

Anthony Kirk-Greene

1925-2018

Anthony Kirk-Greene Memorial
African Studies Centre and St Antony's College, Oxford
22 November 2018

Anthony Kirk-Greene passed away on 8 July at the age of 93. From his arrival in Oxford in 1967, he was a respected and committed member of the St Antony's and African Studies communities. Before this, he spent ten years in the Colonial Service in Nigeria and was a founding member of staff at Ahmadu Bello University. He is best-known academically for his extraordinary work on the British colonial service, Hausa language and culture, and conflict in Nigeria. He also devoted himself to the Colonial Records and Development Records Projects at Rhodes House, securing invaluable new collections for the University.

Introduction:

Roger Goodman, Warden, St Antony's College
Wale Adebani, Director, African Studies Centre

Speakers:

Insa Nolte, University of Birmingham, outgoing ASUK President & former Kirk-Greene Fellow

John Smith CBE, formerly Northern Region Government, & Institute of Administration, Zaria.

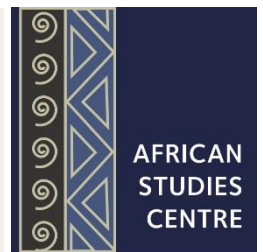
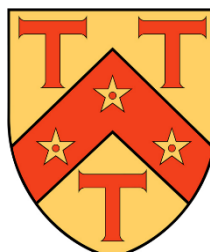
Lucy McCann, University of Oxford, archivist and collaborator

Murray Last, Professor Emeritus, University College, London

Vincent Hiribarren, King's College London, historian of North-Eastern Nigeria

HRH Muhammad Sanusi II, CON, the Emir of Kano.

Messages, tributes, comments and questions, chaired by Olly Owen



Remembering Anthony Kirk-Greene

Address by Professor Roger Goodman, Warden of St Antony's College

As Warden of St Antony's, I would like to welcome everyone here this evening. It is particularly lovely to see Helen here this evening. It is fabulous that so many friends, family and colleagues have been able to join us here to celebrate Tony's extraordinary career and multiple contributions. It is a sign of the affection and respect in which Tony was held.

I want to formally thank on behalf of everyone those colleagues in the African Studies Centre who have made this evening possible, in particular Olly Owen, David Pratten and Danielle Del Vicario. I know William Beinart would also want to send his greetings to everyone and say how sorry he is that he is not here today.

Tony was my college advisor. I first met him in my first week in the college in October 1982 (36 years ago) when he approached me in the Hall in the Hilda Besse Building to introduce himself. (In those days there were so few students that Fellows could easily work out which student was which). For those who do not know, 'College advisor' is the term that St Antony's has always used for what in other parts of Oxford was in the 1980s still called a 'moral tutor': the person in college to whom one can turn for advice on non-academic issues. I did not very often turn to Tony for advice but, when I did, he was always there and it is hard to imagine a more sympathetic, clear headed, wiser person. Actually, the time when I most sought his advice was not when I was a student, but much later when, in the mid-2000s, I was briefly the Acting Warden of the College. But more about that later.

Tony was born in Tunbridge Wells in 1925 and served as a Captain in the Indian Army from 1943-47. Returning to the UK, he went to Cambridge from where he joined the Colonial Service and went to work in Nigeria where he rose to the rank of Senior District Commissioner. He was closely involved in establishing a programme for training Nigerian civil servants which developed into Ahmadu Bello University where he taught for five years before he came to St Antony's in 1967 – originally on a five-year fellowship – and stayed until he retired in 1992.

Others here today will talk with authority about Tony's career in Africa and his influence – both in teaching and research – on subsequent generations of Africanists both in Nigeria and in Oxford. I would just like to take a few minutes to talk about his influence on St Antony's as a College.

When Tony arrived in St Antony's, the College was still less than 30 years old but was already known as the most international of Oxford's colleges. In her history of the College, Christine Nicholls tells the story of an African student turning up at Oxford station and asking a taxi to take him to 'the university'. He was automatically dropped off at St Antony's, which turned out to be the right place.

In total in 1967, there were still only around 80 students in the college. Indeed, it had only admitted its first female students three years earlier (to be fair it was the second college to go mixed). African Studies was represented in the person of just one individual, Kenneth Kirkwood, although there had already been a number of students who went to be very distinguished Africanists, such as Roger Louis and Terence Ranger.

