

Minutes of the 56th Annual General Meeting of the ASAUK, held at SOAS, University of London, 16th October 2019

1. Members Present: Carli Coetzee, Simon Heap, David Kerr, Ben Lawrance, Lucy McCann, Ambreena Manji, Nici Nelson, Pedi Obani, Lizzie Orekoya, Ola Uduku, Nick Wescott

2. Apologies: Lindsay Allan, Maxim Bolt, Nic Cheeseman, James Currey, Jonathan Fisher, Vincent Hiribarren. Rebecca Jones, Geoffrey King, Stephanie Kitchen, Helene Kringleback, Roy May, Sharifah Sekalala, Marian Wallace.

3. Minutes of the 55th ASAUK AGM, University of Birmingham, 13th September 2018. These were published in the January 2019 Newsletter. They were unanimously approved.

4. Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.

5. President's Report (Ambreena Manji)

The African Studies Association UK has had a busy and successful year. Much of 2018-2019 was dedicated to working with the All Party Parliamentary Group-Africa and the Royal African Society to produce a report on Visa Problems for African Visitors to the UK which can be found at: <http://www.royalafricansociety.org/file/appg-report-visa-problems-african-visitors-ukv157pdf> The ASAUK has been collecting evidence of visa problems experienced by academic colleagues since 2016 and we were pleased to be able to contribute clear evidence of problems to the report. The report was launched at the House of Commons in July 2019 and we look forward to its recommendations being acted upon to address the serious difficulties faced in applying for a UK visa.

The ASAUK is now working towards its biennial conference to be held at Cardiff University on 8–10th September 2020. This is the first time ASAUK is being held in Wales and we have had a very good response to our call for thematic streams, as well as success in raising external funding for bursaries to support participation in the conference.

6. Report by the Honorary Secretary (Nici Nelson)

Throughout the past year, Council has continued to maintain a good close working relationship with the Royal African Society (RAS). As in the past few years progress has been made in strengthening the organisational capacity of both societies.

The Directory of Africanists and a directory of African scholars is up and running, as a joint collaboration managed by the ASAUK and British Academy. The site is for all of those involved in African social sciences and humanities research and can be used to identify scholars to invite for conferences, or with scholarships and fellowships to advertise, for journals looking for peer reviewers, for researchers looking for funding and fellowships, or who want to identify new collaborators or track down colleagues; and for anyone with an interest in African studies. It's a work in progress, with new developments planned. Members are encouraged to enter their details: www.africadesk.ac.uk

Mary Kingsley Zochonis Lecture, 16th October 2019

The lecture will be delivered this year by Dr Pedi Obani (Department of Public Law, Faculty of Law, University of Benin, Nigeria). It will be entitled 'Sanitation, Human Rights and Governance: A Critical Perspective from Nigeria'. It will take place at 7pm after the AGM at the Institute of Advanced Studies, University College London. It will be followed by a reception.

Birmingham Biennial Conference, 11-13th September, 2018

The ASAUK conference took place successful, with over 40 streams, 1,200 abstract submissions and 800+ delegates registered. It was the largest conference we have organised yet. The Keynote Speaker was Professor Grace Musila of the University of Stellenbosch. One issue raised after the Cambridge Conference concerned the fact that number of African scholars did not obtain visas in time to attend. In conjunction with the RAS, ASAUK is working to address this problem.

Small Conference Grants

In non-Biennial years the subvention is used to give small grants (up to £750) for UK-based conferences, preferably for travel grants to bring an African scholar to attend the conference. In Biennial years it is used to support travel grants to the Conference for African scholars. The Small Conference Grants are now funded by ASAUK. This year one grant was made. It was to the University of Leeds for a conference in April entitled 'Contemporary Africa; Creative Africa'. Members are urged to remind colleagues that such a grant exists.

Fage and Oliver Prize

This award is given biennially to the author of an outstanding or original scholarly work published on Africa during the preceding two years, as nominated by the publishers. The Committee to choose the winner is being constituted at the moment. The winners will be announced at the next Conference.

Audrey Richards Dissertation Prize

The Audrey Richards Dissertation Prize is given for the best dissertation successfully examined in the two year period between the Biennial conferences. The candidates must be nominated by their supervisors. The deadline for nomination is 31st March 2020 year. The dissertations submitted will be judged by a committee chaired by Ola Uduku

Writing Workshops

Carli Coetzee reported. The Council welcomed Vincent Hiribarren as the new Workshop Officer. Three successful bids went in: an ASAUk bid for £20,000 by Toby Green (Luanda), Ola Uduku (Accra) and Vincent Hiribarren (Dakar); Louisa Egbunike of City University will lead the bid for one in Lagos at £16,000; and Karin Barber (Journal Work Academy) are leading a bid for £20,000. There is only one ASAUk bid because the same University or institution cannot make two applications. Ambreena Manji reported that at a British Academy meeting in March, she intends to note to the Academy that the Writing Workshop model was developed by ASAUk and ask that our experience, frugality and success be recognised. Practically we should be able to make applications in the Association's name.

The @ASAA_Conference and the @ASAUk_News are delighted to announce the launch of the #AfricaJournalWorkAcademy which aims to build inter-generational links across African institutions and to train the next generation of editors, peer reviewers and authors. For more information contact Carli Coetzee @AfricaJacs at journalworkacademy@gmail.com

Teaching Fellowship

It had been decided that for the 2019 Biennial Year, the Council would fund one fellowship for an early career, UK-based academic who had finished their doctoral degrees on an African topic in a British university in the Social Sciences or Humanities to work in an African university, hopefully also including a proposal running a Writing Workshop at that University.

The Fellowship was allocated to Katie Young (Geography, Royal Holloway) whose dissertation was on the influence of Hindi Film and Music in northern Ghana. She is working in the University of Development Studies in Tamale Ghana to explore the importance of the arts in Development Studies and to assist in the setting up a Music, Dance, Theatre and Media Programme and to organise an international music festival and academic conference.

Membership

Membership numbers in all categories show positive upward trends in a Biennial Conference year. However we must build on this and not let those who have joined for the special conference deal let their membership lapse next year. However, it is still the case that we are not recruiting young members.

The membership records of RAS/ASAUK are difficult to access and understand. Stacey Hynd and Carli Coetzee have been working with Lizzie Orekoya to access and understand the database. We need to know where our members are and why they are members. It would seem that 360 of the 760 of the RAS/ASAUK joint members are ASAUK members first.

The Council is considering a number of related membership issues. A two-year membership was suggested, as was a tab on the Website on post graduate issues (such as career development and journal workshops). Recruitment in difficult times must be the responsibility of everyone. Those of the membership who are lecturing and supervising students are urged to make a concerted effort to recruit their post-graduate students as members to ASAUK/RAS. Academics could also ensure that any Africanist colleagues in their institutions (perhaps in non-African Studies departments) are aware of the many advantages of being a member of ASAUK/RAS. Members who have contact with Africanists outside of academia (such as working in the NGO Sector or in business) might ensure that they know about the advantages of belonging to ASAUK/RAS.

ASAUK Council for the year 2018-2019

Officers:

President: Ambreena Manji

Vice-President: Ola Uduku

Honorary Secretary: Nici Nelson

Honorary Treasurer: Toby Green

Projects Officers: Carli Coetzee and Vincent Hiribarren

Newsletter Editor: Simon Heap

Website Officers: Poppy Cullen and David Kerr

Co-opted Council Members:

James Currey, Stephanie Kitchen (IAI), Lucy McCann (SCOLMA), Sheila Ruiz (RAS), Ricardo Soares (*African Affairs*)

Elected Council Members

Retiring 2019:

After First Term: Nic Cheeseman, Cherry di Leonardi, Louisa Egbunike, Rebecca Jones, Sharifah Sekalala.

