

EDITORIAL

Africa and the Moving Image: the role of libraries and archives, held at Newnham College, Cambridge, on 17th June 2009, was one of the most successful and popular annual conferences ever held by SCOLMA. It attracted an audience beyond the usual constituency of librarians and archivists, as academics and practitioners were eager to exchange experience and knowledge of resources. For the first time in over a decade the annual conference has blossomed into a special issue of *ARD*. The last was also concerned with the visual: *Images of Africa: the Pictorial Record* (*ARD* 68, 1995). That issue, remaining copies of which sold well at the conference, contained just one article on film and one on television.¹ In the intervening fifteen years, the relevant technology has changed almost beyond recognition, bringing new opportunities of viewing moving images in teaching and research as well as entertainment but also raising many new problems of conservation and analysis, of location, access and ethics.

The Conference reinforced the view of the SCOLMA Committee that at this stage we had more questions than answers but that as librarians, archivists and information managers, we should be equipping ourselves to deal with these issues.

This special issue contains three papers from the seven given at the conference (those of Guido Convents, Vivian Bickford-Smith and Emma Hunter). David Forbes and Peter Davis were unable to attend the conference but saw the publicity and contacted SCOLMA about our mutual interests. We are very grateful to the former for allowing us to publish his paper, originally prepared for the 1st International Conference on African Digital Libraries and Archives (ICADLA-1), held from 1 to 3 July 2009 in Addis Ababa and to the latter for writing an article especially for this special issue.

Clearly there is much more to be done and explored. SCOLMA is now looking at ways to follow up the growing interest in the Africanist community and beyond in moving images. This will be a major theme of the SCOLMA and ELIAS meetings now being planned for 2010 and we hope in future issues of *ARD*. Your editors would welcome contributions: accounts of film libraries, conservation projects, reflections on use of film in teaching and research, reviews of film festivals and more.

¹ James Patterson, "Africa on film", *ARD* 68, 1995, pp. 75-79 (an overview of the National Film and Television Archive) and Sue Malden, "Images of Africa's television's eye", pp. 69-74.