From-the-President

It is with much excitement that I begin my tenure as the president of the ATWS because of the opportunities that exist for us to make an impact on the future of the Third World. Several of our members have already begun that process through research by bringing to the forefront the issues which these countries face. Our consultative status with the UN puts us in a favorable position of which few associations of our size can boast. We must not only be proud of that status, but use it effectively for the benefit of the Third World.

I also urge you to become active in the Association in some office, recruiting new members and publicizing the Associations’ mission to your colleagues. It is through your efforts that the Association can continue to have years as successful as the last which concluded with a very productive conference in Connecticut. For those of you who not there, we missed you. For those of who were, I extend my thanks to you for your support. There were a total of 25 excellent panels with presentations on Africa, Asia, and an expanded representation on Latin America.

The conference provides an invaluable opportunity to interact with others with similar research interests. I hope you are beginning to make plans for the 1998 conference to be held in Durham, North Carolina. You should be receiving further details in the mail shortly.

Please keep us informed of your activities by submitting information to the Newsletter and supporting the Journal with the results of your research. Together we can make a difference for the benefit of the Third World.

Marcia Jones
Georgia Southern University

Election-Results and Other News

Election-Results for 1997

The Nominating / Election Committee submitted to the Executive Council the following results of the election conducted from February 15 through April 15, 1997:

President-Elect / Vice President  |  Rolin G. Mainuddin
Secretary                      |  Sun Yi
Treasurer                     |  Gary Kline
Executive Council Post #3
Nominating / Elections Committee Chair Don Simmons
Teaching Committee Chair Jeff Elliot
Fund Raising Committee Ghassan El–Eid
Information Services Committee Chair Nancy Shumaker

The Association wishes to thank the Chair of the Nominating / Election Committee Bill Head and members George Pruden, Bob Curry, and Steve Rhee for their efforts at ensuring a successful election.

Upcoming Conference

16th Annual Meeting
Association of THIRD WORLD Studies, Inc.

October 8 – 10, 1998

North Carolina Central University
Durham, North Carolina

Rhetoric Versus Action
The Challenge of Policy Implementation

For more information, please contact:
Dr. Rolin G. Mainuddin, President–Elect
Association of Third World Studies
Department of Political Science,
North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC 27707, USA
Phone: (919) 560–5303
E-mail: rmainudd@wpo.nccu.edu

DUES

Membership Dues increase effective January 1, 1998.

Annual Membership:

$20 for Student
$45 for Regular
$65 for Joint Spousal
$70 for Sustainer
$75 for Patron

Life Membership:

$300 for Individual
$500 for Joint Spousal

Congratulations to Our 1997–Award–Winners

David Moore–Sieray is the winner of the Reddick Award for best article on Africa. His article, “Towards a Decolonization of Scholarship in Africa and a Vision for the 1990s and Beyond,” was published in the 1996 issue of the Journal of Third World Studies.

Cecil B. Currey, professor emeritus of history, University of South Florida, won the “ATWS Book-Length Publication Award,” For his biography of Vo Nguyen Giap, “Victory at Any Cost.”

http://apps.gsw.edu/atws/newslet/vol3n2.htm
Presidential Award winners were:

Akwasi B. Assensoh, Department of History, Indiana University–Bloomington.

Michael D. Phillips, Department of Humanities, Classics, and Comparative Literature, Brigham Young University.

Alastair Iain Johnston, Government Department, Harvard University.

David C. Davis, History Department, Millsaps College.

Helping–Africa–Prepare for the New Century: A Role for the Association of Third World Studies

by John M. Mbaku, Professor of Economics, Weber State University, Ogden, UT

In the late 19th century, a group of European countries decided to divide Africa amongst themselves. The exercise resulted in the conversion of African territories into European colonies. Colonialism, despite claims to the contrary by its apologists, was alien, racist, degradative, and exploitative. Those who became Africa's new rulers were not accountable to the indigenous peoples. Instead, they governed through despotic and non-democratic processes. To improve the ability of the Europeans to exploit African resources for the benefit of the metropolitan economies, the colonialists brought together—usually through force—many African ethnic cleavages, each with unique languages, cultures, traditions, and political and economic systems, to form an administrative unit that could be controlled effectively by the colonial government. As a consequence, the laws and institutions brought by the Europeans and imposed on Africans were despotic, exploitative and not designed to serve the interests of the indigenous peoples. Colonial institutional arrangements were designed to maximize European objectives in the colonies and severely restrict African participation in both political and economic markets.

