

Mila a Biannual Newsletter of Cultural Research

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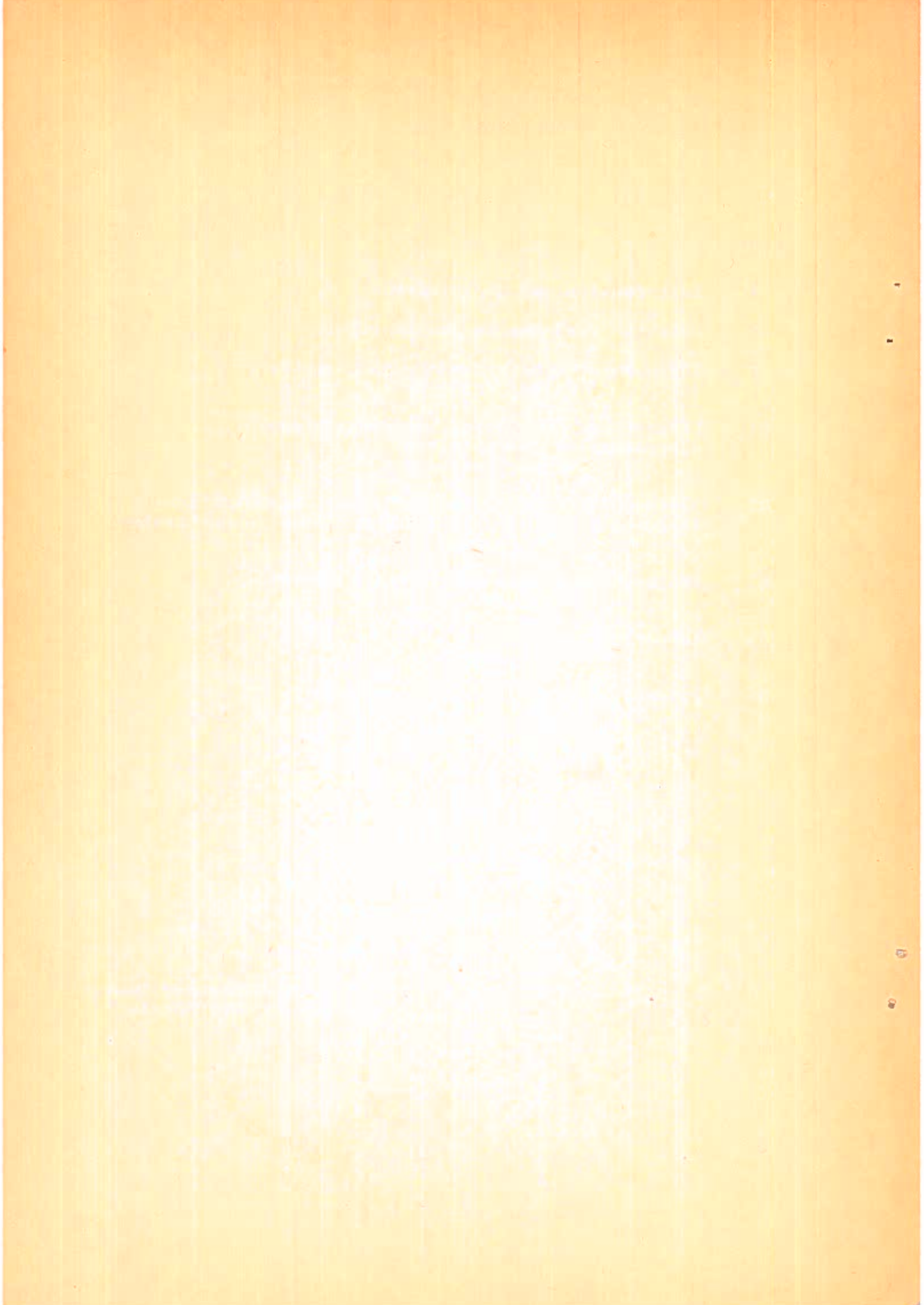


CONTENTS

Page

- 1 Introduction and Constitution
- 2 Research Projects in the Institute
- 7 The Game of Bao or Mankala in East Africa
Walter Driedger
- 21 Lineage and Generation in Pokomo Kinship:
a preliminary investigation
Norman Townsend
- 27 Glottochronometry: some critical considerations
in general and for sub-Saharan Africa in particular
John Sharman
- 43 Swoger, the Ritual Spear of the Marakwet
Dick Nauta
- 53 Acholi Funeral Dirges
Okot p'Bitek
- 66 Procedures for Research Associates

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MILA is the newsletter of the Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi. We hope to publish two issues per year, in the first and second halves of the academic year.

Although Mila serves primarily to publicise the researches, reports and activities of the Institute of African Studies, short articles, comments and letters are invited from other inquirers and researchers. All correspondence should be addressed to:

MILA
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CONSTITUTION of the Institute of African Studies

1. The Institute of African Studies shall in collaboration with the relevant Departments be responsible to the Senate for the promotion and conduct of its own research relating to such fields as indigenous African: prehistory and history; ethnography and social anthropology; linguistics; musicology and dance; traditional and modern literature; traditional and modern arts and crafts; and religion and other belief systems; and shall report to the Senate thereon from time to time.

