tel: 020 7922-0386).

**9 Oct–27 Nov:** African Studies Centre, University of Cambridge, Research Seminars, Michaelmas Term 2000, Mondays at 5.00pm, Committee Room, Faculty of Social & Political Sciences, New Museums Site, Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RQ. Speakers this term are Elizabeth Isichei, Douglas Akinjogbin-McCabe, Ambreena Manji, Noah Kofi Karley, Khalid Mubarak, Wangui wa Goro, David Lehmann, John Harrington.

**17 Oct:** Gill Lusk, Deputy Editor, *Africa Confidential*, '*Newspeak: where words mean their opposite*', first meeting of the Africa Business Group, run by the Centre of African Studies, SOAS, in association with *Africa Confidential*. Contact: Jackie Collis, Centre of African Studies (tel: (+44) 020-78984370; email: [jc7@soas.ac.uk](mailto:jc7@soas.ac.uk)). ATTENDANCE BY INVITATION ONLY.

**7 Nov:** The Britain Tanzania Society in association with The Centre of African Studies, SOAS, is organising a workshop for NGOs and Link Organisations entitled '*Aid to Tanzania*'. There will be presentations by five or six large NGOs including Action Aid, Christian Aid, Traidcraft, and World Vision. A charge £5 (£2 students) will be made (refreshments and sandwich lunch included). For further information contact Roy Galbraith on email: [roygal@aol.com](mailto:roygal@aol.com).

15 Nov: Jon Marks, Editor, *FT*, 'African energy: corporate responses to developing Africa's energy resources', second meeting of the Africa Business Group, in association with *Africa Confidential*. Contact: Jackie Collis, Centre of African Studies (tel: (+44) 020-78984370; email: jc7@soas.ac.uk). ATTENDANCE BY INVITATION ONLY.

5 & 7 Dec: Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, Woodstock Road, Oxford, open lectures on Tuesdays at 10:00 am will include: Wendy James, 'Anthropologists, missionaries, and the study of religion in practice' (5 Dec) and Ben Knighton, 'African Traditional Religion' (7 Dec).

### 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. Organizers are invited to keep the Newsletter up-to-date with any changes or additions to earlier notices.*

#### UNITED KINGDOM

2-4 Nov: 'The Black Gaze' is a three-day international conference organized to celebrate the new millennium by taking stock of the landmarks of African and African-Diasporic contributions to, and perspectives on literature, visual culture and society. It will focus on literature, film, painting, sculpture and photography from Africa, the Caribbean and the British and American African-Diaspora. The conference will address the following issues, among others: defining the Black Gaze; African norms of cultural production; reception, mediation, dissemination and consumption of African-world Arts; discourses of authenticity; languages of identity; identity and difference; knowledge and community; identity and violence; dissemination; popular and local cultures; literature/art and power; gender/race/class and African identity; the Black Gaze and its future. Venue: Institute of English Studies, School of Advanced Studies, University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London. Registration enquiries to the Institute of English Studies, tel: +44-(0)20 7862 8675; fax: +44-(0)20 7862 8672; email: [ies@sas.ac.uk](mailto:ies@sas.ac.uk).

17-18 Nov: A colloquium for francophone and anglophone, African and Caribbean writers, Churchill College, Cambridge, on 'The power of the Word: a millennium of francophone and anglophone writers from West Africa and the Caribbean'. Contact: Paula Halson: +44-(0)1223 336211; [colloquium@chu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:colloquium@chu.cam.ac.uk).

9 March 2001: 'Engaging with Law in Africa', 10am-5pm at SOAS, University of London. Law forms an important part of any society. The role that it plays varies enormously according to the ways in which it is conceived and to the local, national and international contexts in which it operates. In Africa, discussion of the role of law has progressed through several phases. These have included law as social control by colonial powers during the colonial period, followed by law as an instrument of social change which emerged out of the Law and Development movement. Subsequently theories built around the concept of the Imposition of Law became prevalent in which law was perceived as a tool of external domination. The Invention of Tradition/Customary law thesis also gained credence in which the role of law was viewed as a tool of domination by particular interest-groups for whose benefit it was invented. More recently law has been viewed as an instrument of economic forces in the context of structural adjustment programmes promoted by the World Bank and other globalizing agencies. It has also

become engaged with a human rights based development approach as well as with the growing move towards 'comprehensive development' which looks beyond economic growth to development in political/distributional terms in the fight to reduce poverty and to advance social as well as economic justice. This workshop will explore contemporary issues affecting the operation of law in Africa, including the impact of and interrelation of custom and culture on gender relations, legal pluralism and human rights, issues of development, good governance, and constructions of 'democracy'. Contact: Anne Griffiths, Old College South Bridge, Edinburgh EH8 9YL; tel: +44 (0)131 650-2057; fax: +44 (0)131 662-4902; home tel/fax +44 (0)131 332-1250.