After Second Term: Maxim Bolt.

Retiring 2020

After First Term: Ini Dele Adedeji, Toni Haasrup, Njoke Wamai.

After Second Term: Stacey Hynd, Phila Steyn.

Retiring 2021

After First Term: Lindiwe Dovey, Jonathan Fisher, Helene Neveu Kringlebach, Katharina Oke, Nathan Richards.

After Second Term: Paul Basu, Reg Cline Cole, Jose Lingna Nafafe.

Newsletter

Council should like to thank Simon for his sterling and tireless work as Newsletter editor, and for maintaining its crucial role as a major organ of communication within the Africanist community. All the past issues of the Newsletter are on our website. The membership is reminded that the value of the newsletter is determined by information that members provide Simon.

Open Access

The Council would like to thank Stephanie Kitchen, co-opted member of the Council and thank her for her consistently detailed and informative updates on Open Access issues for the council and the membership through the newsletter.

SCOLMA

Lucy McCann has been the Council co-opted member from SCOLMA and has provided excellent detailed reports about SCOLMA activities of interest and relevance to ASAUK.

Relationship between ASAUK and RAS

It is now an established rule that the ASAUK Officers and the RAS officers have a joint meeting at least once a year. In addition, the head of Programmes, Partnerships and Operations, Sheila Ruiz, is a co-opted member of the Council. The President of ASAUK is also committed to attending RAS Council meetings and the AGM.

For various complex reasons, the RAS is going through a period of reorganisation and retrenchment and this will necessitate an on-going re-examination and redefinition of the future relationship between RAS and ASAUK.

ASAUK would like to express its thanks to the RAS/ASAUK Administrator, Lizzie Orekoya, The Council appreciates the cheerful energy and efficiency with which she deals with the ASAUK finances, subscriptions and payments as well as maintaining the ASAUK e-mail list. This provides a convenient, fast and cheap means of communicating with the bulk of the membership. Members who change their e-mail addresses or who have not yet given us their new emails are urged to pass them on to Lizzie: ras@soas.ac.uk

7. Report by the Honorary Treasurer (Toby Green)

Accounts for 2018 were submitted and approved.

ASAUK Finance report till end April 2019

Income

We started 2019 with £75,796.48 in the current account and this has risen to £134,824.72. The majority of this is the finalised conference finances; with University of Birmingham depositing a surplus of £55,139.54 end February. The British Academy £15,500 funding (via City, University of London) for the Lagos Writing Workshop has been sent to the Workshop Coordinator in Lagos. The contract has been signed and funds are due to be sent to ASAUK soon, further

boosting income. The reserve account ended 2018 on £81,463.79 having risen £368.39 from the start of the year.

Expenditure

Apart from the usual expenditure for membership payment facilitation via the web and the newsletter, the small grant of £500 was sent to Uni of Leeds, in Feb. The small conference grant for SCOLMA will be paid this month. Last but not least, we formally joined African Studies Association of Africa as Institutional members in April, at a cost of \$600 (£469). ASAUK are very much looking forward to working with ASAA.

ASAUK Finance report till end Sept 2019

The current account balance was £58,255.89.

Income

We started May with a balance of £134,000 and apart from individual membership subscriptions there is nothing significant to report. We are due to be reimbursed £15,000 from City, University of London for the Lagos Writing Workshop advance sent early May, once paperwork agreed.

Expenditure

Funds have now been sent to the Teaching Fellowship awardee Katie Young. £6,200 was sent in July and Katie will be Guest Lecturer in the newly developing Music, Dance, Theatre and Media programme at the University of Development Studies (UDS), Tamale, Ghana. The 2020 Conference Coordinator started in September and funds of £43,000 have been advanced to Cardiff University to cover costs. £11,600 membership capitation was transferred to RAS for the rest of 2018, plus just over £1,000 spent on the ASAUK 2018 independent review.

8. Election of Officers and Council Members

Those officers standing again were approved. The following new officers were approved: Secretary: David Kerr and Projects Officer: Maxim Bolt

The following council members were approved:

First Term: Caroline Davis (Oxford Brookes), Elsbeth Robson (Hull), Portia Roelofs (Oxford), Aidriaan van Klinken (Leeds).

Second Term: Nic Cheeseman, Louisa Egbunike, Sharifah Sekalala.

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Retiring 2020

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After Second Term: Stacey Hynd, Phila Steyn

Retiring 2021

After First Term: Lindiwe Dovey, Jonathan Fisher, Helene Neveu Kringlebach, Katharina Oke, Nathan Richards.

After Second Term: Paul Basu, Reg Cline Cole, Jose Lingna Nafafe.

Retiring 2022

After First Term: Caroline Davis, Portia Roelafs, Elsbeth Robson, Adriaan van Klinken.

After Second Term: Nic Cheeseman, Louisa Egbunike, Sharifah Sekelala.

8. Writing Workshops

Carli Coetzee reported that ASAUK was doing well in obtaining funding from the Royal Academy. George Ogola and Ola Uduku each have a writing workshop coming up in the next few months. The method of applying now is to do it through one's own academic institution.

9. ASAUK Newsletter

Simon Heap reported that four issues were sent out this year. He made the annual plea for the membership to send in news about new doctoral award, publications, conferences and workshops, as well the death of noted Africanists.

10. RAS

Nick Westcott reported that RAS was still solvent and funding efforts were going ahead full steam. *African Affairs* is thriving. Recent successful initiatives have been the Mental Health in Africa conference conducted with the Wellcome Trust and a workshop on African Urbanization at the African Investment Summit. RAS along with ASAUK is continuing to keep up the pressure on the visa issue. *African Arguments* is also thriving and a new website is opening soon.

11. SCOLMA (Lucy McCann)

SCOLMA held its annual conference, 'Decolonising African Studies: questions and dilemmas for libraries, archives and collections'. on 10th June 2019 in Edinburgh in conjunction with ECAS 2019 and looked at questions raised by the decolonisation movement in the UK, Europe and Africa. Various speakers with library, publishing and academic backgrounds contributed, looking at such questions as the availability of African-published books in the North, the decolonisation of curriculums, the 'migrated archives' and the repatriation of

colonial records, archival practice in Francophone Africa and how French colonial archives were dealt with.

SCOLMA is particularly grateful to ASAUK for a small conference grant which enabled two visiting African speakers to participate in the conference, Livingstone Muchefa (National Archives of Zimbabwe) and Ahmed Hussein Abdelrahman Adam (University of Khartoum). Muchefa discussed the complexities of the situation in Zimbabwe, including efforts being made to research, preserve and make available archives of struggle, and argue for the repatriation of colonial records. Adam discussed archive and museum collections relating to Sudan in the UK and elsewhere in Europe, including archives at Durham and Exeter. Both speakers saw the way forward as a set of interrelated actions including working with European archives and museums to make material available and improve documentation.

Planning is underway for next conference which will take place at SOAS on 8th June 2020 and have the theme of African languages and literature.

In January SCOLMA sent an open letter to Baroness Amos, the Director of SOAS, concerning the proposed cuts to SOAS Library, one of the most important African Studies collections in the UK, used by researchers from around the world including Africa. We believe that the proposals will have an adverse effect on the ability of researchers to access collections and on the Library's ability to acquire and process publications and archives. We are concerned to learn that a revised structure has now been imposed on the Library without consulting staff, a number of staff have left under voluntary severance and many of the remaining jobs have been downgraded (including that of the Africa Librarian). Library staff are still in dispute with the School over a number of concerns including grading and excessive workloads.

We continue to value our close connections with ASAUK and the ASAUK's support of SCOLMA's activities. We are particularly grateful for the input of Stephanie Kitchen as ASAUK representative at our committee meetings.