While Tony's position was originally only for five years, it is a sign of this commitment to teaching and research that it was extended several times until, in 1976, the college made it permanent through to retirement. He took on more and more roles within the university and the college. He undertook most of the teaching on the African paper in PPE and half of the teaching of the African paper taken by undergraduates in History. He was primarily responsible for the introduction of the new section on Sub-Saharan Africa for the Politics of Developing Countries PPE paper and the Tropical Africa section for the Imperialism and Nationalism paper in History. For five years, he was Director of the Oxford Colonial Records Project and throughout he taught on the Foreign Service Programme of which he was director until the arrival of Robert Cassen in 1985. Much of the time that he was in Oxford, he was actually officially on a part-time post because there were not enough funds to cover the full cost of his post. Indeed, when he was appointed to a special lectureship in the modern history of Africa in 1982, there was no salary which came with the post in the first year because it had just been frozen by a University economy drive. Much of Tony's costs during this period, therefore, had to be covered by the external grants he managed to raise. While this state of affairs is not so unusual these days in Oxford, it was extremely unusual in the 1960s and 1970s.

When Tony formally retired from St Antony's in 1992, he characteristically volunteered to stay on for an extra year to help run a fundraising campaign which the College had just launched under the then-Warden Ralf Dahrendorf.

Perhaps the role for which students at St Antony's may remember Tony best, however, was as the College's Wine Fellow. He volunteered for this role in 1970 – the year in which the Hilda Besse building was opened with an impressive cellar in its basement – and remained in it until 1993. He set the policy for buying wine. This essentially was to buy good vintage wine cheap and sell it later at

prices which undercut those of wine merchants. He advised the Steward on which wines to serve at High Table. He organised termly meetings of the Wine Committee which took the form of a cold lunch with several wines for tasting. There were a number of student representatives on the committee; in some years, elections to be those representatives were more competitive than becoming the JCR President itself.

Tony's devotion to the college was such that, on retirement, he made an arrangement to be kept informed about what was going on in the college which, as far as I know, was unique. He asked Ralf Dahrendorf, the then Warden, if he could continue to be sent the Governing Body minutes in retirement. Ralf, reluctantly, said that this would not be possible under charities law; the minutes must be confidential to the current Fellows of the college. Ralf agreed, however, that, given Tony's exceptional service to the college, he would meet with Tony once a term to report, *informally*, on what was going on in the college. I discovered the existence of this commitment to Tony when I took over as Acting Warden in 2006. One of my fondest memories of that year is of bicycling up to Davenant Road of an afternoon, taking tea and cake with Tony and Helen, and then briefing Tony on the latest developments in the college. The only equivalent I can liken it to is the Prime Minister of the Day reporting on government affairs to the Queen. And, like the Queen, Tony dispensed judicious advice borne of long experience of administration and management. Those conversations were a real privilege. They also gave me a taste of the famed hospitality which Tony and Helen had distributed for many years to the partners of visiting academics through the University's Newcomers Club.

Above perhaps anything else, Tony will be remembered for his extraordinary courtesy to all he met – whatever their importance or lack of – and his unfailing care of the staff and students. He was an inveterate writer of notes of thanks and encouragement. In retirement, he spent a lot of time keeping up with how his students were doing and writing references for them. He was a true gentleman who, even when illness struck, was kindly and interested in all who visited.

Tony's support for the college was unstinting. He very generously supported a junior research fellowship, travel grants for students to research in African countries, a prize for dissertations on Africa and a College Governing Body Fellowship in African Studies which was held, until recently, by another much-missed colleague, Raufu Mustapha. It is no surprise that when the African Studies Centre secured for the first time their own building in Bevington Road they named their seminar room the 'Kirk-Greene seminar room' in recognition of Tony's signal contribution to African studies.

Like you, I am much looking forward to hearing more about those contributions in the talks which make up today's workshop.

William Beinart, Rhodes Professor of Race Relations and Fellow of St Antony's College (1997 to 2015)

Anthony Kirk-Greene (b.1925) died aged 93 on 8th July. Above all Tony was an enormously hardworking and committed historian of Africa and of the colonial era. As a young man he served in the army in India, during and immediately after the war, and then followed a successful career in the Colonial Service in Nigeria (1950-60). He also taught as a founding member of staff at Ahmadu Bello University (1961-65). This background gave him a lengthy and distinctive experience in Africa that few British-based Africanists now replicate. He learnt Hausa and he saw colonial rule from the inside in an area where it was relatively short-lived and constrained.

Tony was in some respects a man of his time and yet in important ways transcended this. He is best-known for his extraordinary knowledge and prolific writing on the British colonial service. Yet his earlier work especially demonstrated his ethnographic interests (*Adamawa Past and Present*, 1958); his expertise in Hausa language and culture (*A Modern Hausa Reader*, 1967); and his concern to explain the complexities of Nigerian civil war and Nigerian politics. In addition to papers he produced an invaluable sourcebook on *Crisis and Conflict in Nigeria* (1971) and an introduction to *Nigeria since 1970* (1981). His work on the colonial service has provided a very valuable resource for scholars in many fields of African history and, despite his immersion, he could be sharply critical of individuals and gently sceptical about its structures.

