

LETTERS

To the Members of the ASA:

I am greatly honored by the recognition accorded to my book, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830*, as co-winner of the 1989 Herskovits Prize of the African Studies Association. I am also concerned that works thus recognized in the United States become available in Africa so that our colleagues there may have adequate opportunity to bring their own perspectives to bear on works evaluated abroad. To these ends of scholarly criticism and discussion, to explore the potential of small-scale and voluntaristic means of overcoming blockages in international communication at global financial and bureaucratic levels, and to implement personal and collaborative efforts along these lines, I would like to invite members of the Association based in the US to join me in taking copies of *Way of Death* directly to scholars and institutions in Africa.

To this end, I have contributed the monetary component of my Herskovits prize. The University of Wisconsin Press has agreed to provide a number of copies of the book at substantial discount. The executive secretary of the Association has consented to accept re-

quests and supply books to bearers at mailing addresses within the US. Members of the Association may obtain the book at a cost of \$12.00 (list price \$35.00) by writing to Edna Bay at the ASA, indicating the name of the recipient scholar or institution, explaining when and how they will deliver the copy, and describing the circumstances under which it will remain reasonably widely available for consultation by students and researchers in Africa. Bearers making requests fulfilling these objectives, and not duplicating recipients in Africa already named by other bearers, will receive books on a first-come-first-serve basis up to the limit of copies available.

I hope that, together, this plan will allow us collaboratively to further the study of Africa's past and also contribute to its future.

Yours sincerely,
Joseph C. Miller
University of Virginia

Dear Edna:

I want to record my appreciation to the ASA and its 1989 Program Committee for the excellent meetings

in Atlanta. I attended the all-day symposium on the Horn at the Carter Center and benefited immensely from those sessions. The panels, workshops, and roundtable discussions that I attended at the regular ASA sessions were all well-organized and ran promptly on schedule. The rooms themselves and the equipment in them were all more than adequate in each case. I thought the book exhibit was larger and more diverse than ever; it certainly helped persuade me to spend far more money than usual! I was sorry that the "Heaven Bound" performance was cancelled and I was unable to attend the awards banquet.

Nonetheless, a conference of this sort does not just "happen." It takes enormous energy, careful and systematic planning, and paying close attention to a myriad of details to make it all come together. This year's Organizing Committee displayed all of these necessities and more. The proof was in the superbly run meetings. Again, my heartiest congratulations and most sincere thanks for a job well-done.

Sincerely yours,
Charles L. Gesheker
California State University, Chico

ASA ENDOWMENT

The Board of Directors has agreed to establish a modest endowment for the African Studies Association. Built with tax-exempt donations, the ASA Endowment will be managed to encourage constant financial growth. It will ensure the long-term stability of the Association and over time may be used to support selected activities and a portion of the operations of the ASA.

As the ASA matures, the Association is increasingly drawn to expand its programs and activities. Four major awards are now sponsored by the ASA: the Distinguished Africanist Award for lifetime contributions to

African studies, the Herskovits Award for the best book in African studies published in English each year, the Conover-Porter award for the best bibliographical or reference work in the field and the James H. Robinson Award for creative work based on a first visit to Africa. In early 1989, the Association joined the American Association for the Advancement of Science/American Council of Learned Societies journals-to-Africa project, donating 100 copies of *African Studies Review*, *Issue* and *ASA News* on a continuing basis for distribution to African institutions. During the past decade, the

Ford Foundation and other donors have contributed to the success of the Association's International Visitors Program, which provides travel support to enable overseas scholars to attend the Annual Meeting. ASA members have indicated their desire to continue the International Visitors Program even should outside funding not be available. Plans are being made to expand member services in the immediate future by the production and distribution of a biennial directory of ASA members. With expanded computer capabilities in the secretariat's Emory University home, there are increased publications possi-