

# A.S.A.I. Newsletter

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***Obituary: Professor Martin Lynn August 31st, 1951 - April 15th, 2005  
Founding member of the African Studies Association of Ireland***

It is with shock and sadness that we received the news of the passing away of Professor Martin Lynn earlier this year. Martin was Professor of History at Queen's University Belfast and a founding member of the African Studies Association of Ireland. He was the Association's Honorary Secretary until December 2004.

Martin was born in Lagos. He held an MA from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and a PhD from King's College London. Martin led a distinguished career as a historian of Africa. His research contribution to African Studies within Ireland and internationally was immense. His interests were expansive, covering economic and political history in West Africa across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries up until the decolonisation of Nigeria after the Second World War. Martin was widely regarded as an innovative scholar. His publications included *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa: The Palm Oil Trade in the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1997) and *Travel, Trade and Power in the Atlantic, 1765–1884*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2003), edited with Betty Wood. He also undertook the editing of the magisterial compilation of edited colonial documents for Nigeria as part of the *British Documents at the End of The Empire Project*, London: Stationery Office (2001).

Martin moved to Queen's in 1980 where he was renowned as an inspiring teacher. He worked to promote African Studies in the University and beyond, eventually working with other Africanists on the island of Ireland to develop the African Studies Association from fledgling idea to its present-day robust form. As Honorary Secretary, Martin worked tirelessly to promote the Association. He contributed much to the smooth running of the committee and all ASAI events and authored the ASAI newsletter. The ASAI is indebted to his work.

Martin will be fondly remembered in the Association for his kindness, good humour, charm and his modesty. His encouragement of younger scholars in the Association will be missed greatly. The hundreds of mourners at his funeral at the Society of Friends' Meeting House in Belfast attest to the esteem in which he was held.

Martin passed away after heart surgery. He is survived by his wife Alice and by their two daughters.

## ***Call for Papers, 6<sup>th</sup> Annual ASAI Conference 2005***

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual conference on the theme “Congresses, Conferences, Commissions: African Visions and Visions for Africa” will take place in University College Dublin on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December. A recent publication of the Commission for Africa sets out a claimed “blueprint” for African development. But Africa has long been the subject of such “blueprints,” often imposed by outsiders; the Berlin Conference of 1884-5, dividing Africa up between the imperial powers, was perhaps the most thoroughgoing example of such outside intervention. At the same time, Africans themselves have articulated their own visions of the continent’s development through fora such as the Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester in 1945. This ASAI conference will chart the history, and discuss the significance of, how Africa, and Africa’s structures and futures, have been envisioned – by Africans and by others. While African visions, and visions for Africa, constitute the central themes of the conference, papers on all aspects of African studies from within all disciplines are welcome. Abstracts, approximately 300 words in length, should be submitted to Andy Storey ([andydsc@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:andydsc@yahoo.co.uk)) or Vincent Durac ([vincent.durac@ucd.ie](mailto:vincent.durac@ucd.ie)) – Centre for Development Studies, Library Building, UCD, Belfield, Dublin 4 – by Friday 14<sup>th</sup> September. For further information, contact either of the above by e-mail, by post, or at (01) 7167187.

### ***Draft Minutes of the 2004 AGM held at the University of Ulster at Magee in Derry/Londonderry at 1.30 pm on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2004***

*In the Chair: Prof David Dickson. There were 19 members present.*

*Apologies: Dr Durac, Mr Evans, Prof Leonard, Prof Tonkin, Dr Uhomoibhi.*

#### ***1. Minutes***

*The Minutes of the AGM of 4 December 2004 were approved and signed.*

#### ***2. Matters Arising***

*There were no matters arising that were not covered elsewhere in the Agenda.*

#### ***3. Secretary’s Report***

*Prof Martin Lynn reported on the activities of the committee over the past year. It had met four times, once in Belfast and three times in Dublin though one of its meetings had been seriously disrupted due to a bomb scare on the Belfast-Dublin railway line. Its main business had been to organise the annual conference; in addition a Newsletter had gone out to members in the summer. He reported that the committee had agreed to put on a Public Lecture in the Dublin area in the new year and plans were under way for this. He drew members’ attention to the AEGIS conference in London in June/July and expressed the hope that there would be a strong Irish Africanist presence at it; he also reported on the ‘Africa 05’ festival that was to begin in London in February and last for most of the year; he hoped members travelling to*

or through London would be able to attend some of its various exhibitions, concerts, lectures etc. He reported that Tony Zurburgg of the Africa Book Centre had been unable to be present in Derry this year but had expressed the hope to attend future conferences; in addition Taylor & Francis had also expressed the hope to attend in future. The committee welcomed the presence of booksellers, saw them as a useful resource for members and would do their best to facilitate their presence.