Tony came to St Antony's in 1967 on a five-year fellowship. He taught undergraduates on the African papers for PPE and Modern History and supervised many students doing topics in African and colonial history. With the strong support of College warden Raymond Carr, he was reappointed as a Senior Research Fellow till retirement in 1992 and he taught enthusiastically throughout his appointment. He also directed the Foreign Service Programme. Tony understood and accommodated the increasingly Africanist perspectives in British and American African Studies. He built and nurtured a strong network of colleagues in the United States as well as Britain and Africa. Throughout his career, he was a wonderful resource for those studying West Africa and hosted a wide range of visitors from Nigeria, till well after retirement, who showed him great affection and respect. He helped to make St Antony's a key centre for the study of Africa within the University.

One of Tony's major legacies to the University was his assiduous work on the Colonial Records Project at Rhodes House and on its successor, the Development Records Project, as Director 1980-84. He wrote countless letters, organised workshops and meetings and succeeded in regenerating this unparalleled archive with a large number of collections, particularly relating to agriculture, education and medicine. As just one small example of this legacy, papers were secured on education in colonial Nigeria including material from British teachers at Umuahia College, the leading school in south-eastern Nigeria. These and other materials in Oxford provided a rich resource for a recent prize-winning study by (former SAM) Terri Ochiaga about Chinua Achebe and his friends in their youth and the making of Nigeria's first generation of literary giants.

When I first came to the College in 1997, Tony was a supportive member of the African Studies seminar and programme. He attended many Thursday seminars and made an effort to get to know a new generation of staff and graduate students studying Africa. He was particularly generous in supporting a junior research fellowship, travel grants for students to research in African countries, as well as a prize for dissertations on Africa. When we established a full African Studies Centre in the university for the first time (2002), with continuing close links to the College, and were eventually able to secure a building, we named a Kirk-Greene seminar room in recognition of Tony's sustained support for African Studies. He contributed important building blocks. During his time at the College, there were two or three Fellows specialising in Africa. There are now 8 or 9 with such expertise. Raufu Mustapha – sadly recently deceased – David Pratten and Wale Adebaniwa have ensured that Nigeria specifically remains an important focus of attention at the College.

Muhammad Sanusi II, CON, Emir of Kano
November 22, 2018

Anthony Kirk-Greene's is a household name in Nigerian academic and, until recently, civil service circles. A former long-time colonial administrative officer who served as a lecturer at the Ahmadu Bello University, his contributions to Hausa Studies, Nigerian – particularly Northern Nigerian – history, Nigerian politics and the study of the civil war are unrivaled. I have no doubt that many who are more competent than me will provide an overview of his prodigious intellectual oeuvre including the significant academic output of students under his supervision. His work on the Emirate and Native Authority system in Northern Nigeria remains valuable to this day. Students of History will remain

indebted to him for his painstaking devotion to *The Travels of Barth*, who visited Kano in the days of Emir Usman I.

My academic background is in Economics and Islamic Law. My contact with Kirk-Greene's writing therefore came later in life than my classmates who studied history, Africa Studies, Hausa Studies or Political Science. My earliest recollection would be the late 1990s when I developed an interest in Philosophy and, specifically, Ethics. Going through a book that was a collection of pieces on African Philosophy which covered a wide range including for example Father Placide Tempels and Bantu Philosophy, I read Kirk-Greene's article, *Mutumin Kirki: The Concept of the good man in Hausa*. It was a short piece but for me it was profound. This was a time in Nigeria when religion had become politicized. Northern politicians were all announcing the "Implementation of Shari'ah". The country had become polarized and the politics of ethnic and religious difference was gaining ascendancy. Some of us were concerned about the implications of the new demagoguery for the unity of the country and stability and development of the North. Starting around 1999 and for several years thereafter I found myself involved in a furious and engaging debate with politicians, Muslim scholars and religious intellectuals on the meaning of being a Muslim in a multi-cultural and multi-religious setting and in this century. What in fact does it mean to be a "good" Muslim and how is that different from simply being a good person? The article by Kirk-Greene and some similar writings (such as various works of the Ghanaian philosopher Anthony – yes, Anthony! – Kwame Appiah were pivotal to framing my world-view and sharpening my arguments. Sadly, we are seeing the consequence of intransigence and extremism today with the north of Nigeria falling far behind the south in all development indices. The discourse of religion eclipsed the discourse of development and politicians have privileged religious propaganda over delivering on education, nutrition, health and the rights of women. Today, as Emir of Kano, his many works of history and politics are going to be essential reading for my intellectual development, as we continue the struggle for hearts and minds and retrace our steps and focus on the issues that really matter.

