

## ARCHIVES-LIBRARIES COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

The Archives-Libraries Committee has undertaken several new projects this year. A basic guide to libraries which have substantial Africana collections is being prepared. This guide will give isolated Africanists information concerning the location of and access to these major collections. It is hoped to distribute the guide as an insert in the *ASA News*.

The Committee has also discussed several ways of distributing information concerning access to African archives. It was recommended that the ASA Secretariat regularly give advice to those scholars who are preparing for field research.

A Committee project which is continuing in a most successful manner is the list of recent American dissertations on Africa which is compiled regularly by Joe Lauer for the *ASA News*. The *Africana Libraries Newsletter* continues to provide an excellent means of communication among librarians in the US, Europe and Africa.

At this meeting, the Committee is sponsoring two panels on interlibrary cooperation. It is hoped to expand our acquisitions of African newspapers and other expensive research materials while eliminating unnecessary duplication of effort.

The Conover-Porter Award for excellence in an Africana bibliography or reference work will be presented at next year's meeting. It is requested that nominations for works published in 1979, 1980 or 1981 be sent to Joe Lauer at Michigan State University Library by December 31, 1981.

Work on a detailed handbook on Africana collections in the US — which is supported by NEH — is proceeding well under the direction of Jean Gosebrink. Publication is planned for 1982. The *Guide to Non-Federal Archives and Manuscripts Relating to Africa* by Aloha Smith has been completed. The Committee is now attempting to facilitate its publication.

Our Subcommittee on Cataloging and Classification continues its liaison work with the Library of Congress. Recently it advised that the pejorative word "primitive" be eliminated from all subject headings. Our Subcommittee on Bibliography continues to provide a clearinghouse and forum wherein new bibliographic projects may be discussed and implemented.

I wish to thank the ASA Board and Secretariat for their continuing assistance and support. Finally, I wish to thank all Committee members for their hard work throughout this past year.

Daniel Britz (Northwestern University)  
Chairperson  
Archives-Libraries Committee 1980/81

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### IN MEMORIAM: WILLIAM BASCOM

Recently, while in Sierra Leone, I many times saw proverbs on lorries. Two of them, "Nobody Knows Tomorrow," and "No Condition Is Permanent," are appropriate. They apply to Bill and to the rest of us. We create some illusion of stability while life constantly alters. Bill was very great at this. He was enduring — he always wrote, translated, did the hard, tedious job as well as the fun work, and continued, like a strong locomotive engine, pulling the rest of us along.

I went to Northwestern to work with him because he was a friend of John Useem, whom I had been studying under at Wisconsin. They had both been in the Pacific on the Coordinated Investigation of Micronesian Atolls project. When I arrived at the university I was brash, full of odd theory and ideas, and intellectually wild. Bill calmed me down, he molded me, he helped me mature to a steadier state. Drinks at his home in the evening, with Bill and Berta, became a home for me, a talking and thinking place. He never told jokes as far as I can remember, yet he was a humorous person. He clearly relished the obliqueness, the double humor, of African and Afro-American folktales and proverbs even as he went about the steady task of collecting, comparing, and analyzing them.

He was a gentle person. He never yelled at us students, always kept his cool, and continued to teach. He was one of the few individuals who was always busy, always working,

yet seemed paced down. I don't know how he did it. His particular human qualities made him a great field researcher, a man of patience, quiet humor, and interest in others. He was not a great theoretician, though he had his share of knocking down concepts of others, but a magnificent collector, synthesizer, and analyzer of data. Theories come and go, but Bill Bascom's Yoruba work, Cuban studies, and research on Ponape will live on a long, long time, will be a mine of information and ideas. As Meyer Fortes wrote me after Bill's death, "His two books on Ifa will be read and studied and written about in Ph.D. theses long after most of us are consigned to the dusty library shelves."

I am proud to be the editor of a Festschrift in his honor. I only regret that I was too slow in getting it out so that he never saw it, although he knew about it; a book written by his students, who have grown up, gone their ways, but have all been affected by his qualities. I regret too that he died so young, still writing, still working on old and new projects, leaving behind a large and impressive list of finished and nearly completed manuscripts, which will appear in time.

He and Berta had good years together; they were fine companions. She helped him in his work but never claimed credit for it. They worked seriously, fought hard at times, and loved strongly. Their particular drives somehow matched.

I am proud and happy, even in the midst of sorrow, to have known such a fine man and such an immense scholar.

Simon Ottenberg

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### FAREWELL TO DUFFY

At the end of the year James Duffy is retiring from his position as Managing Director of Crossroads Press, an enterprise which more than any other bears the marks of his initiative and imagination. It seems appropriate, at this time, to publish excerpts from the remarks made by Allen Isaacman at the 24th Annual Meeting of the ASA regarding Professor Duffy's scholarly place in African Studies:

It is a pleasure to be here to honor James Duffy. While many of us know him in his more visible role as the hard-working, often frazzled Executive Secretary of the African Studies Association it is important not to forget that James Duffy is a pioneering historian whose writings have had far-reaching intellectual, moral and political significance.

In the late 1950's most North American scholars with even a passing interest in Africa uncritically accepted Lisbon's claim that its overseas experience had produced a series of uniquely multi-racial societies. This thesis, known as Luso-Tropicalism, received intellectual legitimacy in the writing of Gilberto Fryrye who discovered Brazil's reputed racial paradise reproduced in Angola and Mozambique. Other friends of the Salazar regime including F.C.C. Egerton and S.R. Welch, as well as a host of Portuguese scholars working under the constraints imposed by a fascist government, predictably found the legacy of racial harmony and of Lisbon's "civilizing mission" firmly rooted in the Angolan and Mozambican past. "Professor Duffy is no muckracker. At times, in his anxiety not to influence the results, he even works overtime trying to collect all the little credible bits that can be scrapped away from the lies and self-deception with which the Salazar regime nourishes its national vanity."

As is the case with all pioneering works of lasting importance, *Portuguese Africa* excited the imagination of a whole generation of younger scholars. Many of the themes highlighted were subsequently elaborated upon in the works of such prominent students of Angola and Mozambique as Edward Alpers, Gerald Bender, John Marcum, Joe Miller, William Minter, Michael Samuels, John Saul, Alan Smith, Leroy Vail and Douglas Wheeler—most of whom explicitly acknowledged the profound impact his work had dur-