



African Studies Association of the UK

NEWSLETTER

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Editorial Note

This is the first issue of a new ASAUK Newsletter. It is intended to provide a forum for ASAUK news and events, as well as cover Africanist activity throughout the UK generally. It will be distributed quarterly with *African Affairs*, and it is hoped that it may eventually reduce or replace the regular 'Notes and News' section in the journal; thus allowing more space for articles. 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, and brief articles or notices on matters of importance to Africanists in the UK (including forthcoming meetings, exhibitions, films, plays, etc., or reviews of same).

All items for inclusion in the Newsletter should be sent to Douglas H Johnson, Editor, ASAUK Newsletter, St Antony's College, Oxford OX2 6UW (Fax: 01865-54465). Deadlines are 30 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.

Comment and Opinion

BBC 2's 'African Season' this summer began with a large studio debate on the question of reparations to Africa. David Killingray, co-editor of African Affairs and ASAUK council member was a sceptical participant. Here he reflects on his own 'trial by media'.

Anonymity has always seemed to me a good reason for not appearing on television. However, vanity and the desire to be seen can overwhelm the best of intentions. The lady from the production company assured me that the programme would offer ample time for discussion; it would certainly not be a confrontation. So off I went sometime in June to participate in the BBC2 'Radical Options' programme on Reparations to Africa. Confrontation it was. The agenda of the proponents for reparations ranged over compensation for the slave trade (the African and non-European slave trade was ignored) and for colonialism, the return of African artifacts and works of art from European museums, and redressing African debt. Some of these suggestions seemed to me to be reasonable, and I said so. Certain African artifacts could be returned if adequate provision for their continuing care was provided (replicas could take their

place in western museums and galleries), and most certainly Africa's great burden of debt needed to be addressed radically by the creditor states.

However, participation in the programme was a depressing experience and it was equally depressing to watch it transmitted while I was on holiday. It did not seem to me that the reparations lobby was interested in debate or historical evidence. They had their specific agenda and that had to be pushed home. Emotion rather than evidence, rhetoric rather than reason fuelled many of their arguments. The ideas of a Nigerian economist and a gentle African cleric that did not fit in with the 'radical' reparations views were denounced and swept aside. In response to a statement that all African people (the term was very generally applied) continued to suffer from the effects of a humiliating past, one African lady said that she was perfectly all right and did not recognise this crude stereotype. One man denounced me as knowing nothing about Africa's history or the slave trade and being immoral. The barbs of the ignorant and ill-informed it is possible to stand. Less comfortable to be with are those who seem to applaud any cause because it has a radical edge, irrespective of how that cause is presented. The Euro-centric curriculum in schools was denounced (a cause to which I am sympathetic and on which I cut my African teeth thirty years ago) but any claim to objectivity was dashed by the demand that it be replaced by a more distorted Afro-centric curriculum.

I came away from the studio feeling deeply troubled at what might have been a useful debate and which had been largely a platform for a single view. Measured response was lost to soundbites. It was not a good forerunner to the Africa '95 celebrations. I now have a reinforced resolve never again to appear on television 'shows'. Please invite me to sit with three or four others in a studio discussion where minds are ready to engage with ideas, but do not 'phone to suggest that I come to a staged confrontation.

ASAUK Dissertation Prize

In 1993, at the initiative of then President, Christopher Clapham, the ASAUK instituted a biennial dissertation prize, to be awarded for the best dissertation (or dissertations) submitted to a British University. The first prize was generously supported by Avebury, C.U.P., James Currey, Heinemann, MacMillan, M.U.P., O.U.P., Penguin, Routledge, and Westview, who together donated over £1300 in books.

The entries for the first biennial prize were of a uniformly high standard, and in the opinion of the selection sub-committee two works clearly merited sharing the prize. The joint winners were: Stephen Devereux (Oxford University), 'Household responses to food insecurity in north-eastern Ghana', and Caroline Orwin (SOAS), 'Yodit'. A presentation ceremony took place at SOAS on 17 May 1995 at which many of the sponsoring publishers, as well as members of the Royal African Society, joined the ASAUK for the occasion. In his capacity as President of the ASAUK Richard Hodder-Williams, who chaired the selection sub-committee, made the award to Caroline Orwin. Stephen Devereux was then in Namibia and was not able to be attend, and his portion of the prize will be sent to him.

