



FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE
AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF AFRICA, ASAA



OCTOBER 13-17, 2015

AT THE INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, NIGERIA

THEME: "AFRICAN STUDIES IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE."CALL FOR ABSTRACTS, PAPERS AND PANEL PROPOSALS

History was made on October 25, 2013 when Africanist scholars drawn from different parts of the African continent and beyond, met at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana to establish the African Studies Association of Africa (ASAA) to be domiciled on the African continent. This was a revolutionary decision given the fact that before this historic event, all the existing African Studies Associations in the world were located outside the African continent. It was often an uphill task for African Scholars to be able to attend the conferences of these African Studies Associations in North America and Europe, to say nothing of their little or no control over the direction of discourse or decisions taken at such conferences, especially those relating to the perception of the peoples of the continent. This unfortunate situation violated the original expectations of the founding fathers of the field of African Studies and their counterparts in the political field on the continent who in the 1960s spent the best of their time working for African solutions to African problems. This issue was best captured by Kwame Nkrumah in his classic, *I speak of Freedom* (1961, 1973), in which he observed that “we must find an African solution to our problems...this can only be found in African unity. Divided we are weak; united, Africa could become one of the greatest forces for good in the world”. In 1967, and in a similar vein, Professor Ali Mazrui called for a “Pax Africana that is protected and maintained by Africa herself”. In another thought-provoking speech delivered to the Ghanaian Parliament in Accra on July 11, 2009 President Barrack Obama made the same point when he observed that “Africa’s future is up to Africans”. The formation of ASAA is a response of Africanists on the African continent to this clarion call by African leaders.

The objectives of ASAA at this conference are twofold: the first is to domesticate the field and study of Africa on the mother continent and the second is to make accessible the results of the study, teaching and research of the field readily available to all stakeholders around the world. In that spirit, the Association has decided to hold its first conference at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria from 13 to 17 October 2015 on the theme “African studies in the twenty-first century: Past, present and future”. The theme itself is not new given the volume of literature globally available on the issues involved. Yet, it is very significant for us as a theme for the inaugural conference of ASAA at Ibadan where the Institute of African Studies was established in 1962 under the leadership of the Late Prof. Kenneth Dike. This theme would enable us to return to the task of properly defining “African Studies” and its domains. For instance, is it what is done in the extant “Institutes of African Studies” on the continent or an aggregation of what is practised globally in the

respective Departments and Faculties about Africa, the African continent and her Diasporas? Once this question is more clearly answered the future roles of ASAA in African development and the network of relationships it has established around the world would make the field easier to navigate.

The first International congress of Africanists took place in Accra, Ghana, from 11th through 18th December, 1962. The proceedings were subsequently published in 1964 for the International congress of Africanists by Longmans press. The congress divided the sessions into nine distinct disciplinary headings which focused on specializations. Today, fifty-two odd years on, those disciplinary boundaries are as diffused as national and continental borders. It is, therefore, for pragmatic reasons that our call for papers recognizes disciplinary boundaries without being delimited by them. The two-dozen or so sub-themes and sessions listed here are not meant to circumscribe the skill, perception or abilities of scholars, practitioners or generalists on the emergent fields in African Studies. It is diffused to give room for inclusiveness and the freedom that the field truly deserves. African Studies is not in any way limited to Africa nor is it limited to the Diasporas of Africa. It is a field now cultivated by the world in all the disciplines available on the school curricula and in scholarship from botany to quantum physics to literature and political science. Indeed it has become, methodologically, one of the most puzzling, most challenging and most diverse areas of intellectual pursuit. There naturally arises the primary question of what it is and how to define it. This will give room for both a conceptual and an empirical study of this overwhelmingly peculiar and protean Field.

The taxonomy for the plenary sessions is informed by a composite sense of history. Though this is the inaugural conference of the African Studies Association of Africa (ASAA) the direction of the study and understanding of Africa is viewed and constructed on the premise that Africa had been re-invented in three major phases.