12. Decision of Motion Put Forward at the 2018 AGM

The Council considered the motion made at the 2018 AGM to elect non-residential Council members. After an extensive discussion it was agreed that this was not a viable option for ASAUK. It was decided that ASAUK would instead form strong alliances with Africa-based organisations such as ASAA (African Studies Association of Africa) and build strong networks that are mutually beneficial. It was also pointed out that ASAUK would not be able to ensure the attendance of Africa-based council members, for financial and logistical reasons. Forging such horizontal links with Africa-based institutions, it was decided, was preferred as a way forward

13. AOB

None.

Conferences Future...

UNITED KINGDOM

'Making Sense: Language, Text, and Interpretation in African Studies' conference, University of Birmingham, 21st–23rd May 2020. This conference is a joint event co-organised by the LANGARCHIV Project funded by the European Research Council and coordinated by Camille Lefebvre and by the Department of African Studies and Anthropology of the University of Birmingham thanks to the Cadbury Fellowship and Conference endowment.

The conference is concerned with the process of interpretation in African societies and African studies: how do the authors of what we call 'sources' convey meaning in their written and oral texts? How do these meanings develop in historically specific semantic worlds? How is meaning transformed through translations, reinterpretations, and struggles over meaning? How is the world made sense of in African languages and epistemic traditions, and what changes when analysts – African and non-African – make sense of African texts and societies in different discursive contexts? The conference wishes to discuss what makes the understanding of African societies possible; what is at stake when different types of exegetes interpret the past or the present of Africa. From authors like Gadamer and Ricoeur the organisers take the idea that understanding is always interpretive and perspectival. Understanding is shaped by one's position in the world and is a product of language, history, and subjective perspective. As Mamadou Diawara and Abderrahmane Ngaidé have shown, this implies a reflexion on the position of interpreters, historians or anthropologists, 'outsiders' or 'insiders' in relation to the circumstances they study and their being in the world as 'searchers of Meaning.'

Karin Barber and Paulo Fernando de Moraes Farias have pioneered research approaches that subject to close critical scrutiny the intellectual, political, and artistic projects of producers of knowledge; the social settings of knowledge-production and consumption; the formal rules governing different types of written or oral works or performances; and the situation of the researcher/interpreter. This holistic approach to interpretation that necessitates a constant 'back-and-forth' analytical movement between past and present, between observer and observed, between so-called 'primary sources' and 'secondary literature', urges researchers to take into account all the layers of interpretation accumulated in the process of producing and analysing oral and written texts. Focused on Africa, it is this process of knowledge production which is proposed to be discussed at the present conference on at least three dimensions of research: empirical, methodological, and theoretical.

From an empirical perspective, the interest lies in the conditions of evidence collection and negotiation of research agendas in sites as different as urban or

rural contexts, colonial archives or the private libraries of Islamic scholars, repositories of newspaper or radio recordings, war-zones or NGO headquarters. How do the agendas of researchers and other research participants intersect and interact? How does research happen at the interface between the questions of the researchers and the priorities of the subjects of research, collaborators, interpreters, gate-keepers, and mediators?

Methodologically, a focus on hermeneutics presupposes the development of methods for the exegesis of different types of evidence, ranging from a semantic approach to oral or written texts in vernacular languages, to a phenomenological engagement with the embodiment of particular forms of evidence – from the actual bodies and voices of informants, *griots*, or performers; to the material means through which text or other data are written, recorded and circulated: how do researchers interpret a variety of sources? What obstacles do they face, which new methodologies can be adopted to improve our understanding of African history and society (for example, new methods in digital humanities)?

Theoretically, a hermeneutical approach poses questions such as the possibility of cultural translation; inequality and reciprocity in knowledge production; and the relationship between researchers and authors of research evidence ('sources'). Both the original author of a source and the academic analysing the source (at a later stage) engage in similar processes of reflection, selection, and editing albeit for different purposes. They are *both* exegetes, inevitably engaged in constant decision-making, not only about what to do next, but also about which words and representations to choose. They are *both* engaged not only in pragmatic strategies and negotiations, but also in semiotic ones.

The organisers invite contributions that engage with questions of interpretation: how can the meanings of what we call our sources be accessed? What problems arise in the process of interpreting material and immaterial evidence? How is the researcher positioned in relation to the authors of their sources, and the users and audiences of the knowledge they analyse and/or produce? And how do researchers represent the phenomena they study – are their interpretations new representations? How are they related to the original meanings conveyed by the producers of their sources? 200 word abstracts by 31st January 2020 to Dr Benedetta Rossi: b.rossi@bham.ac.uk and Dr Camille Lefebvre: camillelefebvre@yahoo.fr

'Cloth and Creativity in African-Atlantic Cultures', Cardiff, 30th June 2020. Cloth has functioned as an important medium of creativity and resistance in African-Atlantic communities. From the intricately spun yarns of the trickster Anansi to the meticulously sewn suits of the Mardi Gras Indians of New Orleans, fabric and textiles have a long history of communicating unique and connected identities within African diasporas. During the colonial era, fabric bundles

imported by plantation owners were styled and fashioned by enslaved men and women of colour who used their bodies as 'canvasses of representation' (Hall). For marginalised communities, cloth and clothing speaks and signifies as a visual and performative language of resistance (Buckridge). This is what Haitian scholar Michel-Rolph Trouillot referred to as 'individual signature' in African-Atlantic cultural contexts.

This interdisciplinary workshop will consider cloth and its myriad material forms as innovative expressions of identity, collective and 'individual signature', and modes of creative resistance in African-Atlantic cultures. More specifically, it aims to explore different fabrics in African-Atlantic communities: their origins, complex migrations, commercial exchanges and personal, social and ritual meanings. It seeks to question how the creative act of making garments and crafting textiles offers potential for self-crafting and community organisation in the face of continued inequalities, racial oppressions and global imperialisms. The organisers are also interested in discussing the development of both new and traditional techniques of cloth production, dye technologies, and creative processes that embed environmental sustainability and circularity.

This event will include a salon-style indigo workshop led by artist-researcher Lucille Junkere (<https://lucillejunkere.com/>), the opening of the accompanying exhibition *Cloth/Ffabrig/Twal* at BayArt gallery featuring performances and new work by Lucille Junkere, Barbara Prézeau Stephenson (<https://prezeau-stephenson.com/>) and Rose Sinclair (<https://www.gold.ac.uk/design/staff/sinclair/>), and the launch of Barbara Prézeau Stephenson's new book *Le Cercle Atlantique – The Atlantic Circle*. The event is supported by the Leverhulme Trust and Cardiff University.

Possible topics for papers could include: cloth and clothing as signifying practice; cloth, memory, heritage, race; cloth and the legacies of slavery and colonialism; textiles and trade; textiles, dress and mobility; textiles and community; textiles, the body and performance; textiles, revolution and protest; textiles and gender stereotypes; cloth, ritual, and everyday life; fast/slow fashion and sustainability; needlework and labour; and needlework and repair. 250 word abstracts and short bio by 31st January 2020 to Charlotte Hammond: hammondc6@cardiff.ac.uk

INTERNATIONAL

'Third World Historical: Rethinking Revolution from Iran to Ethiopia', Columbia University, New York, USA, 5–7th November 2020. This conference seeks to rethink the historiography of revolutionary movements and the heterogeneity of anti-colonial legacies. It is sponsored by the Department of Middle East, South Asian, and African Studies, and convened by Elleni Centime Zeleke (MESAAS, Columbia University) and Arash Davari (Politics, Whitman College).

This conference stages a conversation between the 1979 revolution in Iran and the 1974 revolution in Ethiopia to ask broader questions about the concept of world historical events, the significance of anti-colonialism, and the relationship between archives and theory. We seek to pose these questions through comparisons with revolutions across the Third World from Haiti to Algeria, Vietnam, and Grenada.