Thanks to the continuing support of publishing houses in Britain, the ASAUK will be awarding a dissertation prize (or prizes) again in 1996. John Peel, Vice President of the ASAUK, will chair the Council sub-committee responsible for the award. Nominations for the prize should be made by supervisors of any dissertation, or thesis, submitted to a British University (whether by a home or overseas student) in the calendar years 1994 and 1995. Supervisors should ensure that all entries are sent to Lindsay Allen, Secretary of the ASAUK (School of Oriental and African Studies, Thornhaugh St., Russell Sq., London WC1H 0XG) by 31 January 1996. No late entries will be accepted. In making their nominations, supervisors must report the date



Caroline Orwin and Richard Hodder-Williams at the ASUK Dissertation Prize giving
(oblivious to the descent of the Assyrian cohorts behind them)

of submission and the institution to which the dissertation or thesis was submitted. No correspondence in support of the candidate (including examiners' reports) should be sent. Dissertations and theses from any discipline are accepted, and will be judged not only on their contribution to their own disciplines, but their accessibility to other disciplines and the wider Africanist audience. The prize sub-committee, while keen to encourage entries, depends on the good judgement of colleagues to ensure that only exceptional pieces of work are entered. The sub-committee expects to make its decision during the summer term 1996 and the winner (or winners) will be invited to the biennial Conference in Bristol to receive the prize.

Directory of Africanists in Britain, 3rd Edition

A small grant from the Royal African Society has enabled a third edition of this *Directory* to be compiled. It is intended that all those currently active in either researching, publishing or teaching on Africa should be included. If you have not received a questionnaire or have not returned the one sent to you, please contact immediately Mrs Anne Merriman, c/o Department of Politics, University of Bristol, 12 Priory Rd., Bristol BS8 1TU.

Ghana Studies Council

The Ghana Studies Council provides an international and inter-disciplinary forum for those involved in research and writing on all aspects of Ghana's past and present. The GSC publishes a regular *Newsletter* which includes correspondence, notes and news, and details of current research and publications. The Council also organises and supports a programme of seminars and conferences. Annual subscription in the UK and Europe is £8 (waged) and £5 (students and unwaged). Further details available from David Killingray, Department of Historical and Cultural Studies, Goldsmiths College, New Cross, London SE14 6NE, tel: 0181 919-7486 (home 01732 4543008).

International Campus Book Link

The International Campus Book Link, a project of Book Aid International supported by Citibank and the ODA, is aiming to provide a co-ordinated scheme of book and journal donations from British universities, colleges, hospitals and private donors to universities in Africa. It collects publications which are being discarded every year because libraries amalgamate, lack storage-space or move to other information storage techniques, and responds directly to specific requests for volumes of journals from overseas partners. Selection guidelines have been drawn up to assist the process of weeding through collections of discarded materials and assessing their suitability. To date some thirty-six universities, colleges and institutes, drawn from Cameroon, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe participate as overseas partners. For more information contact Book Aid International, Project Manager ICBL, 39/41 Coldharbour Lane, Camberwell, London SE5 9NR (Tel: 0171 733-3577; Fax: 0171 978-8006; E-Mail: rls@gn.apc.org).

Conferences Past...

A one-day workshop on '*Africa in the United Nations World Order, 1945-1995*', sponsored by the ASUK and the African Studies Centre, University of Cambridge, was convened at Pembroke College, Cambridge on 20 May. Speakers included: Mungai Mbayah (ex-UN and Commonwealth Secretariats), 'The United Nations' role in decolonisation', Sally Morphet (International Research Unit, Research & Analysis Dept, FCO), 'Africa and the non-aligned movement', H A A Hamad-Elneil (ex-WHO), 'The United Nations and structural adjustment: the case of human development, adaptation and growth', Susan Willett (Centre for Defence Studies, King's College, London), 'The United Nations world order and the arms trade: the case of southern Africa', Abdul Koroma (International Court of Justice, The Hague), 'The contribution of Africa to the evolution of international law, 1945-1995', and Keith Hart (Cambridge), 'Africa's future in the United Nations world disorder'. About 50 persons attended.

'*Transitions in West Africa: Towards 2000 and beyond*', sponsored by the ASUK and the University of Central Lancashire, 1-3 September (Tunde Zack-Williams, Giles Mohan and John Dugmore convenors). Fifty papers from a variety of disciplines were presented, 24 by West African speakers. This conference marks the first major activity of the University's new West Africa Studies Unit.

The Forum Against Ethnic Violence held its AGM and a workshop on '*Civil war, ethnicity and the media*' on 16 September at UCL. Convenors were Tim Allen and Jean Seaton (both of South Bank University). Speakers on Africa included Nick Stockton (Oxfam), Enoch Opondo (Moi University), David Styan (South Bank University/Economist Intelligence Unit), Barbara Harrell Bond (RSP, Oxford), Mark Duffield (University of Birmingham), Paul Richards (UCL), and Andy Mawson (Amnesty International).