The reason I am qualified to write this tribute, however, is not any pretentious claim of expertise as a Kirk-Greene scholar. It is a simple one. I own all of Kirk-Greene's library. Here is the story.

The palaces in the North historically kept libraries and archives where manuscripts – some going back centuries – were kept (think Timbuktu). That tradition of palaces being repositories of knowledge – or let us say of culture in its broadest and richest sense – has disappeared for the most part, with culture being limited to trumpets and drumming and horses and customs and traditions.

In Kano in the early sixties, my late grandfather, Emir Muhammadu Sanusi 1, took a decision that would have momentous consequences. Concerned that thousands of manuscripts were lying fallow in the inner recesses of the palace and scholars had no access to them, he had them brought out and given to what was then called the Judicial School in Shahuci so that the wealth of knowledge therein would be available to students. These books were catalogued by Murray Last (and I believe he mentioned to me that he did this under the supervision of Kirk-Greene or John Hunwick, I cannot recall exactly now). In any case this wonderful idea had a tragic end. Those manuscripts were not well preserved and at some point were said to have been burnt in a fire in the school. Hundreds of years of knowledge gone up in smoke.

One of my dreams has always been to return the palace to being a centre of learning. By the time I became Emir in 2014 I owned a reasonable number of books mainly in economics, development, Islamic studies and philosophy. I had a dream of building a library in the palace which people could use for reading and research thus combining the legacy principle of palaces as repositories of knowledge with Emir Sanusi I's vision of access to this pool of knowledge. My thinking was to start something and hope that subsequent emirs would keep adding to the collection until at some point in the future the Kano Palace becomes like Timbuktu; scholars would troop there to have access to these books. But I wanted the library to focus largely on Africa and Islam.

Not long after my ascension to the throne I bounced this idea off Professor Murray Last. To my surprise he became very excited and encouraged me to start immediately. He could see exactly what I was thinking and agreed that this would be a key defining moment in palace history and a legacy worthy of leaving behind. I then requested him to look out for any collections on sale that I could buy for the Palace Library. Murray mentioned that he was aware that the collection of books left behind by John Hunwick of Northwestern was available. Sadly, by the time we reached out to his family we were informed that the collection had gone. But we were soon alerted about two collections that were likely to be available – that of David Kimble and that of Kirk-Greene. I could think of no better collections in an Africa Studies Library. Kimble had a large collection covering all of Africa and mainly the post-colonial period, including a huge stock of journals. This would be very well complemented by Kirk-Greene's collection that covered largely the pre-colonial, colonial and independence period with a strong bias to the Sahel and the British and French colonies. Old books like the manuscripts of Mungo Park and the entire collection of Barth would be difficult to find elsewhere. Although the library has not been built, we set out these collections in addition to my own books in the form of libraries in several rooms

in the palace. I am proud to say, thanks to Kirk-Greene that it would be difficult now to find a single private collection on Africa Studies that can match what we already have in the Kano Palace.



Library in Kano

The books are being catalogued. The plan is to leave them as the Emir's Palace library, under the management of the Bayero University, Kano. When this process is complete the books will be available as part of BUK Library assets in the Emir's Palace which will be a research only library. The university will have librarians in the palace in charge of the books and in the future we hope to have reading rooms, an auditorium for academic conferences (Bi-annual Emir of Kano International Conference on Africa and Islam which we hope to hold around the durbars of Eid el Fitr and Eid el Kabir).

Anthony Kirk-Greene spent his life in the service of our lands. I can think of no better place for his collection to rest. Centuries from now, when hopefully this library will have millions of volumes, the Kirk-Greene collection will remain at its core. Already these books have become a tourist attraction. The collection is now the most unique and iconic element of the palace and pictures of the library have been all over the social media.

On this day I say thank you to Professor Kirk-Greene and, wherever you are, I hope you are seeing your collection in the palace built by Muhammadu Rumfa in the fourteenth Century. And I hope you are smiling with joy.

Two memories of Tony Kirk-Greene

By Insa Nolte, University of Birmingham, Kirk-Greene JRF (2001), ASAUK President (2014-16)

My memories of Tony are linked to two institutions; first St Antony's College Oxford, where I benefited from Tony's support, and later the African Studies Association of the UK (ASAUK), which I joined some years after Tony had served as its President. However, in Tony's life the order of events was of course reversed, and so I will first reflect on his contribution to the ASAUK and then move on to my memories of him as a benefactor and mentor at St Antony's. This also allows me to illuminate (one aspect of) Tony's remarkable career through my own encounters with him.

