



February 2019 Newsletter

AHSA Presidents of the Past

AFRICAN HERITAGE STUDIES ASSOCIATION (AHSA) CELEBRATES "HOLY MONTH"

Our founding President, John Henrik Clarke referred to February as "Holy Month", a time to reflect, renew and advance. At this, the 50th year of our organization let's take a moment to look back in order to chart our path for the future. In 1968 Black scholars and professionals found themselves marginalized from academic, professional and social organizations. Those within found yet another form of exclusion in that the analysis, aims and true respect for Black people was still wanting. In this context, those before us knew that the only way to maintain their integrity and put forward the interests of our people was to form their own organizations. The African Heritage Studies Association (AHSA) was born out of a rupture to the African Studies Association (ASA) when that group failed to address the concerns of equality, inclusivity and a shift in the scholarship from a Eurocentric, anthropological type of analysis to one that addressed and respected the culture and historical heritage of African people. It was this commitment to the study of the African World, one born from the love of a people that shaped the mission and structure of AHSA. The Pan African founders' mission was to reconstruct and represent African history; relate, interpret and disseminate Afro-centric materials; and to improve contacts with Africans around the globe.

As we reflect on the semi-centennial, we see that AHSA members met and exceeded those goals in the proliferation of scholarship, the dissemination of African centered knowledge and debunking of Eurocentrism. Public school curriculums in the major cities of Atlanta (Asa Hilliard), Washington, DC and Chicago (Barbara Sizemore and Haki Madhubuti) and Philadelphia (Molefi Asante) were infused with resources and instruction on how to impart that knowledge. The first Africana Women's Studies department was created by Shelby F. Lewis at Clark Atlanta University and the major cultural tradition of Kwanzaa, birthed by Maulana Karenga, is currently celebrated on a global scale. Annual conferences have been held by AHSA to exchange scholarly ideas and findings about our history, culture and struggles, and many of our members attend and participate in other Pan African historical and international conferences. Our ancestors like Yosef Ben-Jochannan and Asa Hillard, along with Leonard Jeffries and others have led many sojourns to the African continent to document and highlight our rich history, beginning with the Nile Valley Civilization and culture. Such work continues today with the excavation of the 25th KMT Dynasty by Tony Browder. The AHSA community has moved beyond academia, it has taken the struggle to the streets as activists and advocates on many issues that still negatively impact African peoples across the globe. Most importantly, AHSA has sustained the vision of the founders and held true to their call. As we move into the next fifty years, our commitment to further our cause is needed now more than ever. In spite of the proliferation of knowledge the status of the masses has stagnated and in some instances declined. Charshee McIntyre analyzed the criminalization of the race before the prison industry decimated our communities; Barbara Sizemore spoke on the erosion of public education prior to that affect being cemented in the privatization of public schools; Ronald Walters foresaw the rise of the conservative corporate state and its marginalizing impact; and John Henrik Clarke warned of the psychic and social devastation of not knowing our history and who we are as a people. We stand on the shoulders of prophets who saw what we are now living in and it's up to us to confront historical wrongs, like they did. My favorite quote by Dr. Clarke is that "We will stand at the crossroads and we won't know which foot to put forward; we do know the one that will advance us along the path that our founders charted." Our situation as a people is dire. We cannot flounder! - Ife Williams

SAVE THE DATE!

AHSA'S GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY! "TOWARDS AN AFRICAN
RENAISSANCE: AFRICAN AND DIASPORA
COLLABORATIONS"

OCTOBER 31ST-NOVEMBER 2ND 2019
WASHINGTON, DC

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT OF AHSA IFE WILLIAMS

We are very excited to celebrate our jubilee year mid center of the International Decade for People of African Descent. This is a pivotal time to revitalize our organization, expand our membership and embark on some new projects! AHSA members also plan to visit the ASA restoration site in Kemet and honor our ancestors (stay tuned for details)! We are in the midst of building our archives, supporting the promotion of scholarship and building international connections. Over the past three years we have been working to get to this moment as seen through our conference themes of expanding our global outreach through scholarship, cultivating leadership, and cultural rejuvenation.