More often than not, the 1979 revolution in Iran is taken as a harbinger of all that is wrong with revolutionary politics today. Where the 1776 American Revolution and the 1789 French Revolution mark the affirmative possibility of revolutionary change, the 1979 Iranian Revolution marks its limits, where the Third World failed to replicate the spirit of the Enlightenment. Thinking against this historiography affords a point of departure for a reconceptualization of not only revolutionary movements but also the heterogeneity of anti-colonial legacies. If Iran signifies all that is wrong with revolutionary politics, Ethiopia signals the final arrival of the last peripheral nation-state into modernity, setting the conditions for capitalism to exist.

The organisers welcome paper proposals on any of the following three core themes. First, "Anti-Colonialism". What is the anti-colonial? And what is its relationship to revolution? Why do we tend to think the anti-colonial – or, for that matter, revolutions – as a unified and homogenous experience? The assumption that anti-colonialism and revolution are not to be thought together may perpetuate a tutelary model – the notion that the "periphery" must first arrive before it can engage in revolutionary action, or the formation of genuinely new political institutions, structures, ideas. To think against this grain is to ask, how do we think anti-colonialism in its heterogeneity? Revolutions from Ethiopia and Iran provide apt sites to do so. Neither readily signifies a case of anti-colonialism. And yet, they did pose questions and answers about a world structured by European colonialism. How are we to read these revolutionaries' characterization of their efforts as anti-colonial? These cases afford possibilities to think anti-colonialism and revolution together and in novel ways. What other cases are there? How, in other words, does South-South comparison afford new resources for thinking the anti-colonial?

Second, The Periphery as World Historical and The Archive as Theory. Can the periphery be a world historical agent? Whether through Hegel or Marx, revolutions are understood as the essential world historical event—as, in fact, productive of the world historical. Is a world historical imaginary only possible in a European register? Does a turn away from that register entail a celebration of localism? To be precise, how has the Third World constituted the international? Can we think the international from it? What can we learn, for instance, from revolutionary experiences in Haiti (1794-1801) and Algeria (1954-1962)?

Third, what is Revolution? In the 1960s and 1970s, Third World activists engaged revolutionary talk to pose questions about the particularities of their immediate contexts. In the process, they posed new conceptions of revolution. Congealed manifestations of the term revolution can preclude our effort to think the event as experience. If revolution signals the disruption of existing categories, can we in turn disrupt congealed categories to think revolution? If sociologists are preoccupied with mapping revolutions as a set of patterns and stages, what would it mean to reposition the question of revolution in the specificity of the Third World? 300-500 word abstracts by 1st March 2020 to Elleni Centime Zeleke: ecz2109@columbia.edu and Arash Davari: davaria@whitman.edu

...Conferences Past

Institute of African Studies University of Ghana, 12th-16th June 2019

This workshop followed an earlier workshop which took place a year ago also in Accra. The imperative for both workshops has been threefold: to support and work with young African students to develop their writing skills using the intensive workshop medium; to encourage the appreciation through the writing about and recording of contemporary and historical African built environment; comprising social infrastructure, public, commercial and private buildings; and to disseminate the products of the workshop; comprising written material, images and other media.

The co-ordination team of Ola Uduku, Manchester School of Architecture; Irene Appeaning Addo, University of Ghana; Victoria Okoye, University of Sheffield; Joseph Oduro-Frimpong, Asheshi University, Ghana; and Kuukuwa Manful, SOAS, London, reflected on the challenges and successes of 2018 Workshop and used the insights to refine and develop the 2019 edition. We also had the challenge and opportunity to link the workshop to an exhibition project being undertaken as a collaboration between Manchester School of Architecture, (UK) Students and Ghanaian Architecture students from Kwame Nkrumah University (KNUST) and Central University. Also with a team of five involved in being mentors for the workshop we had to co-ordinate availability of all coordinators.

Initially we planned to run two workshop streams to accommodate the student numbers who had expressed interest in attending the 2019 workshop as a result of having either participated in or hearing about the 2018 workshop. These workshops were planned to be led by the two early career researchers Victoria Okoye and Kuukuwa Manful. Eventually however only one intensive workshop was run in mid-June, which enabled myself as workshop overall coordinator to meet with organisers, Victoria Okoye, and Dr Irene Appeaning Addo, and Joseph Oduro-Frimpong three weeks before the workshop on site in Accra in order to prepare for the event. This was important as the final timing for the writing workshop was scheduled to work in parallel with a collaborative exhibition on

Ghanaian planning involving architecture students from Ghanaian Universities and the Manchester School of Architecture.

This pre-planning aspect of the workshop proved vital as we were able to identify where best to hold the workshop and how the workshop would work independently but also have some coordinated overlaps with the Ghana-Nigeria exhibition collaboration. We were also able to make contact with and plan for students from the School of Planning from the University of Lagos Nigeria, to also be invited to attend the workshop. This was through our involvement with the West African Rapid Urbanisation and Heritage Network (WARUH) and links with WARUH member, Associate Professor Taibat Lawanson from the Centre for Planning and Urbanisation at the University of Lagos.

We also opened the workshop to students from the school of Journalism in Accra. We also had two students who had attended the 2018 writing workshop attend this year's workshop and a participant who worked as a conservation officer in the town of Wa in Northern Ghana. At the conclusion of the pre-planning meeting the Writing Workshop was confirmed as taking place over five days from 13th-16th June.

We also used the preparation period to develop a clear idea about what was expected of the programme and the outputs students were to produce at the end of the project. We had a two week call out on email and other social media in Ghana and also Nigeria. The call produced 15 Applications for the ten places. The final 2019 cohort were chosen using the same criteria with a view also to having a group with gender and institutional diversity.

From the 15 applications received for places at the workshop and we as organisers worked with Kuukuwa Manful the workshop lead to select ten promising students to attend the workshop. We felt that the optimum number of students that we could effectively work with was ten students in total. This was as a reflection on what worked best for effective and focused mentoring and development over a short period, from the 2018 workshop the year earlier.

The final student names and their institutions are as follows:

1. Benjamin Afagbege (m, Ghana, Conservation Architect)
2. Edem Dotse (m, Ghana, Film-making, student Spelman College, USA)
3. Kwabena Appeaning Addo (m, Ghana, Architecture, KNUST)
4. Oluwaseun A. Muraina (f, Nigeria, Urban Planning, University of Lagos)
5. Rhoda Osei-Nkwantabisa (f, Ghana, Architecture)
6. Oghenetega Ogodo (f, Nigeria, Urban Planning, University of Lagos)
7. Justica Adjei Boampong (f, Ghana, Journalism)
8. Selorm Afeke (f, Ghana, Architecture, KNUST)
9. Opeolu Olukunle Toyosi (m, Nigeria, Urban Planning, University of Lagos)
10. Agyei Sophia (f, Ghana, Economics Student)

Report on ASUK British Academy funded workshops, 7th November 2019

The British Academy has supported a number of ASUK-related workshops this last year. To read more about the principles guiding the ASUK workshops please see: <http://www.asauk.net/asauk-writing-workshops/>

In each of these ASUK workshops, we worked alongside major Africa-based conference series, and the work was integrated with the work of the Publications Committees of these conferences and organisations. Through the writing and peer mentoring workshops, we hope to build partnerships with the many excellent mentoring schemes already existing across Africa, including the AHP fellowships, the APN fellowships, training and professionalisation sessions run by CODESRIA and the BIEA, and by conference series such as the Lagos Studies Association, Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies Association and our sister organisation African Studies Association of Africa.