The Research and Analysis Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (director, Basil Eastwood) hosted a one day conference, attended by some 80 persons, on '*What price democracy in Africa?*' at the Foreign Office on 21 September 1995. FCO senior staff set out the position of the British government and a number of academics presented papers. Country surveys were given by Richard Crook (Ivory Coast), Richard Jeffries (Ghana), Ian Campbell (Nigeria), David Throup (East Africa), Barry Munslow (Angola and Mozambique), James Barber (South Africa), and Christopher Clapham and Robin Luckham both gave overview presentations.

The Centre for Developing Areas Research (CEDAR) in the Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London, held a one day symposium (David Simon organizer) on 22 September 1995. Nine speakers (seven from South African universities or South Africans studying in Britain) presented papers on '*Post-apartheid Southern Africa*'. Topics covered included: the rising tide of illegal immigration to South Africa (Graeme Hart, University of Witwatersrand), social justice in post-apartheid South Africa (David Smith, QMW, London), sugar production in relation to land issues in Swaziland and Kwazulu/Natal (Alan Terry, University of the West of England, and Shafiur Rahman, St Anne's College, Oxford/University of Durban-Westville respectively), the reorientation of the University of Transkei into a resource for South Africa's reconstruction and development programme (Kevin Phillips-Howard, UNITRA), the use of GIS to locate primary health care facilities (Maria Stuttford, South Bank University), land issues in the Eastern Cape (Simphiwe Mini, University of Fort Hare), local development initiatives in post-apartheid South Africa (Chris Rogerson, University of the Witwatersrand), and minibus taxis and appropriate transport in the new South Africa (Mongezi Noah, Royal Holloway/University of Fort Hare). This was the third in an occasional series of meetings held around the country on '*The geography of Southern Africa*'.

The last three of a series of six ESRC-sponsored workshops on North East Africa took place at Oxford this year. '*Provincial towns in North East Africa: towards a new research agenda*' (Wendy James, convenor) met at St Cross College on 20 May. '*Biography in Eastern African historical writing*' (David Anderson, convenor) convened at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology and St Antony's College on 6-7 July. Panels were held on 'Political Biography, Biographical Politics', 'Private Sources, Public Lives', 'Religious Hagiography as Historical Source', 'Biography, Ethnicity and Nation', 'Orality and Literacy', and 'Trends in Biographical Writing'. Seventeen papers were presented by participants based in the UK, USA, Canada, Europe and Ethiopia, covering biographies and biographical sources in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. '*The fate of information in the disaster zone*' (John Ryle and David Keen, convenors) met at St Anne's College on 27 September, with 120 persons attending. Panel discussions were held on 'The fate of disasters in the information zone (Mark Duffield, University of Birmingham), 'Mindless violence or careless analysis?' (Paul Richards, UCL, Rakiya Omaar, African Rights, Lindsay Hilsum, writer and broadcaster, and Nick Stockton, Oxfam), 'Didn't we do well?' (Philip Winter, ex-SCF-UK, David Keen, Queen Elizabeth House, Beverley Jones, Christian Aid and Joanna Macrae, ODI), 'Human rights workers: missionaries, chroniclers or detectives? (Alex de Waal, African Rights, Abdelwahab el-Affendi, ex-Sudan embassy, Kenneth Anderson, Soros Foundation, and Lucy Hannan, journalist), and 'Local information deficits and the use of propaganda (James Fennell, CARE, Jok Madut Jok, UCLA, Tafari Wossen, editor, Ben Parker, information specialist). An account of the workshop appeared in John Ryle's 'City of Words' column in *The Guardian* (29 Sep 1995).

Conferences Future...

The Museum of Mankind, together with the Royal Anthropological Institute, is holding a study afternoon on the *African art trade* on 4 November, 1995. Admission is free. Enquiries to the Information Officer, Museum of Mankind, Burlington Gardens, London W1 (Tel: 0171 323-8065).

CamFed and the African Studies Centre, Cambridge, present a public lecture by Doris Lessing on *Recent experiences in Zimbabwe: the role of books in a non-electronic society*, Winstanley Hall, Trinity College, Cambridge, 30 November 1995, 5 p.m. Admission is by advance ticket sales only from the African Studies Centre (Tel: 0223 334398), £6 (£3 students). All proceeds will go to CamFed.

A symposium on '*Mobility in Africa*', sponsored by the ASAUk in association with the Developing Areas Research Group of the Institute of British Geographers, is to be held at SOAS, from 10 am to 5 pm on 16 December 1995. Further information can be obtained from the convenors, David Simon (Department of Geography, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, Egham Hill, London TW20 0EX) and Nici Nelson (Anthropology Department, Goldsmith's College, London SE14 6NW).