In those colonies in which there were substantial populations of European settlers, the abrogation of the property rights of Africans was more severe. In many of these colonies, settlers either controlled colonial state structures or had plenty of influence on the government. As a result, colonial institutions were designed to advance the interests of either the resident European population and /or the citizens of the metropole. Usually, significant limits were placed on the mobility of Africans in order to improve the availability of labor resources for European economic and industrial activities. Colonialism, thus, resulted in the marginalization of Africans. The struggle for independence can be seen as an effort by Africans to:

overthrow and get rid of the oppressive, despotic, and exploitative colonial system;

establish more accountable, transparent, and participatory governance structure;

provide resource allocation systems that maximize the participation of the indigenous peoples in national development;

provide African societies with governance structures that enhance peaceful coexistence of all ethnic cleavages; and

improve the standard of living of the continent’s deprived and marginalized groups and communities.

Thus, in fighting for new dispensations, Africans intended to establish laws and institutions that reflected their values, aspirations, interests, ambitions, and cultures that were more conducive to the maximization of their interests.

Decolonization, Independence and the First Failure

The process of decolonization and independence offered Africans the first opportunity to establish appropriate laws and institutions for their societies. Basically, the state inherited from the colonial government was supposed to be reconstructed to provide (1) more appropriate governance structures for the Africans; and (2) economic systems that enhanced sustainable development in the post–independence period. Unfortunately, this was not undertaken because the decolonization process was reluctant and opportunistic and did not adequately address important issues associated with the effective participation of Africans in post–independence political economy. The Europeans failed to adequately transform the critical domains (e.g., economy, bureaucracy, educational system, etc.) and make them more appropriate for post–independence development. In fact, in several instances, the Europeans engaged in wanton destruction of valuable economic infrastructures, leaving behind economies that were not viable and thus, could not support the people. At independence, Africans inherited government and economic systems that were alien and designed for the exploitation of indigenous populations and not for the advancement of their development.

Independence and the Second Failure
it was expected that the indigenous elites who had captured the evacuated structures of colonial hegemony would engage the people in proper constitution-making to reconstruct the neo-colonial state and establish governance and economic structures more friendly to African participation in development. Unfortunately, Africa's post-independence leaders made no efforts to undertake proper reconstruction of the state. Instead, many of them engaged in opportunistic reform processes that increased their ability to monopolize both political and economic systems.

At independence, Africans had to decide two critical issues: (1) the choice of a political system; and of (2) a development model. Arguing that the market-centered resource allocation systems inherited from the colonial state were not appropriate for African societies, many of the continent's leaders chose statism which emphasized (i) state regulation of economic activities; (ii) state ownership of productive resources; (iii) minimization of the functions of the market; and (iv) placed emphasis on the redistribution of income, supposedly in favor of poor, deprived and marginalized groups and communities.

It was generally believed that statism would provide the state with the wherewithal to more effectively deal with mass poverty and deprivation.

A significant number of Africa's new leaders argued that “tribalism” was an important post-independence development problem and that the political system chosen should be one that could effectively minimize this “evil.” The one-party political system, with a strong central government, was believed to be ideal for Africa's unique circumstances. In fact, many leaders, including Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, argued that multiparty democracy could politicize the tribe, encourage tribal warfare, and promote disunity. Thus, in the 1960s, many African countries adopted statism (or some variant of it) as their development model and the one-party political system.