#### 4. Treasurer's Report

Dr Roger Boulter circulated a paper outlining the Association's finances; it currently had E418.55 in its bank account and a paid-up membership of 29. This was before the costs of the conference had been considered. He reported that the 2003 conference had cost about E900. He stated that ASAI had to rely on its own resources and the key to this was to increase membership; he urged members to recruit colleagues to the Association. He stated that the Association's books and accounts were open for inspection by any member who wished to do so.

#### 5. 'Suggestions for expanding ASAI membership'

Ms Ide Corley spoke to the paper drawn up by herself, Dr Durac and Dr Uhomuibhi concerning the future direction of ASAI and which had been circulated to members. A response by Mr Ryan was also circulated, as well as a short questionnaire. She asked members to respond to the ideas in the papers and to get in touch with her. Prof Dickson echoed this and drew attention to the need outlined in one part of the paper to develop links between Universities and Colleges in Ireland and their African equivalents. He hoped ASAI could stimulate these links; it might be an idea to consider a separate ASAI conference purely on this issue.

#### 6. Research Database

Prof Lynn reported on the research database. Members had completed a questionnaire on their research at the 2003 conference and it had been agreed that this would be uploaded onto the ASAI website. Dr Uhomuibhi had informed him that this was now in progress.

#### 7. Conference 2005

Prof Dickson reported that the committee would be interested to hear suggestions as to where the next conference should be held. Dublin was a possibility. It would also be good to hear if early December was the best time of year to hold it, and if the format was acceptable.

#### 8. Elections to the committee

Prof Lynn reported that most of the committee had reached the end of their second term of office and elections were therefore necessary. Members had been informed of the need, under the constitution, to submit nominations a week in advance of the AGM. Several nominations had been received but there had been only one nomination for each of the three committee offices and only five nominations for the six ordinary members; a contested election was therefore not necessary. The following names of

*paid-up members, having been properly nominated before the deadline, were therefore approved by the AGM:*

*Chair: Dr Vincent Durac  
Secretary: Ms Ide Corley  
Treasurer: Dr Andy Storey  
Ordinary Members: Dr Stefan Andreasson  
Dr Roger Boulter  
Mr Eoin Dillon  
Dr Rachel Naylor  
Dr James Uhomoibhi*

*These would serve for a two year term of office, with effect from the AGM. Members of the committee were entitled to serve in a post for two terms of two years.*

#### **9. AOB**

*Prof Lynn said he wanted to draw attention to the fact that he and Prof Dickson were now stepping down from the committee. The ASAI had arisen out of a suggestion made by Prof Dickson in a phone call to him some six years ago and had now reached maturity. Dr Hart proposed a vote of thanks to the committee for their work over the past few years. This was accepted by acclamation.*

*The meeting closed at 2.10 pm*

*Minutes: Prof Martin Lynn*

#### ***Elections***

An election will be held at the annual conference on December 3 for an ordinary committee member to serve a two-year term of office. Nominations for election to the committee must be submitted in writing (including email) to the Secretary to arrive at least one week before the AGM. The cut-off date, this year, is 26 November 2005. Only members may be nominated for election and such nominations must be proposed by a member and seconded by another member and must also indicate the consent of the nominee.

#### ***Report on the AEGIS Conference 2005***

The First European Conference on African Studies organized by AEGIS, Africa-Europe Group For Interdisciplinary Studies, was held at the School of Oriental and African Studies and the Institute for Commonwealth Studies in London from 29 June to 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2005. Seven hundred and eighty delegates attended the conference from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland among other European countries. Fifty delegates attending the conference were citizens of African nations, including sixteen from South Africa. The delegate list also included scholars from the USA and Australia. Keynote speeches included “Home or Exile: The African Writer’s Dilemma” by the renowned

writer and broadcaster, Bole Butake (University of Yaounde I, Cameroon) as well as “Strengthening the foundations of Social Science Research in Africa” by Adebayo Olukoshi (CODESRIA).