Tony's contribution to the ASAUK reflected both the depth of his engagement with Africa and his ability to move freely in very different Africanist circles. Following Nigerian independence in the 1960s, Tony had moved from a career as a colonial officer to a lectureship at Ahmadu Bello University in Nigeria, and he joined St Antony's after his return to the UK in 1967. Drawing on an understanding of northern Nigeria that was matched by very few scholars of his generation, Tony published widely, contributing to debates about Hausa concepts and etymology as well as Nigerian history and politics. Tony understood his hands-on knowledge of the colonial service as an intellectual resource, and contributed to the retrospective assessment of colonial rule through an emphasis on archiving and publishing relevant materials, as well as through his own publications, from the illuminating article 'The Thin White Line: The size of the British colonial service in Africa' (*African Affairs*, 1980) to his later book *Symbol of Authority: The British District Officer in Africa* (2006).

Tony's engagement with Nigeria exemplified the ethos of the then relatively new academic field of African Studies, which emphasized interdisciplinarity and privileged the experiences and perspectives of Africans rather than their former European rulers. In British universities, these new academic approaches were institutionally represented in the African Studies Association of the UK (ASAUK). But while many scholars of Africa in the 1960s and 1970s emphasized the break with the colonial past, institutions central to the presence of Africa in UK public life, such as the Royal African Society, were then still dominated by men whose dispositions were shaped by Britain's role as a colonial power. Tony, with his

characteristic politeness and tact, was perfectly situated to build personal and professional networks that emphasised the shared interest in Africa. By the 1980s the ASAUK and the Royal African Society collaborated increasingly closely and thus contributed to the overall visibility of Africa. Tony's contribution to this process was recognized when he was elected as President of the African Studies Association in 1988-90. Reflecting the mutually supportive relationship between the two associations, he also served as the Vice President of the Royal African Society.

Tony's life-long dedication to African Studies in the UK was honoured by the ASAUK when he was presented with the 2005 Distinguished Africanist Award. The prize ceremony was held during the 2006 ASAUK conference at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, and as Tony was recovering at the time, he unfortunately had to be absent. However, he did of course send in a gracious acceptance speech, which I was delighted to read out on his behalf.

By that time I had become an academic not least thanks to Tony's intervention. When I spent part of my PhD at the University of Ibadan in 1997-8, I learnt that, after his formal retirement in 1992, Tony had brought together many of the best scholars of Nigerian politics to produce a book entitled *Transition Without End: Nigerian Politics and Civil Society Under Babangida* (1997). Co-edited by Tony, Larry Diamond and Oyeleye Oyediran, *Transition Without End* remains one of the most incisive analyses of Nigerian politics in the 1990s.

But most of all, Tony had a profound influence on my academic career because for a number of years he funded a Junior Research Fellowship at St Antony's. I completed my thesis in 1999, when African Studies seemed very much a declining subject, and I decided to give myself until graduation in Summer 2000 to find a post or fellowship at a university. If that did not work out my plan was to retrain as a secondary school teacher. As graduation passed without a credible academic post in sight, I allowed myself one more application before the start of the school year in September. The letter from St Antony's that informed me that I had been awarded the Kirk-Greene Junior Research Fellowship in Tropical African Studies arrived with only weeks to go before the start of what would have been a very different life.

It was during my months as a Kirk-Greene JRF at St Antony's in 2001 that I got to know Tony in person. It was then that I learned that in addition to being a deeply committed and insightful scholar, he was an unfailingly kind and generous human being. I do not think he ever allowed me to pay for a drink or food taken in his company, despite the fact that he had already funded the JRF

I held. Equally, I never left his house or office without a present, and as his presents were always books or article offprints they were doubly appreciated.