A call for papers is issued for a symposium on '*Urban poverty then and now*', to be held in May 1996. This symposium seeks to explore the social, political and economic parameters of urban poverty in pre-colonial, colonial, early independence, and post-structural adjustment urban Africa, and to identify continuities and changes. Contact the convenor, Dr Nici Nelson (Anthropology Department, Goldsmith's College, London SE14 6NW; Tel: 0171 919-7804; Fax: 0171 919-7813; E-Mail: anaoinn@goldsmiths.ac.uk).

Robin Law, of the University of Stirling, and Paul Lovejoy, of the University of York, Ontario, are launching a collaborative research programme on '*The development of an African diaspora: the slave trade of the Nigerian hinterland, 1650-1900*', which will involve scholars from Europe, Africa and the Americas. In common with the UNESCO 'Slave route' project, the research programme seeks to transcend the disjunction between the study of the history of Africa and of the African diaspora, by tracing the operation of the slave trade and its consequences from the original points of enslavement in the African interior, through the coastal (and Saharan) entrepôts by which slaves were exported from the region, to the societies in the Americas and the Islamic world into which they were imported. The research programme is supported by the Department of History and the Centre for Commonwealth Studies at the University of Stirling, and by the Department of History and the Centre for Refugee Studies of York University. A series of workshops, symposia and conferences are being planned for 1995-99. Provisional dates for meetings at Stirling and York in 1995/6 are: '*The African diaspora and the Nigerian hinterland: the research agenda*', workshop, 2-3 February 1996, York; '*Source material for studying the slave trade and the African diaspora*', symposium, 13-14 April 1996, Stirling; '*Slavery and the slave trade in the Bight of Benin and its interior*', panel, Canadian Association of African Studies, Montreal, 1-5 May 1996. Contact Robin Law (Department of History, University of Stirling, FK9 4LA, Scotland; Fax: (0)1786 467581; E-mail: rcell@stir.ac.uk), or Paul Lovejoy (Department of History, York University, 4700 Keele St., North York, Ontario M3J 1P3, Canada; Fax: 416 736-5836; E-mail: plovejoy@vm2.yorku.ca).

The 5th International Congress for Ethnobiology will be held at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre, Nairobi, Kenya, on 2-6 September 1996, on the theme of '*Ethnobiology and conservation of cultural and biological diversity*'. Contact Christine H S Kabuye, chairperson, organizing committee, 5th ICE, National Museums of Kenya, PO Box 40658, Nairobi, Kenya (Fax: 254 2 741424; E-mail: biodive@tt.gn.apc.org).

ASAUk Biennial Conference, University of Bristol, September 1996

Planning for the Association's Biennial Conference, which will be held in Wills Hall at the University of Bristol in September 1996 is already under way. Professor Richard Hodder-Williams, in the Department of Politics at the University, is the academic convenor and welcomes all suggestions for panels.

There is no specific theme for 1996, but Council hopes that most panels will be concerned with the issue of boundaries and the state and invites papers discussing some of the following themes: the advantages and disadvantages of the modern state; migration of professionals within the continent; past state formations and their external

relations; the problems of supranational organisations; transnational religious organisations; 'phonic' Africa (Anglophone, Francophone, Lusophone); the political and economic integration of nomadic peoples; the impact of modern communication technology in influencing peoples outside its country of origin; the effect of state boundaries on the dissemination and spread of artistic forms; the causes and consequences of refugee movement; organisations, such as smuggling rings, which cross state boundaries illegally; legal systems which enhance the stability and legitimacy of existing states; resources able to protect African states from the influence of richer and more powerful external actors; the relationship between states and the spread of diseases, such as AIDS. All offers of papers or panel convenors should be sent directly to Richard Hodder-Williams, Department of Politics, 12 Priory Rd., Bristol BS8 1TU (Fax: 0117 973-2133). Members of ASAUK are reminded that the African Scholars Trust fund invites donations to provide travel grants for African scholars to come to the Biennial Conference.

Appointments

David Turton, of the Department of Social Anthropology, University of Manchester, has been appointed new director of the Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford. David has been editor of *Man* and *Disasters*, has served on the Africa Field Committee of Oxfam, and is perhaps best known for his work with Granada TV's award winning (and now much lamented) 'Disappearing World' series. He will be taking up his appointment, with a fellowship at Green College, Oxford, in January 1997. Barbara Harell-Bond, the founding director of the RSP at Oxford, will remain on the staff until her retirement in September 1998.