The One-Party Dictatorship and the Making of an Economic Crisis

It has been more than forty years since many African colonies began to achieve independence. Unfortunately, the standard of living of most Africans has either not improved or has done so only marginally. Statism and the one-party political system have failed to deal with mass poverty and deprivation. Instead, these institutions have encouraged and enhanced personalistic rule, rent seeking, patrimonialism, and bureaucratic corruption. Political economy in post-independence Africa has come to be characterized by:

- High levels of poverty and deprivation;
- Marginalization of popular forces;
- Endemic political violence, including destructive ethnic conflict;
- Bureaucratic and political corruption;
- Suffocation of civil society;
- Unmanageable external debts;
- Economic and political decay;
- Military opportunism;
- Continued economic dependence on the European economies; and
- Higher education systems unable to serve the needs of their societies.

Today, Africa is the poorest region of the world. In fact, according to data from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), of the 30 poorest countries in the world today, 27 of them can be found in Africa. In addition, Africa is the only region of the world whose prospects for the new century look relatively bleak.

Why Continued Poverty and Deprivation in Africa?

Several reasons have been advanced to explain Africa’s continued underdevelopment, including both internal and external obstacles. The latter include the economic policies of the industrial market economies, an international financial system that is unfriendly to Africa, and natural disasters. Internal constrains to development include corruption and other forms of political opportunism, political instability, excessive population growth, low savings rates, destructive ethnic conflict, the burden of external debts, economic dependence, military coups, and poorly developed economic infrastructures. Many researchers have also argued that poverty in Africa arises from policy mistakes made by honest, but poorly trained and incompetent leaders. Thus, there is a call for more effective leadership, especially in the policy arena. If, however, Africa’s underdevelopment is viewed from a public choice perspective, it becomes evident that many of the so-called policy mistakes of the post-independence society were actually deliberate actions taken by opportunist politicians and parasitic bureaucrats to generate benefits for themselves at the expense of the general population. Governance and economic structures adopted after independence provided the elites with the wherewithal to engage in inefficient redistributions of income and wealth in their favor. For example, government-imposed price control programs have allowed many African
politicians to extract the farmers’ surplus and use it to provide privileges for themselves, the bureaucracy, and the politically volatile urban sectors, while imposing significant costs on the poorly organized and politically marginalized rural sectors. In fact, there is evidence to indicate that a significant part of the economic malaise now presently suffered by many African countries can be attributable to perverse economic policies advanced by opportunistic (but not necessarily incompetent or ill-informed) elites seeking opportunities to enrich themselves at the expense of the rest of the people. Viewed from the public choice perspective, most of the obstacles to development in Africa listed above are actually outcomes of weak, inappropriate, and poorly designed laws and institutions. Much of the literature on underdevelopment and poverty in Africa has neglected the importance of institutions to development. At independence, Africans inherited state structures that were inappropriate for post-independence development. Those who captured these structures from the Europeans were supposed to engage the people in reconstruction in order to provide accountable, transparent, and participatory governance structures, and economic systems that could enhance entrepreneurial activity, promote the creation of wealth, and maximize the participation of the people in national development. However, such reconstruction was never undertaken. Instead, post-independence elites engaged in opportunistic reforms that allowed them to continue to monopolize political space and resource allocation. The absence of governance structures that enhance peaceful coexistence and maximize the participation of popular forces in politics, and of economic systems that provide the appropriate incentive system for entrepreneurs to engage in wealth creation, according to the public choice theory perspective, is the main cause of Africa’s continued poverty and marginalization. Preparation for the new century, thus, calls for a new beginning, one that starts with effective reconstruction of the neo-colonial state.

My New Book and the ATWS: Preparing Africa for the New Century

My new book—Institutions and Policy Reform in Africa: The Public Choice Perspective (Praeger, 1997)—has examined all these issues and set a new agenda for policy relevant research on Africa. The book introduces a new research program that is designed to provide African leaders with policy relevant research as these societies prepare for the new century. I am urging members of the ATWS, and other scholars interested in the advancement of Africa, to join me in this research program. Already, several ATWS members have completed a volume entitled Multiparty Democracy and Political Change: Constraints to Democratization in Africa (Ashgate, 1998). It is hoped that those reading this article will seriously consider using their talents and training to help Africa enter the new century with better prospects for growth and development and peace.

Economic Systems is a refereed journal publishing applied economic theory, international comparisons and empirical research related to the theory of economic system.

Journal of International and Comparative Economics (JOICE) is a refereed journal publishing articles in the field of international economics and comparative economics. It is published by Physica Verlag with several ATWS members on its editorial board.