At the request of Professor Patrick Chabal (King’s College London), President of AEGIS, ASAI’s research database has been distributed to the board members of AEGIS. It is hoped that some AEGIS members might seek to form links between individual African Studies centres in Europe and Africanists in Ireland. Professor Chabal also agreed to publicise ASAI activities on the AEGIS website.

The next AEGIS thematic conference will be held in Edinburgh, UK, on 16-17 June, 2006. Details will be available shortly on the AEGIS website. The second general conference is planned for Leiden in 2006. ASAI members are especially encouraged to participate in AEGIS events so that Ireland, North and South, is well represented in this European-wide organization as it continues to grow and develop.

### *Subscriptions*

Members may send subscriptions (**E12.50/Stg £8 for full members or E6.00/Stg £4 for students**) along with a completed membership form to Dr. Andy Storey, Centre for Development Studies, Library Building, UCD, Belfield, Dublin 4. The membership form is also available in pdf format on the ASAI website at <http://quis.qub.ac.uk/asai/member.htm>.

### *ASAI Website*

The ASAI website at <http://quis.qub.ac.uk/asai/index.htm> was recently updated by Dr Stefan Andreasson (Queen’s University) and is managed jointly by Dr. Andreasson and Dr James Uhomoibhi (University of Ulster, Jordanstown) who launched the site in 2004. Dr Andreasson added a number of new items to the site, including a membership form and the results of the research survey compiled in 03/04. This year, he has also continuously updated the website with news of upcoming ASAI events. An ASAI lecture is planned for Belfast in autumn/winter and details will be available on the website shortly. The committee also plans to establish an email list in order to facilitate more frequent communication with members.

### *Other Websites and Contacts of Possible Interest to ASAI Members*

For the Africa Solidarity Centre, 17 Rathfarnham Road, Dublin 6, the website address is <http://www.africacentre.ie>

For the Northern Ireland African Cultural Centre, 12 Upper Crescent, Belfast BT7 1NT, the website address is <http://www.niacc.org>

For Partners Ireland, an eForum focused on HIV/AIDS and other health and

development issues in Ireland and abroad, the website address is <http://www.healthdev.org/eforums/cms/individual.asp?sid=97&sname=Partners%20Ireland>

For email updates about African music performed in Ireland, email Phil Bergan at [feileafrika@africalive.co.uk](mailto:feileafrika@africalive.co.uk)

For information on new African films and upcoming film festivals in Africa, check <http://www.contentbridge.net/pages/1/index.htm>

A large range of African journals can be accessed at [www.ajol.info](http://www.ajol.info).

### ***Other Conferences and Events***

The BA Festival of Sciences 2005 on the topic “Africa’s Rainbow Revolution” will be held on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2005, in Lecture Theatre 2 at the Panoz Institute in Trinity College Dublin. Tickets cost E7.00 and are available on-line at [www.the-ba.net](http://www.the-ba.net) or by calling +44 (0)20 7019 4693. For more information, contact [ebartlet@bbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:ebartlet@bbsrc.ac.uk).

A conference on “Transcultural Modernities: Narrating Africa in Europe” will be held at Frankfurt University, Germany, June 1-3, 2006. For details and the call for papers, check <http://web.uni-frankfurt.de/fb10/ieas/abt/nelk/euro-afric/>.

The annual ASAUSA conference will be held in Washington, DC, November 17-20, 2005. The conference theme is “Health, Knowledge, and the Body/Politic in Africa and the African Diaspora”. Details at [www.africanstudies.org](http://www.africanstudies.org).

The annual African Studies Association of Australasia and the Western Pacific conference will be held November 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>, 2005, at the University of New England, Armidale, NSW. The conference theme is “Africa: Peace, Progress, Passion and Sustainability”. A postgraduate workshop will also be held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November. Details at [www.ssn.flinders.edu.au/global/afsaap](http://www.ssn.flinders.edu.au/global/afsaap).

The next ASAUUK biennial conference, to be held at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, is still in the early planning stages. News will be posted soon at [www.asauk.net](http://www.asauk.net).

### ***Contacts***

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