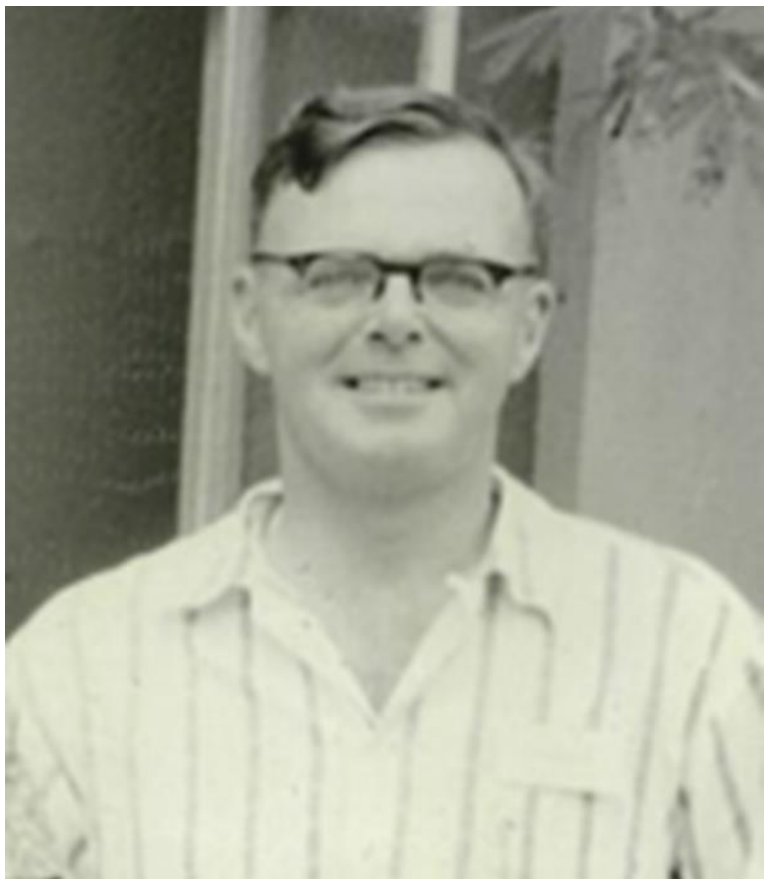
Tony was also generous in other ways. When mentioned that, as very generously stipulated in the JRF contract, I would attend my first dinner in college, he clearly realised that there was a chance that my German upbringing had not fully prepared me for all aspects of the Oxford experience. I remember being a little perplexed when he pointed out to me the finer details of polite academic exchange and advised me never to interfere with the directions of travel of alcoholic beverages. It was only later that I understood what he had tried, in the most polite and indirect manner possible, to communicate to me.

Tony was a remarkable man who successfully combined the roles of colonial administrator, academic institution builder, and scholar, but above all else he was unfailingly polite and generous. Whether we look back at his life with admiration or with gratitude, his was a life well lived.

Barnaby Philips, former student of Anthony Kirk-Greene and former BBC correspondent

To have been taught African colonial history by a man who helped to implement British imperial rule was an extraordinary experience, and one that is no longer possible. Anthony Kirk-Greene loved teaching African history, but above all he loved teaching about Nigeria, and in particular northern Nigeria. Like many British colonial administrators, I think he left his heart there. Some years after I left Oxford, I became the BBC's Nigeria Correspondent, and travelled widely in what he and his colleagues used to call 'the Holy North'. In the palaces' of Emirs, in conversations with retired Nigerian civil servants in their GRA gardens, in encounters with Fulani herdsmen, I had a little insight into Anthony's world. Belatedly, I understood the gleam in his eye during tutorials when he managed to steer the conversation back to Northern Nigeria. Of course, Anthony was a man of his time, but he was no rigid apologist for empire, and gracious and affable when challenged. I'm still fascinated by the British legacy in Nigeria, and I'm so very grateful to Anthony for having set me off on that journey.





Lucy McCann, Senior Archivist, Bodleian Library

I would like to say something about Tony's great support over many decades for the African archives which were until 2014 at Rhodes House Library and are now in the Weston Library on Broad Street with the rest of the Bodleian's special collections.

Tony's involvement began with the Oxford Colonial Records Project which had been established in the 1960s to locate and gather the private papers of colonial administrators and make them available for research at Rhodes House Library. The project had an oral history element and Tony undertook interviews for this in the late 1960s and early 1970s, successfully combining his own experience of serving in the Colonial Service with his knowledge of the questions an academic researcher wanted to ask. The interviews he undertook included one in 1968 with Rowland Skeffington Hudson who had been recruited to the British South Africa Company in 1919 and later served in Northern Rhodesia, the Colonial Office, Northern Nigeria, Barotseland and finally the Ministry of Overseas Development where he finished in 1966 (MSS. Afr. s. 2111). Understandably most of Tony's interviews were with people who had served in Nigeria: Thomas Letchworth who spent most of his career in Bornu Province beginning in 1928 (MSS. Afr. s. 2112); Sir Peter Stallard who was in Nigeria before becoming governor of British Honduras (MSS. Afr. s. 2243); Bishop Cecil John Patterson, a missionary in Southern Nigeria, then Assistant Bishop and Bishop on the Niger and finally Archbishop of West Africa (MSS. Afr. s. 2302).

I am pleased to report that Tony himself gave an interview in 1972 on his experiences in the Colonial Administrative Service in Nigeria and the Cameroons and in the Institute of Administration in both pre and post-independence Nigeria (MSS. Afr. s. 2343). Having looked at this I found that Tony had effectively interviewed himself – it is the transcript of a recording in which he addresses the same kind of questions he had put to other interviewees, beginning with his motivation for joining the Colonial Service. Interestingly Nigeria was not his first choice (he had requested Malaya, Hong Kong or the New Hebrides) and when he was offered a posting there he looked it up in an atlas to find out where it was. He relates the remark made by his grandmother at the time of his posting – that the son of friends of hers was somewhere in Africa and she was sure they would meet. On his first week at his first station Tony crossed a river to relieve another assistant district officer only to find that the ADO was indeed the son of his grandmother's friends.