For more information on these two publications: http://ecoserver.gelso.unitn.it/eacrs/journal.htm

If you would like to participate in any of the following projects, please contact John M. Mbaku (jmbaku@weber.edu)


From the Members

Paul A. Rodell, Georgia Southern University, was awarded an Academic Sharing Program Grant from the Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies of the University of Michigan. The grant facilitated library research and writing this summer on his Philippine volume for the Greenwood Press series “Asian Cultures and Customs.”

Steve Y. Rhee, Armstrong Atlantic State University, was selected to participate in the four-week Fulbright-Hays Faculty Development Program on “Uzbekistan in the Post–Soviet Era” this summer. He joined 13 faculty members of the University System of Georgia and several high school social science teachers. Dr. Rhee also presented a paper, “The Nuclear Crisis of
the Korean Peninsula in 1994," during the Southern Region Conference of the Association of Asian Studies in Savannah earlier this year. In addition, he served as panel chairman of "East Asian Economic Development, Security, and Trade Relations of the 1990’s" at the 15th Annual Conference of the ATWS in October.

J. Patrice McSherry, a member of the Board of Editors of the Journal of Third World Studies, has moved from SUNY New Paltz to Long Island University-Brooklyn Center, where she is assistant professor of political science. Her book, Incomplete Transition: Military Power and Democracy in Argentina, was recently published by St. Martin’s Press. She also presented a paper entitled “Analyzing the Menem Era: Are the Military and Security Forces Democratized?” at the International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association(LASA) in Guadalajara, Mexico, in April 1997. Her new address is Department of Political Science, Long Island University, Brooklyn Center University Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11201, Telephone: 718-488-1057


E.Ike Udogu, Francis Marion University, recently published a chapter entitled, ” The issues of Development and environment in Africa: An Overview, in Rukhsana Siddiqui"(ed), Subsaharan Africa in the 1990s: Challenges to Development and Democracy (Praeger Publishers, 1997). This chapter deals with the political implications of development, protection of the environment, and ecological humanism in Africa.

Udogu published two books in 1997: Nigeria and the Politics of Survival as a Nation-state and Democracy and Democratization in Africa: Toward the 21st Century. Also, Udogu spent some time this summer in Austria, Germany, and France.

Sharon Tracy, Georgia Southern University, was recently chosen as one of 50 invitees to an international symposium on Global Ethics. She was charged with collaborating with martin O’Brien, Irish Civil Liberties Union, Belfast, Ireland, on an article, “Terrorism: The Result of Non-dialogue: The Irish Experience.”

Dorethea Martin will replace Bill Head as the associate editor for Asia for the journal of third World Studies. Dr. Martin is an excellent scholar with vast publications, has spent many years in China, and has an outstanding reputation. Sr. Martin is professor of Asian history (specialty China/Women) at Appalachian State University. She can be reached at : Department of History, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608, Phone: 704-537-8014. E-mail: martinda@conrad.appstate.edu

The Center for Iranian Research and Analysis (CIRA) will hold its 16th annual conference in association with Portland State University’s Middle East Studies Center on April 24–25,1998 in Portland, Oregon. The general theme of the conference is “Iran and the region: Past, Present and Future relationsl with Its Neighbors.” In additions to proposals dealing directly with the main theme of the conference, the Program Committee welcomes submission of paper abstracts and panel proposals on all social, political, historical, economic, literary and artistic issues related to Iran, the Middle East, and Central Asia.

International Faculty Development Summer Seminars, 1998

Brazil: “The Emerging Giant”(focus on business, June 1–8, 1998.


Application deadline for 1998 Summer Seminars is April 1, 1998. For more information, call 1–888–COUNCIL or 212–822–2747; e-mail: http://www.ciee.org/

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Professional Exchange Programs

Institute of International Education, 1400 k Street, NW, Suite 640, Washington DC 20005. Telephone: 202–326–7696 Email: bgumbiner@iie.org

The ATWS can significantly improve the policy making process in Africa through research and publication. If you are interested in providing policy makers in Africa with policy relevant research, either through a journal article, a chapter in an edited volume, or a completed book manuscript, please contact one or more of the following people: John Mukum Mbaku (jmbaku@weber.edu); E. Ike Udogu (eudogu@acs2.fmarion.edu); Julius O. Ihonvbere (j.ihonvbere@fordfund.org); Joseph Takougang (joseph.takougang@uc.edu); George Klay Kieh, Jr. (gkieh@morehouse.edu); or Pita O. Agbese (pita.agbese@uni.edu).

