

# AFRICAN STUDIES REVIEW

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The official name of the journal of the African Studies Association has been changed from the African Studies Bulletin to the African Studies Review. For the convenience of librarians and others, the periodical will continue to be numbered consecutively from the last issue of the African Studies Bulletin.

## Editor's Note

This initial issue of the African Studies Review, successor to the African Studies Bulletin, reflects several changes in the publication procedures of the African Studies Association. Some of these changes are of relatively minor importance, while others are more fundamental in character. For the past three years, the African Studies Center of Boston University has published the Bulletin for the Association, under the able editorship of Professor Norman R. Bennett. This responsibility, as announced in the last issue of the Bulletin, is now being assumed by the African Studies Center of Michigan State University. As was the case with Boston and earlier with Stanford University, Michigan State has undertaken to publish the Review for a period of three years, after which some other university or college will assume this responsibility for the Association.

I have asked Mr. Daniel G. Matthews, Director and Editor of the African Bibliographic Center and President of the Washington Task Force on African Affairs, and Professor James R. Hooker of Michigan State University to assist me as Associate Editors. Representing as we do, economics, political science, and history, we have part of the infield covered, and the composition of the Editorial Board will bring other disciplines to bear on our subject matter. We are also pursuing a campaign to involve scholars in the Review who have not previously contributed and to widen the representation to include persons from the smaller colleges and universities and from Black institutions, both in the United States and Africa. Prior to the publication of the September issue of the Review, we hope to entice more scholars to join our editorial staff and we welcome suggestions as to whom we might include. Particularly, we hope to encourage several Black Africans in African universities to join us.

The change in venue for the publication of the Bulletin is not so much responsible for the new name as is the change in the editorial policy which will foster the publishing of substantive research. This change reflects the opinion of many of us in the Association that African studies have progressed beyond the bibliographic stage. Scholars in many disciplines have completed extensive fieldwork and are engaged in the writing of substantive articles reporting their findings. Almost exclusively the Bulletin tended to reflect the very important early stages of research associated with the gathering of bibliography and the dissemination of data. Not all members of the Association will applaud our decision to change the direction of editorial policy and to solicit substantive manuscripts in African studies. However, those of us responsible for the Review, supported by the Executive Board of the Association, believe that a large number of Africanists are now producing a literature for which

new avenues of publication must provide an interdisciplinary forum. The editors of the Review will not necessarily reject manuscripts which are bibliographic in nature or those which survey research in progress. We will be highly selective, however, and will seek to publish contributions to knowledge rather than bibliography and epistemology exclusively.

To a great extent the decision to publish substantive research in African studies is part of the issue of relevancy which has been raised in recent months and is discussed by Professor Marshall Segall in this issue. Much of the criticism has been raised by those who believe that research should deal more realistically and more directly with the social, cultural, and economic problems of African society. So long as research is in the data-gathering and bibliographic stages, it is difficult indeed to deal with the issue of relevancy. It is hoped that our new editorial position will permit us to publish many articles of interest to scholars and activists alike, if these two groups are indeed divergent.

In addition to the decision to publish articles from the various disciplines engaged in African studies, we have also decided to publish book reviews. The book review editor, Professor Kenneth Wylie of the History Department of Wayne State University, has worked very hard in getting together a group of reviews for this issue, and we believe the book review section will be one of the more interesting characteristics of the new Review. Anyone wishing to review books, or having suggestions as to what should be reviewed, should communicate directly with Professor Wylie. Other suggestions and manuscripts should be addressed to the Editor. With no backlog of material on hand, we are in the fortunate position of promising prompt consideration of the work submitted and a briefer time lag than must be expected with more established journals.