1. Her first encounter and pre-historic study by Persian, Greek and Roman travelers were based on a true and scientific curiosity. Arabic documentation was also largely factual in its encounter with Africa.
2. The studies by early European explorers were largely focused on trade and economic concerns. The historical study of Africa in this second phase had materialist and mercantilist motives
3. The third phase in the study of Africa which also involves American explorers has shifted the focus and scholarship on Africa to Anthropology as the key instrument of African Studies. This is where we have been for a while.

It is hoped that the fourth phase which is envisaged by this conference, building on the first international congress of 1962 will further broaden the scope of African Studies into that which is intensely sociological, multi-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary. This, we hope, would intensify a more heuristic, more creative, more cosmopolitan mode of 'scientific' study of all aspects of Africa. This will help concretize the field and the new curriculum for a new generation of scholarship on Africa for the 21st century. This agenda setting will be a further improvement on the hermeneutic programme objectified in the conference of 1962.

The conference envisages that presentation could be made in any language of the world provided that an English translation or abstract is provided. Organizers will make efforts to have translators of French, Spanish, Arabic and Swahili at the venue.

It is with this vision in mind that we have proposed the following panels trusting that related ideas which have not been captured here can find their own places in the broad spectrum herein laid out:

1. Definitions, Methodologies and Theories
2. Deconstructing the teaching research of African Studies
3. Roundtable/Plenary on Curriculum development, Teaching and pedagogy
4. Inter-disciplinarity in African Studies
5. History and the Reinvention of Africa
6. Slavery, Colonialism and the New Nation states
7. Africa and the Pan-Africanist Ideal
8. History of African Development
9. Leadership and Politics in Africa
10. Peace and Conflict in Africa
11. Classical and contemporary musical practices of Africa and the new world
12. Literature, Writing traditions and the Post-Colony
13. Film, the Mass and New Media
14. Gender formulation and its role in Africa's development
15. Africa in global economy
16. The place and the modes of indigenous and modern medicine
17. African Art, Craft and representations of Heritage
18. Labour issues in Africa's development
19. African religions, faiths and Pentecostalism
20. African Diaspora Communities
21. The Military and Democratization in African Politics
22. African universities and modes of knowledge production
23. Managing youth and population crises in Africa
24. African solutions in the context of African problems
25. North Africa and the Maghreb in African Studies

26. African Studies across Colonial language curtains
27. The heritage of Multilingualism and knowledge production
28. African Studies in Africa: Any Dilemma?

The ASAA 2015 International Conference will take place at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan between Tuesday 13 October and Saturday 17th October, 2015.

The opening ceremony and keynote sessions will be at the International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan on Wednesday October 14, 2015 at 10.00 a.m. Departure will be on Saturday 17th October.

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Abstract and Panel Proposal: March 1 - 30, 2015

Conference Registration:

The following are the conference registration deadlines and fees:

Early Registration June 1 - July 31, 2015

Senior Citizen/Postgraduate Students \$25

International Scholars/Researchers \$100

Local Scholars \$75

- . Payment is expected upon acceptance of abstract,
- . Participant with accepted abstracts (i.e. conference presenters) should endeavour to register during this early registration period.
- . Participants with accepted abstracts who do not register during this period may not be included in the conference programme.

Late Registration August 15 - September 30

Senior Citizen/Postgraduate Students \$40

International Scholars/Researcher \$120

Local Scholars \$100

The conference registration fee can be paid by any major credit card, Western Union, or a cheque (drawn in US dollars) payable to Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan.

Unfortunately, for this inaugural conference, organizers are unable to provide assistance or sponsorship for conference participants.

Conference Banquet only: \$20

Only participants registered for the banquet by September 30 will be admitted to the event.

Publication of Selected Papers

Selected conference papers will be published as a book.



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Optional Tour: An optional tour of the city of Osogbo, Osun heritage sites and the Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding; or Abeokuta and Obasanjo Presidential Library will be organized for participants on Saturday, October 17, 2015. Participants interested in being part of this tour should please indicate interest on the registration form.