Each workshop is shaped by the needs of the particular research community, and the agendas and content are determined in collaboration with senior Africa-based scholars and colleagues. The aim of the workshops is to foster a healthy research and publication culture, and to support the establishment of networked scholarly communities across the continent. A strong emphasis is placed on the importance of mentoring and supporting women scholars, many of whom report careers blocked or hampered by inappropriate attention from senior male colleagues. We remain in touch with each participant, through our offers to read revised versions of their contributions, to help them identify appropriate journals to which to submit, and generally remain available to support personal and career development.

Lagos Studies Association, Lagos, Nigeria, 25th-29th June 2019

In June 2019, Louisa Egbunike and Carli Coetzee collaborated with Saheed Aderinto and Yetunde Zaid on three separate but linked mentoring and writing initiatives at the Lagos Studies Association Conference. The conference was held from 27-29 June 2019 at UniLag and the workshops took place on the two days preceding the conference, 25-26 June. For a full programme of the conference and workshops please see https://lagosstudies.wcu.edu/?page_id=98.

The first of the initiatives was to inaugurate a women's mentoring network within LSA. LSA is an organisation and conference series that pays a great deal of attention to the development of women scholars and early to mid-career women. An inter-generational and international team of 13 leading women scholars led this workshop, which brought together a carefully selected group of participants, all Nigeria-based women scholars. The LSA conference explicitly aims to address the gender imbalances in the global academy and has become known as an organisation and as a conference series that works actively towards gender equity in the academy. Having an inter-generational team of women scholars leading the workshop was a meaningful intervention.

The response to this initiative, from the 26 women mentees as well as from the mentors and others (men and women) who attended these sessions, was overwhelming. Many of the younger women said they had never felt so seen and heard in their careers, and the workshop and discussions changed the way they saw their lives and careers. These conversations carried on over meals overlooking the lagoon; the sociality and community spirit of the LSA conference is one of its distinct features. Each mentor will remain available to read work by her mentees, and we shall reconvene and renew the network each year at the conference.

In addition to the women's network, the LSA again ran their extensive and extremely useful set of writing and professionalisation workshops. In preparation for these workshops, we worked with Cambridge University Press and Routledge/Taylor & Francis, to prepare carefully curated collections of articles that were made free to read. CUP compiled set of papers on Lagos and Nigerian history from their journals. T&F selected publications available free to read, significantly most of these were papers written by members of LSA. The set included papers presented at LSA in 2017 and 2018, and which had subsequently been submitted to journals and had been published. The authors of three recently published papers were present and were invited to address their peers.

Present at these workshops were a range of senior scholars, including journal editors and academics from Nigeria as well as elsewhere. The seminars were themed: there were some general topics such as "Research methodology in the social sciences" and "The life cycle of an article" and seminars that touched on a broad array of subjects such as "Academic Research, Writing, and Publishing in Tier-One Journals." The full list of topics can be seen on the conference website.

Selected academics were invited to submit 8,000-word papers and had an opportunity to discuss these in one-on-one sessions with senior colleagues and journal editors. We worked closely with Yetunde Zaid and Saheed Aderinto in selecting the participants. The career stage of participants is a crucial dimension in selecting those who will most benefit from this intervention. Often what may seem to a UK-based selection committee to be a "mid-career" scholar is in fact someone who would benefit greatly from such a workshop. Zaid's intimate knowledge of the academic landscapes, and her clear understanding of the challenges faced by scholars at Nigerian higher education institutions, made her advice invaluable. Aderinto's intellectual leadership and inspirational championing of Nigerian scholarship makes him our second valued advisor and collaborator.

Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies Conference, Lalibela and Bahir Dar Ethiopia, 19th-23rd August 2019

The workshop preceded the fourth edition of the hugely influential Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies Conference and was jointly convened by the African Humanities Project and the *Journal of African Literary and Cultural Studies*, and coordinated by Bhekizizwe Peterson (AHP Advisor), Carli Coetzee (*Journal of African Cultural Studies* Editor), Godwin Siundu (editor, *Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies Journal*, EALCS) and Grace A Musila (AHP Mentor).

The workshop convenors nominated workshop participants from those whose abstracts had been accepted for the 4th EALCS conference in Lalibela. Selection was based on the originality of the abstracts and their potential to be a publishable paper. Nominated participants were offered accommodation, meals and conference registration fees, on condition that they submitted a draft of their papers prior to the workshop. Since the British Academy funds could not cover all nominated authors' expenses, some authors who could cover their own expenses were requested to do so and these funds were channelled towards less resourced participants.

A total of 31 participants were invited. Of these, 9 did not submit papers for the workshop. In total, 22 papers were received. As some participants could not raise travel funds to the workshop, we invited such participants to submit papers nonetheless, and they will also receive feedback on email; and some participants took up this offer.

The workshop programme was two pronged: there were panel discussions on academic publishing and academic citizenship; and a session during which participants received feedback on individual draft papers. The core objectives of the workshop were intergenerational and interregional networking, manuscript development towards article publication and demystifying academic publishing of both books and journal articles.

A total of 14 peer readers committed to reading and responding to three drafts of 2-3 papers, over the period between 1 August 2019 and 30 June 2020; we shall guide participants towards developing them to publishable status. Out of the 14 peer readers, 7 were AHP funded and 2 BA funded; the rest made their own arrangements around travel to the workshop.

African Studies Association of Africa Conference, Nairobi, Kenya, 23rd-26th October 2019

The Journal Work Academy is an ongoing partnership between the African Studies Association of Africa and the ASAUk and aims to foster inter-generational links across African institutions. African scholars in the humanities and social sciences have for 3 or 4 decades been articulating concerns about the barriers faced in getting work published in "international" journals. At the same

time the last decade has seen the establishment of significant Africa-based conference series, including the ASAA, and a steady growth in the number of Africa-based journals and scholarly publications. The growing impetus to build and strengthen Africa-based scholarly journals and the mentoring of the next generation of editors, peer reviewers and editorial board members led to the development of the Journal Work Academy, which responds to these challenges and opportunities.

This workshop was a collaboration between Carli Coetzee, Divine Fuh (Head of Publications & Dissemination at CODESRIA) and Akosua Adomako-Ampofo (President of ASAA) and was conceptualised in collaboration with the Publications Committee of the ASAA. The ASAA conference included several panels on publication and on knowledge production, with CODESRIA and ASAA jointly proposing a new journal which will become the ASAA flagship journal. We shall work closely with Penda Ba, of the LASPAD research programme at the Université Gaston Berger in St. Louis, Senegal, to conceptualise this journal's remit and to establish and support an editorial office.

For the workshop, Divine Fuh and Akosua Adomako Ampofo each nominated 4 candidates. The other 6 candidates were chosen by Carli Coetzee and included authors who are finalising papers for publication in *Journal of African Cultural Studies* as well as the current shadow editor of the journal, Dr Serah Kasembeli. The selection was based on the candidates' ability to produce a high-quality paper, but also on the fact that they are persons who are interested in and already involved in journal editing or wish to become involved.

Each participant submitted a full-length paper and was also required to read all the other papers as well as to write peer reviews of two of the other papers. In this they were guided by carefully prepared documents on peer reviewing and were taken through all the stages in the life cycle of a journal submission. Each paper was, in addition, sent for peer review by at least one senior specialist, so that authors received between three and five peer reviews on their papers. During the session, participants were asked to comment on and to respond to the peer reviews they received, and to outline how they would revise their papers in response to the peer reviews.

The intimate seminar style format of the Journal Work Academy encourages collaborative work, and understands journal publishing not simply as a step to career advancement, but as an engaged and contextual scholarly practice. The session aimed to demystify academic publishing and to make the "hidden curriculum" visible. The Journal Work Academy will continue to build the intangible capacities and skill sets necessary for active academic research citizenship. Through the collaborations between journal editors and Africa-based associations and conference series, publishing cultures thus become a central part of a future-oriented academy.

