

visitors to Africa. First in this series will be a volume by Harold Womersley, *Legends and History of the Luba*, edited by Tom Reeve (author of *The Rainbow and the Kings*). Of this volume, Jan Vansina has commented:

"I read Womersley's *Legends and History of the Luba* with great interest. This MS, the distillation of 47 years of inquiry by the author, records the collective memory of the Luba about the past of their kingdom, and includes some eyewitness accounts of the last great ceremonies (such as a royal funeral) before they died out.

Authors who have studied the people they write about for 47 years are rare, and the past of the Luba is significant indeed. The roots of their civilisation and kingdoms plunge into the first millenium while their civilisation affected all of the southeastern savanna of Central Africa.

This MS will be a signal contribution in other ways as well. On the whole the literature about the Luba is still rather meagre, especially in history. Apart from the founding myth we have no accounts—before this—of other "tales of memory" for later times. The book does not duplicate T. Reeve's *Rainbow*, a scholarly history of the kingdom, because Reeve did not include an account of the Luba point of view. No author was better placed than Womersley, who still knew the men of wisdom of yore to record these historical accounts. But the MS is of greater importance as well. We now have many studies of customs and histories of people in Central Africa but very few accounts of sufficient length, giving the flavor of the sources for historians, which also are the interpretations of local peoples. And yet, specialists pontify about myths and variants while only a tiny percentage of the myths available are known in the words of those who told them and in their setting of historical (or mythical) places and landscapes. This MS does recapture the flavor of the Luba tale and its "proofs," the places linked to them, the customs linked to them, etc. Such MS can give the student of history a much better feeling for the evaluation of the reconstructions by his colleagues.

Needless to say that the MS, as an expression of a local point of view will be of equal interest to specialists in folklore and oral art, although the latter no doubt would have liked more Luba texts. But such texts would make it impossible to publish this in Crossroads Press. They will look upon it as literature in translation, by one who used that language for all of his adult life."

This very important volume will be available in Summer, 1983 and offered in pre-publication sale in the June ASA Meeting Registration Mailing.

OBITUARIES

MAXINE KREGER DRIGGERS

May 12, 1932–April 20, 1983

Maxine Driggers died after a brief bout with cancer of the liver. The following eulogy was delivered by Dr. Donald Cosentino during her funeral services at the Little Chapel of the Dawn, in Santa Monica, California, on April 22, 1983.

"Eddie and Verla (Huckaby) asked me to say some words about Maxine, in recognition I think, of how much MD's UCLA family had become a part of her blood

family. It certainly is true that in four years we who knew her at UCLA had become her brothers and sisters, her sons and daughters, her nieces and nephews. Her startling, untimely death is felt as a death in the family. She held so many of us together, making connections between students and faculty, among her peers, with her co-workers, and for one special year, in service to African Studies scholars throughout the world.

In that latter role I especially remember her, for she virtually created the African Studies Association office on the UCLA campus: first in jeans painting the walls of that crummy office in Kinsey Hall, then with her aesthetic sense stitching her gorgeous Kente cloth into office curtains (in reverse imitation of Scarlett O'Hara, whom I bet was one of her heroines), bullying office supply stores with all the fury of her 100 pounds to give us those file cabinets cheap, knowing what a curmudgeonly skin-flint the boss was, and having a sixth sense to choose exactly the best bargain on the floor—she must have been a legend in the market in Kumasi. But, in a more vital way, after she made something of a polyester purse out of an undoubted pig's ear, she then created an office where there was none: overnight training herself to become bookkeeper, management service officer, *News* editor, chief clerk, and den mother to me, Susan Rich, Segun Oyekunle, John Distefano, the entire faculty and staff of Indiana University, where she masterminded the 1981 Annual Meeting of the ASA, and most portentously to Eddie Huckaby who, with whatever magic eye she had, she had selected to bring on and train as her successor.

Then, just when she got everything together, made everything work, she knew she had to leave. She had done her bit of creation, and now it was time to go back to her students in the African Studies Center of UCLA, for after all, they had been waiting a year for her return. Her decision to come to the ASA was bold, her decision to return to the ASC was bold, she was a gutsy woman. That's what I really think of most when I think of her: gutsy, tough, all-American, if you can be all those things and still wear your heart on your sleeve.

The Maxine I knew professionally was a real professional. She got a job done well, she was a detail person who you could count on absolutely, and who worked as she dressed, with a style. But there was another Maxine, too, which I wasn't privileged to know as well as many others here: Maxine the lady. You could always tell her in a crowd—she was the good dresser, thin as an L.A. model, in sharp high heels and gold jangles, surrounded by people who were enjoying her humor, her consideration of conversation, her particular charm. I remember one such occasion, a Sunday brunch, when Maxine played the needle subtly stitching together everyone, the students and the old profs, the Americans and the Africans, into a celebratory group, then slipped out into the kitchen to help my wife Bunny with the hors d'oeuvres, and after several glasses of champagne sat down at the piano and played everyone's favorite—her repertoire seemed as amazingly disparate as her charms: she played tin pan alley, "Amazing Grace" and "Bringing in the Sheaves," and wound up enchanting us all with a couple of Twi hymns. How I wished I could have seen her in action at the harmonium in Kumasi—what an improvement it would have been over Kathryn Hepburn pounding out her hymn at the beginning of "African Queen." I suppose it to be no accident that Maxine's adult life was spent in Ghana and L.A.—they are both places which value women of sense and style and grace.