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Chapter News

Second Annual Conference of the Association of Third World Studies-South Asia Chapter held on March 22–23, 1997, Kanyakumari, Kerala, S. India, Dr. K.K. Kusuman, Vice President.

At 9:30 A.M. on March 22, 1997, Prof. Ranjan Roy Danial, inaugurated the conference at the San Thome Dialogue Centre in Kanyakumari. Then dr. isaiaj Azariaj, president of the Association, chaired the conference. Daniel, a well known scientist, spoke at length on the health hazards to which third world countries are exposed. Dr. Azariah outlined the activities of the chapter since its founding in 1995. The conference was attended by over two hundred participants, from various parts of India.

The inaugural session was followed by panel sessions in which papers on nationalism vs. Religious Fundamentalism and women and Developmentalism were presented. On the first day there were three panel sessions. They were chaired by dr. k. sadasisssva, chari of he department of History, M.S, University, Dr. A. Suryakumarii, Chair of the Department of History, Mother Theresa Women's University, and Dr. V. Balambal. Prof. of History, Madrass, University.

On the 23rd there were four panel sessions which were presented by Dr. Chellam Kripakakarann, Christian Medical College, Prof. T.P. Rajalalalakshmi, Govt. Law College, Trivandrum, and Professor C. Satyavani, S.K.R. College for Women, Rajajamundry.
The panel session were followed by a valedictory session, and presided over by Dr. K. Narararanan Nair, Visiting Professor of Physics, University of Kerala. The session was opened by Prof. J.K. Samal of Berhapmur University, Orissa.

Grant-Opportunities

Rotary Grants for University Teachers to Serve in Developing Countries

Grants are awarded to members of faculties of higher education to teach abroad in developing countries. The program is intended to build international understanding and friendship while strengthening higher education in developing countries. The fields taught must have practical use in the host country. The program is administered by the Rotary foundation of Rotary International. For more information and eligibility requirements contact: http://www.rotary.org/foundation/educational_programs/university_teachers/

Fedex Opportunity Alert.

An implementation grant program, the microenterprise innovation project SOL RFA GMD–98–A–001 POC. The RFA will request cooperative agreement proposals from a wide range of organizations including U.S. PVOs, cooperatives, credit unions, commercial banks, international organizations, developing country organizations capable of working in more than one county, and for-profit firms. Applicants must have demonstrated capacity to implement microenterprise development programs. For more information: alert@riley.fie.com


Abkhazia Assistance Initiative-Aid. For more information contact: http://www.info.usaid.gov. Select “business and procurement opportunities” from the home page, then “USAID Procurements”. On the following screen, select “download Available USAID solicitations.”


Recent Publications

Mbaku, John M. Institutions and Reform in Africa: The Public Choice Perspective (Praeger, 1997).

Structural Adjustment, Reconstruction and Development in Africa (Ashgate, 1997). Edited by Kempe Ronald Hope, Sr.


The Global Studies series is designed to provide a foundation of information about a specific region’s culture, geography, economy, politics, history, and religion. All of the regional essays and country reports are written by an expert in the area, and each includes maps, current statistics, and time lines. For more information: http://www.dushkin.com/globalstudies/


Diskettes with the HDR statistical database and background papers are available from: The Human Development Report Office, UNDP, Tel: 212-906-3661 Fax: 212-906-3677 and from UN Publications Tel: 212-963-8302 or 800-253-9646 Fax: 212-963-3489.


Copies of this 48-page resource guide are available at no charge from: California Newsreel, 149 Ninth Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. Voice: 415-621-6196; Fax: 415-621-6522; e-mail: newsreel@ix.netcom.com; Web Page: www.newsreel.org