Following the success of the Colonial Records Project the Oxford Development Records Project was established in October 1977 to collect the papers of officials

and non-officials involved in the economic development of former British dependencies in Africa, the West Indies and non-Indian Asia from 1945. The intention was to gather material for the study of economic and social development to sit alongside the administrative and political papers collected by the earlier project. Tony was on the steering committee of the ODRP and became its Director from 1980 to 1984 on a part-time basis in conjunction with his lectureship in the modern history of Africa. The project focussed on collecting papers from those involved in agriculture, education, medicine and law and order. A large quantity of material was collected, enabling analysis of development schemes such as the Swynnerton Plan in Kenya for African agriculture and the Sukumaland resettlement project in Tanganyika, and this research informed development projects being planned in later years. The material continues to be well used at the Library and has been acknowledged as a major primary source by many scholars. We continue to receive collections as a result of the work of both Records Projects.

Among material which Tony donated to the Library is a memorandum about his experiences in Nigeria with related research and teaching papers (MSS. Brit. Emp. s. 478/15), his letters home dating from 1950 to 1965 (MSS. Afr. s. 1313), newsletters (MSS. Afr. s. 2447) and papers of the Britain-Nigeria Association, papers of the Corona Club, material on Colonial Service training, material on Nigeria and the Biafran War, contributions to a project on poetry penned by colonial officers and a research project on second careers of Colonial Service officers. More material is to come from his house including his diaries and many photographs. In addition to his own material many collections have come to the Library via Tony due to his reputation as an expert on the Colonial Service in Africa and his close connections with the Overseas Service Pensioners' Association. As Terry Barringer has written:

The relationship between former colonial officers and academics was often uneasy, characterised by mutual suspicion. Tony was, perhaps uniquely, respected and honoured by both sides. To the former he was one of their own, who knew the challenges and pressures on colonial administration from inside. The academics recognised the depth and integrity of his scholarship.

Finally I would like to acknowledge Tony's support of SCOLMA. The Standing Committee on Library Materials on Africa was established in 1962 as a forum for those concerned with the provision of materials, both published and archival, for African Studies in the UK. The committee is made up of librarians and archivists from the main repositories in the UK which hold African material, such as the British Library, the National Archives, the Bodleian and the National

Library of Scotland. For a number of years Tony was the ASUK representative on the committee which benefitted from his wisdom and extensive contacts, he wrote articles and reviews for the SCOLMA journal *African Research and Documentation*, and his books were reviewed there by others. He was made an honorary member of SCOLMA and we were very pleased when he attended SCOLMA's 50th anniversary conference in Oxford in 2012. An obituary will appear in the next issue of ARD.

John Smith, CBE., Administrative Officer, Nigeria (1951-70)

Northern Nigeria when Tony arrived in 1950 remained remote and undeveloped. The temple of indirect rule, district administration was very different to that in other territories including Eastern and Western Nigeria. Public services were nearly all supplied through the native authorities and staffed by them. The native authority was still usually an Emir, at best restrained by an appointed council of aristocrats. Government staff were in an advisory role.

It could be very frustrating although there was general acceptance of the Margery Perham theory, drummed into us on the Devonshire Course, that we were an external scaffolding that would eventually be removed at independence. Recruitment of local staff to replace us had, therefore, never been an issue. The only Northern graduate in the administration, Abdul Aziz Atta, later to be Permanent Secretary to the Federal Ministry of Finance, was kept in the South on the assumption that 'the Emirs would never accept him'. Other early Northern graduates included an archaeologist, an archivist, a chemist and a vet. Southerners were accepted in technical jobs but rarely in the Northern administration. In this setting, the training of local administrators to replace expatriates, which Tony was to initiate, was controversial.

An aspect of indirect rule that Tony, a good linguist, relished was that proficiency in the local language was taken for granted – all day to day business was conducted in Hausa, a well-developed language, rich in proverbs, in which Tony greatly enjoyed achieving exceptional proficiency.

Posted to Adamawa, a remote province on the border with Cameroon, Tony's job involved touring, 10 to 15 miles a day, on foot, horse or cycle, his loads on the heads of carriers and staying in villages at night. Every evening he would hold a village meeting and in 1950 he would have been talking about the changes in the constitution that would lead to the first national elections in 1951. He would have selected sites for the well sinking programme, looked out for the

enthusiastic village head whose village would be the best place for a primary school and met up with agricultural extension workers to assess the needs for groundnut and cotton markets. In district headquarters there would be accounts to be checked, courts to sit in and observe, schools and dispensaries to visit. He was showing the flag but development was much higher on his agenda.

Touring officers were also a prime contact with the outside world for local people. It was to be another five years before the transistor radio began to make an impact.