Theses Recently Accepted at UK Universities

Charles Arthur (2019), 'The Social World of Hunter-Gatherers in Early Holocene Lesotho: Integrating Method and Theory', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisor: Professor Peter Mitchell.

Barnaby Joseph Dye (2019), 'The Politics of Dam Resurgence: High Modernist Statebuilding and the Emerging Powers in Africa', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisor: Dr Ricardo Soares de Oliveira.

Agne Gvozdevaite (2019), 'The Role of Economic, Venation and Morphological Leaf Traits in Plant and Ecosystem Function along Forest-Savanna Gradients in the Tropics [Ghana]', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisors: Dr Imma Oliveras and Professor Yadvinder Malhi.

Joseph Mutua Katuva (2019), 'Water and Welfare in Coastal Kenya', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisor: Dr Robert Hope.

Chloé Lewis (2019), 'Gender Protection/Protecting the Gender Order: Rethinking Responses to Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict and its Aftermath [relating to Congo], D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisors: Professor Dawn Chatty and Dr Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh.

Samuel Lunn-Rockliffe (2019), 'Connecting Past and Present: The Archaeology of the Contemporary Past in the Glades of Embobut, Kenya', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisor: Professor Peter Mitchell.

Cuthbert Makondo (2019), 'Options in Climate Change Adaptation, Resilience and Mitigation: Evidence from Zambia's Rural-Rural Migration', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisor: Professor David S.G. Thomas.

Victoria Miyandazi (2019), 'Competing and Interrelated Conceptions of Equality in Kenya's 2010 Constitution', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisor: Professor Sandra Fredman.

Daisy Ogembo (2019), 'Taxing the 'Hard-to-Tax' in Low and Middle-Income Countries: An Examination and Kenyan case study', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisor: Professor Judith Freedman.

Oluyinka Opoola (2019), 'Across-Country Dairy Breeding Strategies in Sub-Saharan Africa', Ph.D thesis, University of Edinburgh. Supervisors: Professor Georgios Banos, Dr Mizeck Chagunda, Professor Geoff Simm and Dr Raphael Mrode; <http://hdl.handle.net/1842/35814>

Victor Hugo Orozco-Olvera (2019), 'Using Entertainment-Education to Promote Safer Sexual Behaviour in Young Adults in Nigeria', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisor: Dr Lucie Cluver.

Dan Paget (2018), 'The Rally-Intensive Ground Campaign: Electioneering and Party Adaptation in Tanzania', D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisor: Professor Nic Cheeseman

Emma Riley (2019), 'Essays on Mobile Money Services, Microenterprises and Role Models in Developing Countries [relating to Africa]', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford,. Supervisors: Professor Climent Quintana-Domeque and Professor Stefan Dercon.

Cory Rodgers (2019), 'Rural, Remote, Raiya: Social differentiation on the Pastoralist Periphery in Turkana, Kenya', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisors: Dr Elisabeth Hsu and Dr David Turton.

Yuzhou Sun (2019), "'Brotherly Strangers": Historicising and Disaggregating Kenya and Zambia's Relations with China (1961-2000)', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisor: Professor Miles Larmer.

Alexandra Zeitz (2019), 'The Financial Statecraft of Debtors: The Political Economy of External Finance in Africa', D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford. Supervisors: Professor Ben Ansell and Dr Ricardo Soares de Oliveira.

Recent Publications

Adil Babikir (ed) and Adil Babikir (trans.) (2019), *Modern Sudanese Poetry: An Anthology*. Nebraska University Press, 186pp, 9781496215635, £16.99 [Paperback]; 9781496218216, £14.99 [EPUB]; 9781496218230, £14.99 [PDF].

Oluwakemi M. Balogun, Lisa Gilman, Melissa Graboyes and Habib Iddrisu (eds) (2019), *Africa Every Day: Fun, Leisure, and Expressive Culture on the Continent*. Ohio University Press, 386pp, 9780896803237, £70.00 [Hardback]; 9780896803244, £27.99 [Paperback].

Abdul S. Bemath (2019), *Ali A. Mazrui: Reflections on and by an Africanist, Scholar and Poet: An Annotated and Select Thematic Bibliography 2003-2018*. Otterley Press, 186pp, 978-0-6398375-0-5, Rand150; <https://www.otterley.com/collections/all>

Gordon Conway, Ousmane Badiane and Katrin Glatzel (2019), *Food for All in Africa: Sustainable Intensification for African Farmers*. Cornell University Press, 342pp, 9781501743887, £20.99 [Paperback].

Carien Du Plessis and Martin Plaut (2019), *Understanding South Africa*. Hurst, 316pp, 9781787382046, £16.99.

Deborah Kapchan (ed) (2019), *Poetic Justice: An Anthology of Contemporary Moroccan Poetry*. University of Texas Press, 450pp, 9781477318492, £17.99.

Alain Mabanckou and Bill Johnston (trans.) (2019), *The Negro Grandsons of Vercingetorix*. Indiana University Press, 160pp, 9780253043887, £16.99.

Éric Morier-Genoud (2019), *Catholicism and the Making of Politics in Central Mozambique, 1940-1986*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 279pp. 978-1580469418, £95.

Okot p'Bitek and Frank Knowles Girling (2019), *The Lawino's People: The Acholi of Uganda*. Edited and introduced by Tim Allen. Verlag, 384pp, 978-3-643-90538-3, £45.

Max Siollun (2019), *Nigeria's Soldiers of Fortune: The Abacha and Obasanjo Years*. Hurst, 325pp, 9781787382022, £25.

Megan A. Styles (2019), *Roses from Kenya: Labor, Environment, and the Global Trade in Cut Flowers*. University of Washington Press, 256pp, 9780295746517, £79.00 [Hardback]; 9780295746500, £23.99 [Paperback].

International Journal of African Historical Studies Special Issue: Prophets and Prophecy in Postcolonial Africa. Since the emergence of African studies as a legitimate field of inquiry, historians and anthropologists have produced an impressive body of literature on prophecy in precolonial and colonial Africa. They have written detailed biographies of colonial era-prophets, including Simon Kimbangu, Alice Lakwena, and Enoch Mgijima, and described the connections between prophetic movements, such as the East African Revival, and colonial politics. A comparable body of literature on prophecy, however, does not exist for the postcolonial period, despite the growing prominence of prophets and the gift of prophecy across the African continent in the years since the end of colonial rule. This is due not only to the rapid expansion of Pentecostalism over the past fifty years, but also the reality that many Africans, confronted by civil wars, public health crises, and the inability of neoliberal states to provide basic services and security, have turned towards religion for solutions and remedies to the everyday challenges of postcolonial life.

The guest editors invite submissions that explore any issue related to prophets and prophecy in postcolonial Sub-Saharan Africa, but some possible topics and questions for contributors to explore include: the relationship between gender and prophecy; prophecy in a non-Christian context; the relationship between prophets/prophecy and the postcolonial state; the role of prophets in postcolonial protest or political movements; the diversity of realms in which prophets act and have influence, and the diversity of forms their action takes; and the changing dynamics within established prophetic movement, such as the Kimbanguist Church and the Nazareth Baptist Church).

Interested authors should send a 250-word abstract and a CV by 1st February 2020 to the guest editors: Andreana Prichard, University of Oklahoma:

aprichard@ou.edu and Dima Hurlbut, Boston University: dhurlbut@bu.edu. Notification of accepted proposals will occur by 1st March 2020. Completed manuscripts will be due by 1st September 2020.