There were other Maxines I know, from her account, and from the account of others, which I equally admired. There was Maxine the mother, as fiercely devoted to her children as a she-wolf. And there was Maxine the daughter who worried always

for her own mother's care. And Maxine the friend and companion who cared and loved not wisely, but too well. And there was the student who took her M.A. in her forties, showing her womanly strength struggling with anthropology and other abstruse sciences, and finishing in exciting collaboration with Kwabena Nketia on her real love: African music. Then there was the Maxine of all those years in Ghana, once again creating what didn't exist, making do, leaving things better than they were. Yet another visitor to West Africa, and in the great tradition of Mary Kingsley, listening and learning as well as teaching and working.

She was tough and I guess she had to be, because God knows, things weren't easy. She had her share and more of the things that make life an endurance test, but she did endure, and in fact, prevailed. She never stopped being a Maker, even though she had long since realized that at least on this earth all constructions are temporary. If there is one word I would like to use in her honor it would be "feisty." Full of yeast and energy and schemes and love. A prairie girl from Oklahoma, and from Kumasi, and from L.A. I think in the end she achieved the most important things: I remember that song from the sixties which seems to sum up everything that went before us standing here today:

'All I want from living is to have no chains on me,
And all I want from dying is to go naturally,
And when I'm dead, and when I'm gone,
There'll be one child born in this world to carry on' "

"MOTHER"

Of very few people it can be said, simply, "She Loved."
But she did with open heart and open hands.

I learned from her to live my life bravely—
Asking only that those around me do the same.

Finally, I learned from her that a serene death
Is not to be feared—not to be run from.

From me, from her, I offer these words of comfort from
Quaker poet John Stafford:

"Vespers"

As the living pass, they bow
till they imitate stones.
In the steep mountains then
those millions remind us:
 every fist the wind has
 loses against those faces.

And at the end of the day
when every rock on the west
claims a fragment of sun,
a last bird comes, wing and
 then wing over the valley
 and over the valley, and home.

Till unbound by our past we sing
wherever we go, ready or not,
stillness above and below, the slowed
evening carried in prayer toward the end.

*You know who you are:
This is for you, my friend.*

Verla Driggers Huckaby

AMINU KANO

Aminu Kano died at age 63 on Sunday, April 17, 1983, at Mambaiya House, his family home and political headquarters in the Gwammaja section of Kano City, Nigeria. He was buried there the same day in accordance with Islam. He had been in ill-health in recent years.

At the time of his death he had embarked upon his second campaign for the Presidency of Nigeria, having named the first Nigerian woman to be a Vice-Presidential candidate as his running mate. Kano State observed an official day of mourning, joined in spirit by multitudes of other Nigerians and many friends from other lands.

Born into one of the elite traditional lineages of Kano whose members are associated with learning and law, Aminu projected himself as a voice for the social and political advance of common people, in a society and beginning at a time when there were few such champions, and none as prominent as he nor as bold. Renowned for that role and for the modesty of his life-style, in popular usage he uniquely was hailed as 'Mallam' (teacher): an honorific in the Hausa language that is otherwise employed in reference to millions of men. He numbered among a handful of political leaders acknowledged throughout the country as a maker of independent Nigeria. A nationalist and a rebel, he lived out his life in personal and political struggle, steadfastly identified with the principles of fundamental human rights and social justice. Many individuals of humble origin, especially in northern Nigeria, for whom unaccustomed social opportunities opened up during the last two decades, owe much to his influence.

In the course of his public career he was a school teacher and headmaster, a Hausa language tutor and author of several classic Hausa texts, a Delegate to Conferences in London that negotiated Nigeria's freedom from British rule and later to the United Nations, a President of powerful political parties in both the First and Second Nigerian Republics (NEPU and PRP, respectively), a Federal Government Commissioner (minister) in the period of military government, and a member and a committee chairman of the Constitutional Drafting Committee and of the Constituent Assembly—the deliberative bodies that fashioned the current institutional framework of Nigerian democracy.

In 1981 he was one of two first recipients of an honorary doctoral degree awarded by Bayero University, Kano, on which also he exercised a pioneering influence. This year he was invested as a Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger. To mark his passing, the broad highway between his home at Gwammaja, situated at a junction en route to Kano International Airport, and the road to Bayero University, has been renamed Aminu Kano Road. Such too is his legacy that since April 17, his residence in Kano has emerged spontaneously as a place of public prayer.

C. S. Whitaker, Jr.
Kano City
April 22, 1983