30-1 March 2001: '*Development policy in Africa: public & private perspectives*', Keble College, Oxford, organized by the Centre for the Study of African Economies. Enquiries should have the mark/subject '2001 CSAE Conference' and be addressed to Sandra Mallinson; fax +44-(0)1865 281-447; email: csae.enquiries@economics.ox.ac.uk; CSAE, Department of Economics, Oxford University, Manor Rd, Oxford OX1 3UL, UK.

12-15 July 2001: '*Locating the Victorians*', National Museum of Science and Industry. Contact: j.speller@nmsi.ac.uk.

#### INTERNATIONAL

Funding Competition to Attend the 5th Annual ALTA Conference: The National African Language Resource Center (NALRC) is seeking to provide either full or partial funding for qualified graduate students to attend the 5th annual ALTA conference on April 26-8, 2001 in Madison, WI. Applicants should be currently enrolled in an African Language Program and be students in good standing. The Center will provide funding for students on a case-by-case basis, according to merit and need. Preference will be given, in the following order, to a) graduate students who plan to present a paper at the conference; b) graduate students or teaching assistants who have no other funding opportunities and would not otherwise attend the conference; and c) graduate students or teaching assistants who are interested in teaching African languages. Students funded by NALRC will be required to attend each workshop at the conference. In addition, they will have to submit reports of each session and workshop they attend in order to receive reimbursement. Interested students should submit a letter of application for funding and a letter of recommendation from the director or coordinator of their language program to Antonia Schleicher, care of NALRC, by November 1, 2000. Applications may be sent via e-mail or regular mail. Applicants will be notified of the results by December 1, 2000. Contact: Antonia Schleicher, Director, NALRC, 4231 Humanities Building, 455 North Park Street, Madison, WI 53706, USA; tel.: (+1-608) 265-7905; fax: (+1-608) 265-7904; email: nalrc@mhuh.facstaff.wisc.edu or kbhartwig@students.wisc.edu (Karin Gleisner, NALRC Project Assistant; website: <http://african.lss.wisc.edu/nalrc>).

4-7 Oct 2001: '*European Traditions of the Study of Religion in Africa*', Wissenschaftszentrum der Universität Bayreuth, Schlos Thurnau. Contact: Frieder Ludwig, email: Frieder.Ludwig@uni-bayreuth.de.

#### ...Conferences Past

The Africa 2000 Conference, which considered Africa and African Diaspora Cultures, and the Crisis of the Black Intellectual at the Millennium, took place at the University of

Liverpool from the 18th to 20th August. The conference was conceived as a joint project between the Universities of Liverpool, Central Lancashire and two Colleges of further Education in the Merseyside area, and successfully brought together a number of leading academics and delegates for a weekend of intellectual discourse on the understanding and interpretation of African culture within Africa and in its ever enlarging diaspora. There were critical debates between the 'Afrocentrics' and the 'Africanists', sessions on women's health and children's rights in the contemporary late 20th century context.

Fifth International Conference on Sudan Studies: The triennial International Conference on Sudan Studies was held at the University of Durham over the three days from 30th August to 1st September, hosted by the Department of History in association with the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom. The conference continues to attract a large turn-out, evidencing the continued strength of interest in Sudan despite the practical difficulties of research in a country ruled by an Islamist regime and divided by war. More than 140 people attended the conference, most being present throughout the event. Financial assistance from the Gordon Memorial Trust and the British Council in Khartoum, as well as the resources of the SSSUK itself, played an important part in making possible the presence of many of these individuals.

More than sixty-five of the attendees presented papers, and those who were not presenting contributed to the discussions with considerable enthusiasm, and often at no little length. The conference saw panels on subjects from education to linguistics, and from natural resources to the writings of travellers. More than one panel picked up on the increasingly important theme of the nature and role of the vast Sudanese diaspora, living in vastly different circumstances, from camps along the Ugandan border to apartments in San Diego; as panellists suggested, the existence and experiences of this diasporic community will surely be of great importance to Sudan's future.

The effects of current political circumstances were apparent in the change in the emphasis of presentations from earlier conferences. Despite the presence of a number of major figures of Sudanese historiography, the panels on history drew smaller audiences and fewer presenters than did the four panels on aid and development and on human rights: only the extremely effective chairing of these latter panels prevented them from running well over their allotted time. The panel on modern foreign policy similarly commanded a great deal of interest. It seems likely that the exigencies of employment and research funding, as well as the immediacy of Sudan's contemporary problems, have shifted attention very much to these fields.

However, the conference did also see a number of cultural events, which were encouraging evidence of the continued creativity of an artistic community – very largely in exile – despite the hostility of the regime. Film shows, a night of music and song after the conference dinner, and a panel on poetry and song were all well attended; and a cultural highlight was the exhibition of the work of five Sudanese artists at the University's Oriental Museum, which was supported by Northern Arts. The exhibition remained on show after the end of the conference, and a steady stream of visitors have taken advantage of this rare opportunity to see these paintings in the north-east.