Call for Manuscripts: Academica Press

Academica Press, a leading independent non-fiction publisher, is proud to call for manuscripts from dynamic scholars at all levels seeking to publish cutting edge work on and about Africa that challenges traditional disciplinary boundaries and provocatively revisits conventional topics. New publications will ideally be devoted to eclectic and under-explored issues and make imaginative uses of theory and method. Academica publishes actively in political science, international relations, history, literature, linguistics, religion, philosophy, cultural and regional studies, the arts, anthropology, law, and other fields. The editorial director will gladly consider proposals for complete or nearly complete unpublished manuscripts. Please direct all proposals and related inquiries via e-mail to: The Editors, Academica Press: editorial@academicapress.com

News

'A Fistful of Shells' by Toby Green has been awarded the British Academy's 2019 Nayef Al-Rodhan Prize for Global Cultural Understanding. *A Fistful of Shells: West Africa from the Rise of the Slave Trade to the Age of Revolution* by British historian Toby Green was named the 2019 winner of the seventh Nayef Al-Rodhan Prize for Global Cultural Understanding, the British Academy's non-fiction book prize. The announcement was made at a ceremony at the British Academy in London.

In his critically acclaimed book, Toby Green tells the history of West Africa in a new light, dispelling the long-held myth that African history only began with the arrival of the Europeans in the 18th and 19th centuries. This comprehensive study draws on many years of research in nine countries, and on oral histories, maps, letters, artefacts and the author's own experience of collecting material across eight West African states to create a new perspective on pre-colonial Africa, little-known in the western world.

In *A Fistful of Shells*, Green, who is a senior lecturer at King's College London, argues that there is much more to the history of West Africa than the history of slavery and abolition. The coastal regions of West Africa were far from closed, sedentary and 'backward' prior to the 18th and 19th centuries. Instead, they were composed of kingdoms that were cosmopolitan, economically advanced and culturally sophisticated, trading far and wide with the West and beyond in a variety of currencies – including the cowrie shells from which the book takes its name.

The product of over two decades of research and experience travelling in West Africa, *A Fistful of Shells* is published by Allen Lane and follows Toby Green's other major works of history including *The Rise of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa* (2012) and *The Inquisition: The Reign of Fear* (2007).

Toby Green has worked with academics, musicians and writers across Africa, organising events in collaboration with institutions in Angola, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone and the Gambia, and his work has been translated into 12 languages. He played a leading role in developing the OCR's new A Level History option, 'African Kingdoms, 1400-1800'.

Commenting on behalf of the jury, Professor Ash Amin, FBA, said: "*A Fistful of Shells* is a treasure trove of a book. Truly ground-breaking, it draws on years of work to tell another story of pre-colonial West Africa, a continually ignored continent. It changed the way in which the jury thought about Africa and helped us to better understand not just Africa but the way in which the world is changing right now. Finally, a detailed history that few westerners know but all ought to. Quite simply, an eye-opener. It was a very demanding task to separate the many merits of all the books on this year's shortlist. Each one was the culmination of years of dedication and represents an illuminating contribution to global cultural understanding."

Professor Sir David Cannadine, historian and President of the British Academy, added: "This prize, which is generously supported by Professor Nayef Al-Rodhan, celebrates books that open up new records of global cultural history and tackle the many influences involved in moulding modern cultural identities. I have been hugely encouraged by the international scope of this year's shortlist, which tackles subjects of enormous importance to those working to foster tolerance and mutual learning, amid all our differences. On behalf of the British Academy, I would like to congratulate Toby Green on the masterful achievement that *A Fistful of Shells* represents for his work, for those in his field of global African history, and for global cultural understanding."

The Nayef Al-Rodhan Prize was established in 2013 to reward and celebrate the best works of non-fiction that demonstrate rigour and originality, have contributed to global cultural understanding and illuminate the interconnections and divisions that shape cultural identity worldwide.

Buchi Emecheta: Goldsmiths College London Pays Homage

"I work toward the liberation of women. My books are about survival, just like my own life" (Buchi Emecheta, Nigerian/British Author 1944-2017)

On what would have been her 75th birthday, 21st July 2019, the internet's foremost search engine celebrated Nigerian author, Buchi Emecheta, with a Doodle. This alteration of the Google logo has taken place 4,000 times since the

original doodle was produced to commemorate France's National Day: Bastille Day in the year 2000. The Google Doodle recognises the world's major holidays and anniversaries and pays homage to the most shining exponents in any field of human endeavour. The Doodle is a marker: Buchi Emecheta is no longer the preserve of her fellow Africans or her fellow Black Britons or of scholars on African literature and African Studies programmes in tertiary institutions or of women – she was a womanist after all. The Doodle is a symbol confirming her status as a global icon of literature and a declaration that her legacy belongs to the whole world.

Her writer's journey began during a marriage blighted and finally destroyed, by spousal violence. When Sylvester Onwordi burned the manuscript of her first novel, *The Bride Price*, she escaped into the slums of London to battle poverty, alone. She was 22, pregnant with their 5th child. She was free, but the picture she cut looked nothing like victory. An Igbo woman in traditional Yoruba dress, iro and buba – trudging London streets in 1960s, 1970s Britain, harassed by poverty, clutching the hand of one or more of the five children she bore for Onwordi and who she was raising alone. See her trudging those cold streets on her way to the British Museum Library where she worked; on her way to her social work at the Inner London Education Authority. In her bag what many would have had difficulty believing were her literary works which would one day bring her international acclaim. What she must have looked like in those days to those who discovered she was looking for a publisher. Someone to help get her African woman's voice heard over the sea of hostile white faces fearful of the immigrant tidal wave that had landed her on English shores.

Emecheta imposed a regimen on herself to write between 4am –6am every morning and produce 2,000 words a day. By the time of her death in 2017, the result of her unflinching regimen was 20 novels and plays for TV, plays for radio, children's books, essays, and her autobiography *Head Above Water*.

Her novels' themes were universal, relatable, though she made sure her protagonists behaved and sounded like Africans in a way that evoked for readers (and for herself), the consciousness of the tribal collective which provides the worldview and legislates the behaviour of the traditional African. She was faithful to details and nuance of culture, using local idioms lavishly, relaying graphically the sounds and smells of home. But she exercised restraint with her writer's freedom. However comical the situations she narrated, she was respectful of her characters, never caricatural.

In a recommendation of any of Buchi Emecheta works, what I would tell a non-African reader or a reader new to Africa, is to look out for the way her village born characters are no more at home than the reader is, in the urban Nigerian settings in which she has placed them. Emecheta brings you up close, so that you see not only the details of her characters' struggles but yourself in Africans

confronting problems born of colonialism with its new and difficult languages, its new and difficult ways of doing virtually everything. See yourself in Africans confronted by the tensions and conflicts of the human condition around race, migration, gender, the patriarchy, marriage and motherhood with its sacrifices, slavery, freedom, oppression, all forms of poverty and civil war.

Thankfully, Emecheta's literary success was rewarded in her lifetime: the Jock Campbell New Statesman Award in 1978; a tour circuit as a visiting lecturer of the world's most prestigious universities; she became a fellow of the University of London; won an honorary doctorate in literature from Farleigh Dickinson University; was ranked on major lists featuring prominent literary artists and thought-leaders (*BBC History Magazine*, *Granta*) and ultimately, in 2005, she was awarded an OBE, Order of the British Empire, for her services to literature.

My chance to participate in the global celebration of her life and prodigious production came through an invitation to the launch of the Buchi Emecheta Space holding on Wednesday, 23rd October 2019 at Goldsmiths Library, Goldsmiths College, University of London. On the second floor of the Rutherford Building, the Buchi Emecheta Space is of a modest size. I stopped to admire a black and white portrait photograph of her in a glass case on the wall. Emecheta is youthful here, dressed up in full aso-oke. Plump, pretty and serene. A Buchi Emecheta: Goldsmiths College London pays homage phenomenon woman Yoruba queen, not a Lagos-born Igbo author from the semi-rural town of Ibusa who has known such suffering and hard-grind. She looks like a beautiful bride who will fetch a very high price. A calmly assured, hopeful bride.

