



African Studies Association of the UK

NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 Number 7

April 1997

Obituary: James Lewton-Brain

Professor James Lewton-Brain, anthropologist, language teacher and creative writer, died suddenly in Poughkeepsie, New York, on 2 December, 1996, aged 73. He was born on 12 September, 1923.

Jim Brain's career showed a remarkable progression, from English farmboy, through war service in Europe and Asia, as a corporal of horse in the Life Guards of the Household Cavalry, then officer of the Royal Tank Regiment, on to Colonial Service in Africa and finally academic anthropology, language teaching and creative writing in the United States.

After completing his anthropological training by intensive fieldwork in Tanzania among the Ha and Luguru peoples, writing his doctoral dissertation at Syracuse University, New York, he found his full-time teaching position at the State University of New York at New Paltz, where he remained for twenty years, soon becoming a prolific author of strikingly original articles. Had he belonged to one of the major graduate departments, enjoying the close professional and scholarly network which that invariably involves, a number of these articles would have become the centre of intellectual debate, attracting wide notice and becoming acceptable for publication in major journals, with corresponding impact on the discipline and the author's reputation and career prospects, with the possibility of moving to the most prestigious departments. This is the unfair and perhaps irremediable injustice of the recruitment and promotion system. Jim suffered from a late start, without internationally renowned sponsors on hand at those critical points when they can make a crucial difference.

Jim was always in demand as a superb teacher of Swahili and Lwoo, for which he produced grammars and course manuals. In recent decades he also wrote novels, children's stories and memoirs. These rich treasures are unfortunately not available to the public. His life was enhanced by the gifted women with whom he shared it: Marian, Professor of Nursing; Mary Gordon the famous novelist; and Karen Lea, Professor of English.

He leaves a beloved widow, a dear sister, two granddaughters and two sons: one a metallurgical artist and goldsmith, the other Principal Dancer in the Ballets de Monte Carlo. He is deeply mourned by his many friends in America, Africa and Europe. (*Aidan Southall*)

Meetings, Lectures and Events

28 April: Prof. M. Mamdani, *'Between justice and reconciliation: reflections on Rwanda and South Africa*, Inter-Faculty Committee for African Studies Lecture, 5 pm, Oakeshott Room, Lincoln College, Oxford.

30 April: Michael Barratt Brown (Director of TWIN & Twin Trading Ltd), third annual African Studies lecture, *'An African road for development: are we really all romantics?'*, 5.30 pm, Rupert Beckett Lecture Theatre, University of Leeds. Contact Kate Banham, African Studies Unit, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT (tel: (0)113 233-5069).

14 May: Prof. Wendy James, *'Placing the unborn: on the social construction of new life'*, the Kaberry Lecture, sponsored by the Centre for Cross-Cultural Research on Women, 5 pm, Taylor Institution, St Giles, Oxford.

19 June: Valedictory lecture by Prof. T O Ranger, *'Living Africa: making and writing history in Zimbabwe'*, at the Nissan Lecture Theatre, St Antony's College, Oxford. There will be drinks afterwards. Those planning to attend can contact Dr Obi Igwara, St Antony's College, Oxford OX2 6JF.

Conferences Future...

UNITED KINGDOM

29-30 April: *'Enigmas and arrivals. Writing now: an international symposium'*. Contact the Centre for English Studies, Room 360, Senate House, Malet St., London WC1E 7HU (tel: +44 (0)171-636-800 ext 3054; fax: +44 (0)171-436-4533; email: enigmas@sas.ac.uk).

9-12 May: Third SCUSA inter-university colloquium on *'The Meanings of the local'*, the International Centre for Contemporary Cultural Research, Keele University. Contact David Maxwell (History) and Jane Parish (Sociology), Keele University, Staffordshire ST5 5BG.

11-13 July: *'Racializing class, classifying race'*, a conference on labour and difference in Africa, USA and Britain. European settlement, colonial domination, slavery, forced labour, racialized migration, segregation and legally enforced discrimination—each has marked, in different ways and to varying degrees, the labour histories of Britain, Africa and the United States. By drawing on original research and comparative discussion, this multi-disciplinary conference will examine the interplay of race, ethnicity and labour. There will be eleven panels: Race and labour in a wider context; racism, violence and the working class; race, labour and the law; gender, race and labour; industrial comparisons—mining; industrial comparisons—the waterfront; migration and immigrant workers; thinking about race and class; race and the organization of labour; the meaning and character of 'whiteness'; race, labour and political transitions in South Africa. There will also be a keynote lecture on 'Empire, race and working-class mobilizations' by David Montgomery, and a summary by Fred Cooper. Registration is £75 (ordinary) and £45 (students and unwaged). Contact: Peter Alexander, St Antony's College, Oxford OX2 6JF (email: peter.alexander@sant.ox.ac.uk).

