

The award has been/is being made at the annual meetings in Washington. Some twenty-three nominations were received, and a Committee panel of three recommended the recipient after examining the works at the meetings at Yale in April. Howard University is hosting the awards ceremony.

RELATIONSHIP WITH PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Following 1981 discussions a member of the Archives-Libraries Committee now sits on the Publications Committee.

GENERAL

Details of the work of this Committee are reported rather thoroughly in the *ASA News* and through Committee minutes. As an archivist and historian rather than, as are most of my colleagues on this Committee, a librarian, it is I think appropriate for me to note that this is an extremely productive group, highly professional yet congenial, committed toward excellence in the provision of resources for African studies. There are at once many institutional initiatives and cooperative ventures. There is a sensitivity to the concerns of African colleagues, and a receptiveness to alternative perspectives. We in the Africanist community in the United States are extremely well served by these colleagues who specialize in Africana resources.

OBITUARY

EULOGY READ AT ANNUAL MEETING BUSINESS MEETING, November 5, 1982
by Wandile Kuse, University of Illinois at Chicago Circle

Okot p'Bitek, 1931-1982

Those of us engaged in that area of African Studies known as African Literature were shocked to learn weeks ago that Okot p'Bitek had died at the young age of fifty-one.

We mourn the death of a distinguished African writer and scholar. p'Bitek was not only one of the giants of East African literature but is also a major figure for all of African literature. He was especially important for setting a new direction which broke with much of the writings of the 1960s because of its assertion of traditional values. It was significant also as acerbic criticism of Western influences on African life and literature.

He is, of course, well known for his books of poetry, especially the *SONG OF LAWINO*. He experimented with language and forms. The *SONG OF LAWINO* appeared in three versions. The first of these was in his native tongue of Acoli. He dealt imaginatively with aspects of the theme for this 25th Annual Meeting of the ASA. The *SONG OF OCUL*; *SONG OF THE PRISONER*; *SONG OF MALAYA*, a novel in his mother tongue, and several academic studies reveal in a profound way his sensitivity to the anguish of Africa in these times.

Born in Gulu in Northern Uganda, educated in his country as well as in Britain, he earned a B.Litt. degree from Oxford University in 1964 on "Oral Literature and Its Social Background Among the Acoli and Lango." He also had a law degree from Aberystwyth, Wales. At one time he was director of the Uganda National Theatre. For some time he was a professor at Makerere University. He took part in the Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa, and organized the 1968 Arts Festival in Kenya. His keynote address for the 3rd Annual African Literature Association Convention (at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1977) was so dynamic it defied attempts to capture its spirit in print.

Regrettably, the last years of his life were spent in loneliness and bitterness. For a long time it was unsafe for him to return to his native land because of the excesses of the Idi Amin regime. His esteem in United States universities did not ease the isolation he felt. He died barely fifty years old. We call upon you to observe a few moments of silence for him.