Lynne Brydon (Sociology Department, Liverpool University) has been appointed to a Lectureship in the Sociology of West Africa at the Centre of West African Studies, University of Birmingham, from January 1996.

David Simon, of the Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London, is the UK co-ordinator of a new British Council-funded link between his department, the School of Geography, University of Oxford, and the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. This commenced in January 1995 and will run for four years in the first instance. One of the principal objectives of the link is to foster collaborative research, and David spent a fortnight at Wits during August-September as the first visitor from the UK.

Awards, Prizes and Fellowships

Amaury Talbot Prize in African Anthropology 1994: The Amaury Talbot Prize (currently at around £500) is awarded annually to the author, or authors, of the work, which in the opinion of the judges, is the most valuable of the works of anthropological research relating to Africa which are submitted in the competition. Preference will be given to works relating in the first place to Nigeria, and in the second place to any other part of West Africa or to West Africa in general. Works relating to other regions of Africa are also eligible. Applications for works published during the calendar year of 1995 should be sent, together with two copies of the book, article or work in question, to Barclays Bank Trust Company Ltd., Executorship and Trustee Service, Osborne Court, Gadbrook Park, Rudheath, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 7UE, England, and must be received by 31st March 1996. Please quote reference number 66/61/888. Entries will *not* be returned to candidates but will be at the disposal of the Judges. Joint winners of the 1994 prize are: J A Fadiman (University of California, Berkeley), *When We Began There Were Witchmen. An Oral History from Mount Kenya* (University of California Press), and Douglas H Johnson (St Antony's College, Oxford), *Nuer Prophets* (Oxford University Press).

Bradlow Fellowship: James Barber of Durham University was 1995 Bradlow Fellow at the South African Institute of International Affairs between February and April, investigating South Africa's position in the post Cold War world. For information about the annual Fellowship write Dr. Greg Mills, South African Institute of International Affairs, Jan Smuts House, P.O. Box 31596, Braamfontein 2017, South Africa.

East African Visiting Scholarship Scheme: Asimwe Godfrey (Department of History, Makerere University), working on marketing systems and the agrarian question in Africa, joins the Centre for African Studies, SOAS, University of London for the Autumn 1995 term as the first EAVS from Uganda.

John Cadbury Visiting Fellowship: Bisi Ogunlana (Linguistics and African Languages, Ilorin University) is John Cadbury Visiting Fellow at the Centre for West African Studies, Birmingham University, from September 1995 to March 1996.

Leventis Research Co-operation Programme: John-Tokpabere Agberia (Department of Creative Arts, University of Port Harcourt), working on ceramics, and Dele Jegede (Department of Sociology, University of Ibadan), working in the field of medical sociology and anthropology, have joined the Centre for African Studies, SOAS, University of London, as the 1995 Leventis Research Fellows.

Oppenheimer Academic Fellowship Scheme: Darma Mahadea (Department of Economics, University of Transkei), working in the area of small firm entrepreneurship, is the 9th Oppenheimer Fellow at the Centre for African Studies, SOAS, University of London.

Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies: Ali Mazrui is a visiting fellow at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, St Cross College, for Michaelmas term.

ORISHA Studentships: The Oxford Research in the Scholarship and Humanities of Africa (ORISHA) Studentships, tenable for up to four years, are granted to persons registered as graduate students at Oxford University whose work involves the study of Africa in those disciplines in the Humanities for which supervision is available. These at present include: Social and Cultural Anthropology, Archaeology, Egyptology, History, Human Geography, Politics and International Relations, Religious Studies, and Sociology. Students recently admitted to a graduate programme are eligible to apply. This year's ORISHA Studentship was awarded to Maritza Uloma B. Okata (Nuffield College). A one year award was also given to Josephine Nhongo (St Antony's College).

South African Schoolteacher Fellowships: Durham University's Department of Linguistics and English Language has admitted Rodwell Minisi and Edwin Chabalala to study for the MA in Applied Linguistics with reference to English Language teaching, both funded by the South African Schoolteacher Fellowship scheme.

The Ray Jenkins Memorial Fund: The late Ray Jenkins was an historian who taught at Staffordshire University. His memorial fund was donated by his colleagues and friends as a lasting tribute to his dedication and love of scholarship, especially in the study of all things African. An award of up to £200 is available to assist a post graduate student in the continuation of research into any aspect of African/Caribbean/British Black studies. Applicants should send a brief resumé of their topic, together with details of how the award is to be used, to Mrs J. Jenkins, 15 Woodside, Madeley, Cheshire, CW3 9HA. Applications should arrive no later than 30 December 1995. The successful applicant will receive a reply by 30 January 1996.