The 16th Annual Meeting of the European Seminar in Ethnomusicology was held 7-10 September at the School of Anthropological Studies, Queen's University, Belfast, on the theme of '*John Blacking's legacy*'. Blacking, the first Professor of Social Anthropology at Queen's, was an influential developer of ethnomusicological studies, and his ideas

owed much to his fieldwork with Venda peoples of South Africa. There were over 100 participants, including many of his former students, and they came from all over the world, including Africa. Of the 60 papers, also on musics worldwide, a dozen were on specifically African themes, while many others compared the researcher's own findings with Venda material. In addition, the keynote address by Paul Berliner (Northwestern) was a powerful multi-media evocation of a Zimbabwean mbira player's work and death in the painful and complex circumstances of war there. Further details of the conference can be obtained from sreily@qub.ac.uk or e.tonkin@talk21.com.

### *Theses Recently Accepted at UK Universities*

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

Fergus Lyon, 'Trust and power in farmer-trader relations: a study of small scale vegetable production and marketing systems in Ghana', PhD Department of Geography, University of Durham (1999).

Peter O. Kyei, 'Decentralisation and poverty alleviation in rural Ghana', PhD Department of Geography, University of Durham (2000).

### *Recent and Forthcoming Publications*

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

T.A.S. Bowyer-Bower & C. Stoneman (eds), *Land Reform in Zimbabwe: Constraints & Prospects* (Abingdon: Ashgate) 200pp. ISBN: 0-7546-1547-2 (cloth) (October 2000).

Deborah Bryceson, Cristóbal Kay & Jos Mooij (eds), *Disappearing Peasantries? Rural Labour in Africa, Asia & Latin America* (London: Intermediate Technology Publications) 352pp. ISBN: 1-85339-477-7, £17.95 (paper) (October 1999).

Allison Drew, *Discordant Comrades: Identities & Loyalties on the South African Left* (Abingdon: Ashgate) 280pp. ISBN: 0-7546-0195-1, £45.00 (cloth) (May 2000).

Stephanie Newall, *Ghanaian Popular Fiction: 'Thrilling Discoveries in Conjugal Life' & Other Tales* (Oxford: James Currey) 192pp. ISBN: 0-85255-556-3 (paper) £14.95, 0-85255-557-1 (cloth) £40.00 (October 2000).

### *Appointments, Academic Links and Exchanges*

*Centre of African Studies, SOAS, University of London:* The following Leventis visiting scholars will be based at the Centre of African Studies from September to December 2000. Victor A. Isumonah, Lecturer, Department of Political Science, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria, carrying out research on oil, federal presence, cultural diversity and organising for change in the oil-region of Nigeria. Caleb Folorunso, Senior Lecturer, Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Ibadan, carrying out research into ethnoarchaeology in Africa, and cultural resource management in Africa.

Other scholars who will also be contactable through the Centre are: Pavi Hasu (Cultural Anthropology, University of Helsinki, Finland), carrying out research on the work of the Leipzig Mission in Kilimanjaro, 1893-1940; Dominique Marshall (Associate Professor, Carleton University, Canada), researching the activity of the Child Welfare Committee of the League of Nations; Jane Guyer (Northwestern University, Program of African Studies, USA), working on a collection of essays provisionally entitled '*Transactions and turbulence: analytical problems in the study of African economies*', and background work for a joint social historical study, provisionally entitled '*The oil economy of the Nigerian people*'; Rixia Pan (Research and Planning and Co-ordination, Institute of West-Asian and African Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China) (from end of November), researching developing strategy of African agriculture, extension food; developing crops for export and policy and measure for developing agriculture.

#### *Awards, Prizes and Fellowships*

*Conflict, Peace & Conflict Zones research opportunities:* The Global Security and Cooperation Program of the Social Science Research Council is pleased to announce two new funding opportunities. The Fellowship on *Conflict, Peace, & Social Transformations* provides 1-2 years of support for training and research at the doctoral and professional levels. The deadline for this fellowship competition is January 12, 2001. Grants for *Research Collaboration in Conflict Zones* are for a period up to 6 months and focus on countries experiencing longstanding or widespread conflict. The deadline for submission for this grant is February 1, 2001. Both competitions are open to scholars, activists, and practitioners. Contact: Program on Global Security & Cooperation, Social Science Research Council, 810 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10019, USA; tel: (+1-212) 377-2700; fax: (+1-212) 377-2727; email: gsc@ssrc.org; website: www.ssrc.org.

#### **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 email: 106155.3441@compuserve.com (please send as text, not as attachments). *Deadlines are 31 December (for the January Newsletter), 23 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. For all matters relating to membership of either the ASAUK or RAS contact Lindsay Allan, RAS/ASAUK, SOAS, Thornhaugh St., Russell Sq, London WC1H 0XG (tel: +44-(0)171-323-6253; fax: +44-(0)171-436-3844; email: ras@sous.ac.uk).