The Space leads to the seminar room where the launch was held. I was welcomed by library staff, Gloria Osojipe into a small crowd of mostly black women, university staff – amongst them postgraduates on the MA Black British Writing Programme – and one man with lilac streaks in his hair. Margaret Busby, the first black female and the youngest publisher in the UK, introduced me to Joy Sigaud, classical musician and black culture activist. Sigaud, an elegant woman, is editor of *Editions*, the magazine of *Black History Month* <https://editionbhm.com> and editor of the *Windrush Day Magazine* www.windrushday.org.uk Two pioneering black women of letters in Goldsmiths Library to celebrate the woman esteemed to be the first successful black woman novelist in the United Kingdom.

The Bride Price, 1976; *Double Yoke*, 1982; *Naira Power*, 1982; *In the Ditch*, 1972; *Second Class Citizen*, 1974; *The Slave Girl*, 1977. Riches Emecheta has poured into the vast treasury of black patrimony and global culture, were on display on shelves ranged along the walls.

Dr Althea Greenan heads The Women's Art Library (Special Collections and Archives) at Goldsmiths. She photographed the event held in Emecheta's memory and generously shared the images with me to support my coverage. She

explained that the Space was the brainchild of Jessa Mockridge, artist and member of staff of the Library whose, “love for Buchi Emecheta’s work prompted her to create an exhibition in 2018 in collaboration with Halima Haruna at Goldsmiths working with Buchi Emecheta’s archives.”

They gave the exhibition a poignant and evocative title: *Comeback, mother: Buchi Emecheta*, April 2018. It reflects the story told by the author about the reason for her Igbo name, Nnenna: “My father told me very, very early in my life that why my third Ibo name is Nnenna – father’s mother, was because I am his comeback mother. It was said that when my father’s mother was dying, she had promised that she would come again, this time as his daughter”. Come back, mother showcased, ‘fragments found, lifted, reproduced and re-read from Buchi Emecheta’s personal archive, including: books, manuscripts, plays, letters, notebooks, ephemera, essays, newspapers and unpublished material’.

Olatoun Williams

Call for Applications: AG Leventis Post-Doctoral Fellowship

The Leventis Research Co-operation Programme is devised to assist younger scholars develop their research interests in collaboration with their counterparts in London. Applicants are invited to apply to spend three months as visitors of the Centre of African Studies at SOAS, University of London, in order to pursue their research in libraries and archives and to participate in the intellectual life of the Centre. The scheme might be particularly appropriate for scholars working up a doctoral thesis into publishable form.

To be considered for the fellowship, applicants should send the following documents via email to: ab17@soas.ac.uk A CV of two pages; a statement of current research interests (of not more than 1,000 words) specifying the aims to be achieved during the research period in London; and one academic reference letter supporting the application (sent directly from the email account of the referee to ab17@soas.ac.uk). Applications are considered by a Steering Committee in London. Emails will be sent to the applicants informing them of the Committee's decision soon after the deadline of 31st March 2020.

Obituaries

Professor William Tordoff, who has passed away on 22nd January 2019, was born in Halifax on 23rd October, 1925, the son of Charles and Dora (Stott) Tordoff. Following service with the Royal Signals (1944-47) and a BA received in 1950 from Cambridge University, he took a position as an extra-mural lecturer in the Gold Coast. He went on to obtain an MA from Cambridge in 1954 and his doctoral degree from the University of London in 1961.

His association with Africa was to dominate his career. And along with membership of Manchester’s Department of Government between 1962 and 1990,

Professor Tordoff spent nearly 18 years at African institutions of higher learning, including a lengthy stay in the Gold Coast/Ghana, and shorter periods in Tanzania and Zambia. In the latter case he served as the foundation professor of Political Science.

His contributions to the study of politics in the new African states were very considerable, extending as they did over almost five decades. Professor Tordoff wrote, co-authored or edited no fewer than seven books as well as producing numerous articles on African and Third World topics. His research activities on African political life began in the Gold Coast during the 1950s, with his doctoral project on the impact of British colonial rule on the Ashanti kingdom and the field work he undertook with Dennis Austin on electoral politics as the Gold Coast's independence approached. His doctoral project was subsequently published as *Ashanti under the Prempehs* (1965). His highly regarded *Government and Politics in Africa* enjoyed four editions, while *Third World Politics*, co-authored with his Manchester colleagues Dr Paul Cammack and Dr David Pool, had two. Bill also served on official commissions of enquiry (as well as on election observing missions) in eight countries, and more than once in Botswana, Zambia and Gabon.

Alongside his scholarly activities, Professor Tordoff took on an important range of administrative responsibilities within the University of Manchester, including Chairmanship of the Department of Government and a term as Dean of the then Faculty of Economic and Social Studies (1983-85). He also produced a considerable range of doctoral students who were to go on to distinguished careers in British and African universities. Bill was regarded as a valuable and supportive colleague by his fellow members of the Department.

In retirement, Bill enjoyed golf, watercolour painting, and walking in Derbyshire. He maintained a keen interest in politics until, sadly, in later life he developed Alzheimer's. He leaves his loving wife Audrey and two daughters and their families.

Ralph A. Young

It is with great sadness that we report the death on 21st October 2019 of **Emeritus Professor Dennis Austin** at his home in Colchester. Born at the Grove Hospital, Tooting on 14th March, 1922, he was the son of Henry Edmund Austin. After wartime service with the Royal Air Force, he obtained his B.A. degree from King's College (University of London) in 1949, and that same year was appointed an extra mural tutor at the new University College in the British Gold Coast dependency in West Africa.

Professor Austin was to remain there for what was to prove a highly eventful decade, as the rapid growth of African nationalism saw the Gold Coast achieve its independence as the new state of Ghana in 1957. This period was also to see

the launch of what was to become an impressive scholarly career. With his colleague William Tordoff, he produced among the first studies of electoral politics in West Africa, and he then went on to chart the evolution of nationalist politics in Ghana into the first years of independence with his landmark *Politics in Ghana: 1946-1960*. He was to write or edit 12 further books during an extended career that were to establish his international reputation as an astute and measured observer of postcolonial politics in Africa and indeed elsewhere (including India and Sri Lanka as well as South Africa, Malta, and the Commonwealth).

In 1959 Professor Austin received a three-year Rockefeller research fellowship, and following this a joint post at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies and the Royal Institute of International Affairs; the University of London subsequently awarded him a readership. In 1967 Dennis Austin joined the Department of Government at the University of Manchester as a professor. He served there and then at the closely linked Institute for Development Policy and Management (now the Global Development Institute) for over thirty years, becoming Pro Vice Chancellor of the University while also having a term as Dean of the then Faculty of Economic and Social Studies.

He was a stimulating and authoritative teacher, highly popular among his undergraduate students and the diploma and MA candidates at IDPM – not least with his considerable fund of entertaining stories from a long career. For his fellow members of staff (and especially those at earlier career stages), Dennis could be a wise, older brother, explaining the way in which universities could be unwise and sometimes unfair...but also excellent places to work!

Many of the doctoral students who developed under his supervision have gone on to distinguished careers at British, African and West Indian universities.

Dennis Austin's wife Margaret passed away in 2010, while a son died in Ghana when young. He is survived by his son Stephen and three daughters, Catherine, Elizabeth and Florence, five grandchildren, and four great grandchildren.

Professor David Hulme and Ralph Young

Note to Contributors

Send items for inclusion in the April 2020 *Newsletter* by 15th March 2020 to Dr Simon Heap, c/o Academic Office, Buckley 1.08, Oxford Brookes University, Gipsy Lane, Oxford, OX3 0BP or effaheap@aol.com

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