2. The Board of the Institute of African Studies shall have the following powers:-

- (a) To consider and make recommendations concerning the research programme and other functions of the Institute.
- (b) To approve at its discretion all research programmes and requests for financial assistance to conduct such programmes as may be submitted to it.
- (c) To deal with any matters referred to it by the Senate.
- (d) To determine the rules governing the procedures to be followed at meetings of the Institute Board.

(e) Heads or Nominees of Heads of the following Departments:-

Community Health
Design
Fine Art
History
Linguistics and African Languages
Literature
Philosophy and Religious Studies
Sociology

(f) Directors of the following Institutes or their Nominees:-

Institute for Development Studies
Institute of Adult Studies

(g) Such other members, not exceeding five in number, and not being members of the full-time academic staff of the University, appointed by the Senate on the recommendation of the Board; of these, the following are ex officio members:-

Director, British Institute in Eastern Africa.

Administrative Director or his Nominee of the Kenya National Museum, Nairobi.

4. The Board of the Institute of African Studies may at its own discretion invite other persons to attend meetings in an advisory capacity where such attendance is considered advantageous to the deliberations of the Board; provided that such persons shall not have a right to vote.

5. There shall be regular Staff Meetings with all full-time academic staff of the Institute, at least once each term, to ensure that there is free and open discussion of all views and policies concerning the conduct of all matters specified in para 1.



Research Projects in the Institute

Now that we have become the Institute of African Studies we have defined certain specific projects which are locally regarded as having high priority research needs. Seven such projects have been approved by the Institute Board. Each is supervised by a full-time member of staff and all research Fellows and Associates will be required to carry out their research within these flexible fields (several of our present researchers cannot be absolutely classified as belonging strictly to any particular one of them).

Archaeological Survey and "Salvage" (Dr. Alan H. Jacobs, left on 31st August): the provision of services and assistance in co-ordinating efforts to discover, evaluate and make more generally known archaeological sites (some of which might easily be destroyed by natural causes or by uninformed human intervention);

Art (Mr. Francis X. Nnaggenda): the collection of traditional items and the encouragement and creation of contemporary sculpture, carving and painting;

Belief Systems (Mr. Okot p'Bitek): the collection and study of various groups' traditional cosmogonies, social values, religious beliefs, myths, legends, and management of environment generally;

History (Prof. Bethwell A. Ogot, Director of the Institute): the collection and recording, collating, analysing and writing up of history of all peoples from all possible sources, including especially oral and archaeological;

Linguistics (Dr. John C. Sharman): collection of selected lexical items, the recording of grammatical systems with the double aim of obtaining better historical perspectives, from glottochronology and starred forms, and of making modern descriptive analyses;

Material Culture (Mrs. E.J. Brown): the collection and classification of artefacts, the study of pottery-making, metal-working and design;

Music (Mr. H. Owuor Anyumba): the collection (recording and transcription) of traditional and 'neo-traditional' songs, instrumental music and dance; also the classifying of musical instruments.

As you see, the overall emphasis is on the urgent preservation of older things, facts and ideas that otherwise might be irrevocably lost, together with the steady investigation and evaluation of things, facts and ideas (both old and new) that are as yet in no danger of disappearing. One might summarise the entire effort as conservation in a cultural-ecological matrix.

Other than project heads: researchers now working in these and allied fields include:-

Archaeological Survey and "Salvage"

Osaga Odak, M.A. Ph.D. (Moscow): Bibliographic sources for archaeological and cultural studies in Kenya.

Belief Systems

Joan A. Barnett, M.A. Ph.D. candidate, Stanford University: adaptation and change in Kenya Luo medical beliefs and practices.

Dallas Browne, M.A. Ph.D. candidate, Illinois: A study of Kikuyu family and class in Nairobi.

A.J. Manners, B.A. Ph.D. candidate, University of London: Processes of social change in the economic development of South Nyanza.

N.A. Townsend, M.A. Ph.D. candidate, Toronto: Social aspects of Pokomo agriculture.

H. Ueda, M.A. Ph.D. candidate, Tokyo: Contemporary change in socialization, religion, spirit possession and witchcraft among the Kamba.

G.W. Mathu, M.A., Research Fellow, Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi: C.M.S. in Gikuyu country to 1923 or C.M.S. enterprise in Gikuyu country.

History

H.S.K. Mwaniki B.A., Junior Research Fellow, Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi: A political history of Embu society in pre-colonial days to 1906.

M. Gillibrand, B.A. Ph.D. candidate, University of London: A study of social response to agricultural and industrial innovation among the Elgeyo.

Linguistics

T.J. Hinnebusch, M.A. Ph.D. candidate, Los Angeles: Generative phonology and Comparative Bantu and sub-classification.

W.A. Sample, B.A. Ph.D. candidate, Indiana University: A phonological study of the Luhya dialects.

Material Culture

Dick Nauta, Netherlands: The traditional spears of Kenya.

Music

P.N. Kavyu: Junior Research Fellow, Institute of African Studies,
University of Nairobi: Folk music & dance.