15-17 September: *'Identity & conflict in Africa'*, organised by the African Studies Unit, to be held at Bodington Hall, University of Leeds. At the heart of some of the most dramatic and tragic events in Africa are issues of contested 'identities', or so they are presented by commentators. This conference aims to take a more critical view of the notion of 'identity' and its salience to developments in Africa today, and not just in conflict situations. Some of the issues the conference plans to address are: conflict and identity; international

politics, identity and regional conflicts; gendered identities; pan-Africanism and the African diaspora; economic crisis and conflict; cultural identity and expression; the politics of 'nation building'; religious identity; identity and regional networks. Contact Kate Banham, African Studies Unit, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT (tel: +44 (0)113-233-5069; email: African-Studies@leeds.ac.uk).

INTERNATIONAL

12-14 June: Fourth International Sudan Studies Conference in Cairo. Contact Cyrus Reed at the American University of Cairo (email: CYREED@auc-acs.eun.eg).

The Journal of Modern African Studies

Dr. David Kimble will be retiring at the end of 1997 from the Editorship of the *Journal of Modern African Studies*, which he founded in 1962, and has edited for thirty-five consecutive volumes. The new editorial team will formally take over from the start of Volume 36 (1998), and has started to consider manuscripts submitted for that volume:

Editor: Christopher Clapham, Department of Politics & International Relations, Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YL, United Kingdom (fax: (0)1524-594238; e-mail: jmas@lancaster.ac.uk).

Book Review Editor: John Wiseman, Department of Politics, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 7RU, United Kingdom (fax: (0)191-222-5069; e-mail: J.A.Wiseman@newcastle.ac.uk).

A new Editorial Advisory Board is being formed, and includes: Michael Bratton (Michigan State University), Stephen Ellis (Afrika-Studiecentrum, Leiden), Jeffrey Herbst (Princeton), Kenneth King (Edinburgh), Melissa Leach (Sussex), Achille Mbembe (CODRESIA, Dakar), Jean-Francois Medard (CEAN, Bordeaux), and Kwame Ninsin (Harare).

The editorial policy of the *Journal* will remain unchanged. Papers will be fully refereed, and three copies should be submitted to the editor at the address above, details of the author being restricted to a removable top sheet. The *Journal* will continue to be published by Cambridge University Press.

Theses Recently Accepted at UK Universities

Next issue in the *Newsletter* a new feature of doctoral theses recently accepted at UK universities will begin. Supervisors, heads of departments, and successful doctoral candidates are invited to send in details of accepted theses, giving the name of the author, title, department, university, and date of acceptance.

Recent and Forthcoming Publications

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

Malcolm J Ruel, *Belief, Ritual and the Securing of Life. Reflective Essays on a Bantu Religion*, Leiden, E J Brill, 1997, 224pp, ISBN (cloth) 90-04-10640-5 (NLG 135, S87)

B P Willan (ed.), *Sol Plaatje: Selected Writings*, Johannesburg, Wits University Press and Athens, OH, Ohio University Press, 1997, 500 pp. ISBN (paper) 1-86814-303-1 (WUP) and 0-8214-11861 (Ohio UP).

Sudan Studies Society of the UK (SSSUK)

Following the AGM of SSSUK last September, there were a number of changes to the Committee: Richard Brook has become Hon Secretary and welcomes inquiries about the activities of the Society (write 20B Howard Rd, Penge, London SE20 8HQ); Alan Kunna is Membership Secretary and would be pleased to hear from those interested in joining the Society (write 143 Southfield Rd, London W4 5LB); Paul Wilson continues as Editor of *Sudan Studies*, and would be delighted to receive contributions for future numbers on any subject related to Sudan (write 4 Kingsland Court, Kennedy Rd, Shrewsbury SY3 7AB). The next major activity with which SSSUK will be associated is the Fourth International Sudan Studies Conference in Cairo, 12-14 June (*ASAUK Newsletter* July 1996, and above).

Appointments, Academic Links and Exchanges

Oxford University: William Beinart of Bristol University has been appointed Rhodes Professor of Race Relations, with a fellowship attached to St Antony's College, beginning October 1997. Ian Phimister of the University of Cape Town has been appointed Lecturer in Commonwealth History at Queen Elizabeth House, with a fellowship attached to St Cross College, beginning October 1997.

Note to Contributors

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