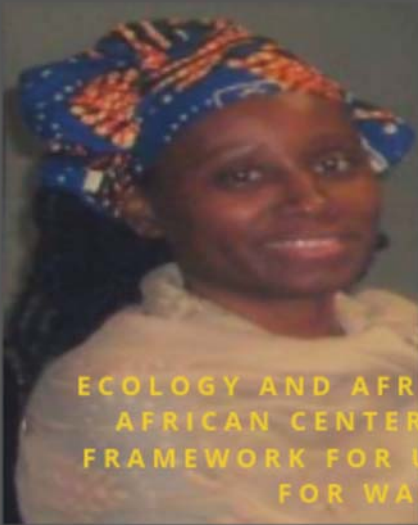
As President, I plan to rekindle the spirit of the ancestors and infuse the present with renewed energy and ideas to make the next fifty years even greater. By bridging the illustrious past laid by our founders to future initiatives, AHSA strengthens its capacity to manifest endless possibilities. Our founders knew they could not depend on the forces that be to propel themselves forward so they bravely separated from the mainstream for the good of the people. We, like them, have to commit ourselves to something larger than us, each day our rich cultural legacy is slipping away as we become even more detached from who we are and where we came from. This system has historically failed us: police brutality, ill health, mass incarceration and inferior education-we cannot advance following the same trajectory that got us to this point. It is time to move forward, rise up and focus on ourselves and our people. We have unwillingly normalized the dysfunction put upon us by dominating forces and their record of destruction. We are now called upon to perform "cultural triage" by tapping into our indomitable spirit that has been evident in our people since the first "encounter". If we embrace the spirit that has protected us up to now and magnify and strengthen those traits that are uniquely African we can build the armor needed to take us into the future.

The global consciousness and spiritual energy that was witnessed in the public response to the film "Black Panther" needs to be harnessed and redirected; As Afro-centric scholars and activists, we are the ones to meet that challenge!



**JOIN US IN KEMET AT THE ASA
RESTORATION SITE TO HONOR
OUR ANCESTORS
JULY 7TH-15TH**

**Visit our website: africanheritagestudiesassociation.org
or email us at africanheritagestudies@gmail.com**



Project Proposal from our newly elected Vice President Afia S. Zakiya

ECOLOGY AND AFRICAN WORLD SOVEREIGNTY: TOWARDS A PAN AFRICAN CENTERED HISTORICAL, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING CONTEMPORARY STRUGGLES FOR WATER IN AFRICA AND THE DIASPORA.

The African Heritage Studies Association (AHSA) was founded in 1969 to provide a forum for scholars of African descent to exchange African-centered research and views about the history and culture of African peoples on the continent and in the diaspora. One area that needs more attention and analysis for its impact on the contemporary socioeconomic problems of African people is that of the evolution of human ecology and relations with nature, particularly water. As articulated similarly elsewhere (Densu, 2017) the need exists for theoretical coherency in our field between African centered conceptions of culture, history, politics and spirituality to assess current world trends in the evolution of human ecological relations and everyday struggles of Africana peoples. We live in a world dominated by a global white supremacist, neo-liberal agenda where intense struggles for all of nature's resources, especially water access, use, and control, is now heightened, Flint, Michigan case in point! This all signals a need for our struggle for Pan African world sovereignty to come together to urgently address the politics of water (ecology) with an informed agenda.

This project proposes AHSA do two things to broaden the field of African World Studies AND create an on-the ground presence for the organization: 1. Research and

produce African centered views about the history and culture of WATER in the African worldview and every-day life. This requires a holistic, transdisciplinary approach within Africana Studies and an African centered political ecology framework minimally, at the center of analysis. The goal is to document old and generate new research on the historical, spiritual and cultural importance of water in indigenous African societies across the continent and diaspora. This can serve as theoretical, epistemological and world view grounding for us as a precursor to addressing the contemporary ecological (accent on water) issues of today and allow us to gauge how close or far we are from our indigenous African eco-philosophical ideas and lived social relations with water and nature and overstand the forces shaping divergence.

2. As we struggle to do 1, there is a practical need to research and document the status and level of water- both surface (rivers, oceans, lakes, kw.k.) and underground- in Africa using an African centered political ecology and sovereignty lens. Today, the reality of the global politics of water reflects heightened levels of conflicts and tensions across Africa over water rights, access, and use. Such tensions should be examined whether internally or externally derived with the goal to assess the impact on African culture and life and to protect African water bodies and sources against overuse, theft (through war, grabbing, treaties or other means), and contamination due to the multitude of negative consequences this brings, the very least of which compromises our survival, inherited role as stewards of the earth by our ancestors, and for those Africans yet to be born.

Connected with this research is the practical need to raise funds and identify a community in Africa or the diaspora, where water impoverished Africans live to do a project to provide water and sanitation services. Water provision can be to a community, school, health center or other desired location.





AHSA VISITS THE African Women's University for Science and Technology (AWUSTT) IN Tororo, UGANDA

Board member and founder Shelby Lewis and President Ife Williams visited Uganda January 3-7-13, 2019 as part of AHSA's global outreach. The initial purpose of the trip was to visit friends and identify space and human resources for Shelby and Sandi McCoy to explore the possibility of establishing a research project [AZ5] in collaboration with AHSA on Uganda's historic human links to Nile Valley Civilization. The project site under consideration overlooks Nalubaale, the historic Bugandan name for what is commonly known as Lake Victoria, the source of the Nile and a critical component in the development of Nile Valley Civilization.

We were aware of a publication that claimed that the DNA of residents of the Great Lakes Region was the same as that of the Kings of Kemet and were informed that a book published in the 1930s, Ker Kwaro, links Uganda to Nile Valley Civilization. However, during our stay, Shelby's 50 year association with Uganda enabled us to meet a variety of people from government, academic, nonprofit, religious and community institutions who shared similar stories about Uganda's historic links to Nile Valley Civilization.

Shelby began her international career in Uganda, 1962-1965, with Columbia University's USAID-funded Teachers for East Africa (TEA) project at Nabumali High School in Mbale, at the foot of Mt. Elgon.

She later accepted a contract with the University of Massachusetts's USAID-funded Uganda project at Tororo Girl's School, 1965-1967. After a visit to Uganda in 2002 for a TEA Reunion, she was asked to serve as the USA Contact for a proposed African Women's University of Science and Technology (AWUSTT). After serving as a Fulbright Specialist at Uganda's Busitema University of Science and Technology in 2010 and an Africa Series Lecturer at Makerere University in 2012, she became a member of the AWUSTT Steering Committee. Ife was asked to explore ways that AHSA and AWUSTT could collaborate.

AWUSTT is the dream of His Royal Highness the Kwar Adhola, Moses Stephen Owor, a 94 year old, spry, insightful elder who appears to be holding on to life to see his dream manifested. It is interesting that Suri, the scientific genius in the Black Panther Movie, heralded from the ancient site of a proposed women's STEM institution.

Discussions about AWUSTT and how AHSA can support the efforts of the Steering Committee will ensue among the membership at our next annual meeting.



50th Year Celebration Activity for AHSA

**OUR ANCESTOR AND FIRST PRESIDENT JOHN HENRIK CLARKE WILL
BE HONORED AT THE ASA RESTORATION SITE IN KEMET**

Day 1: THE BEGINNING OF OUR EXPLORING TOUR –

Leave New York via Egypt Air jet service to Cairo.
Meals will be served on board.

Day 2: WASET – Transfer to board your ship for
lunch aboard, balance of the day at leisure.

Day 3: JOHN HENRIK CLARKE OF AFRICAN HERITAGE
STUDIES ASSOCIATION WILL BE HONORED AT THE
ASA RESTORATION SITE – This morning drive to the
West Bank of the Nile for a special memorial service
at the site of the ASA excavation. We will view
excavation of the tombs of Karakhamun and
Karabasken. Return to your Hotel, dinner and
overnight. Evening Lecture.

Day 4: EDFU (THE TEMPLE OF HERU KOM OMBO
(THE TEMPLE OF SOBEK) – Sail to Edfu to visit the
Temple of Heru (Horus). Continue your sailing
towards Kom Ombo. Double entrances lead through
the pylons to the court, vestibule, pillared hall and
the three antechambers to the Sanctuaries of the
Gods. Enjoy dinner while sailing to Aswan.

Day 5: ASWAN/ THE HIGH DAM/PILAK (PHILAE)
TEMPLE & UNFINISHED TEKENU (OBELISK) OF
HATSHEPSUT – Morning visit to Pilak (Philae). See
the unfinished tekhen (obelisk) of Queen
Hatshepsut, had it been completed, it would have
been the largest ever hewn. Return to your hotel for
dinner and overnight.

Day 6: ASWAN/ABU SIMBEL (THE TEMPLE OF
RAMSES II) ASWAN/ CAIRO Morning flight from
Aswan to Abu Simbel, the Great Temple, hewn
in the rock, with the four colossal seated statues
of the King in front of the entrance. Nearby, to
the north, is a second temple, also built by
Ramses II, and dedicated to Nefertari, the King's
wife. Return to Aswan to connect with your
flight to Cairo. Transfer to your hotel for dinner
and overnight. Evening Lecture.

Day 7: Day at leisure. Transfer to the airport in
time for your flight to Cairo. Dinner and
overnight.

Day 8: CAIRO/ NEW YORK Transfer to the airport
for your flight departure Cairo to New York.

July 7, 2019-July 15th 2019 for \$3,687 from New
York that includes tips, taxes, fuel surcharges
and visa fee). Contact Consolidated Tours
Organization, Inc. at consolidatedtours.org
1-800-554-4556 -email: info@ctonic.com Make
deposit of \$300 ASAP final payment May 1st,
2019

**This is an abbreviated version of the full fifteen-day tour
that runs from July 1-15, 2019 for \$4,599**

For details go to:

**[http://www.ctoinc.com/tours/cultural/egyptstudycruise.
html](http://www.ctoinc.com/tours/cultural/egyptstudycruise.html)**

**If you would like this tour please just specify the 8 or 15 day
tour with Consolidated Tours.**