After a tour Tony would submit a report to his Divisional Officer, bringing him up to date on all the local news and needs. Together they would discuss what he had found with emir and council.

Recruitment to the colonial service, on which the North was so reliant, was drying up in the fifties and Tony and Roger du Boulay, were chosen to attend the second Devonshire Course in 1955 in their respective universities with the specific objective of encouraging undergraduates to apply for the service. But it was far too late and realisation of this forced the government at last to think seriously about training Nigerians for the administration.

It was decided to launch a one-year course for the administrative service at the Institute of Administration, Zaria. The Institute, opened in 1954, had so far focused on courses for the government clerical service and for native authority staff. Tony was put in charge and given a free hand. He ran the first two of five courses which between 1957 and 1961 produced some 100 administrators who bore the strain of the transition as expatriates left at independence.

Thirty candidates were recruited annually, each of the twelve provinces providing two. Ages ranged from 20 to 40. Education varied hugely. There was only one graduate, with a Calcutta degree. There were a few who had dropped out of degree courses, a good many with teacher training, then of a very high standard. All had work experience of one sort or another.

Tony has written extensively about the courses which became a model for elsewhere in Africa. They were intensive, seven days a week for some ten months and included a month's attachment with a district officer and attendance at Nigeria's Outward Bound School, Man O'War Bay, in Cameroon involving climbing the mountain and jumping into the sea, which many would be seeing for the first time. If there was an election or census the course would take on whatever jobs needed doing in one of the remoter constituencies: building the polling stations, presiding, transporting the ballot boxes, counting the votes and being the returning officer.

Classroom work was mainly concerned with learning about the practical jobs that administrators had to do and supervise: advising an emir, chairing a committee, taking minutes, inspecting a prison, building a road, dealing with an epidemic. The only formal academic subjects were political theory and comparative religion.

The courses became redundant when Ahmadu Bello University's department of government offered degree courses, again with Tony's help. His achievement in training was outstanding. The 100 administrators his Zaria course trained were essential for Northern Nigeria, which, the size of France with a population of 20 million plus, went into independence with fewer than 100 graduates.

Gambo Dori (extracted from 'Times of many losses', *Vanguard News*, 19.7.2018)

Anthony Kirk-Greene came into Nigeria about 1950 as a colonial officer and served mainly in the North during those turbulent times when power was shifting from the colonial masters and the traditional rulers to the elected officials. Tony served mainly in Adamawa, Niger and Borno Provinces as Divisional Officer (DO). In Borno, where I come from, he is particularly remembered as supervising that historic election in 1956 where the ruling Northern People Congress, NPC, lost to Borno Youth Movement, BYM. He wrote a lot about his experiences in the field and developed a keen interest in both Hausa and Fulfulde languages. He was said to speak Hausa like an indigenous speaker, kamar jakin Kano, complete with the idioms and all.

He wrote many books on Hausa and Fulani culture and languages that are still relevant. I still come across his book, *Hausa Ba Dabo Ba Ne*, a collection of Hausa proverbs, in bookshops. He was very much involved as a lecturer in the Institute of Administration, Zaria which predated the birth of Ahmadu Bello University, ABU. When ABU came into being in 1962 he was seconded there as Reader and first Head of Department of Public Administration. Later, due to his interest in the major languages of the North and the amount of work he had done on Hausa and Fulfulde languages, he was appointed to begin the new Department of African and Nigerian Languages. He left abruptly for England in 1965 and never returned. In 1967 he joined St Anthony's where he remained for life, basking in their appreciation for his vast contributions which drew from his lengthy and distinctive experience in Nigeria.

He lectured and continued to produce books and pamphlets about Nigeria. Shehu Othman who compiled a bibliography of Kirk-Greene's works was astounded to find and list more than 700 items comprising books, pamphlets,

articles, mostly on Nigerian history and languages. Shehu Othman said, 'Reading through his works one is easily struck by his formidable reservoir of knowledge, his grasp of historical details, his keen prognostic sense and a literary style that makes him among the best of his generation. Whether writing about historical or political issues or about matters of human interest, Tony Kirk-Greene deals with his subject in both a robust and witty fashion. Few Africanists would match the quality of his essays, but I know of no Nigerianist with a higher record of publications.' Shehu Othman's listing stopped in 1992 but certainly Kirk-Greene did not stop there. At least I have seen a copy of *Was It Yesterday? The Last Generation of Nigeria's Turawa*, 2002, edited by Trevor Clark, which contained chapters contributed by Tony.

Shehu Othman (extracted from 'A. H. M. Kirk-Greene: A Select Bibliography', in *Legitimacy and the State*)

Reading through his works, one is easily struck by his formidable reservoir of knowledge, his grasp of historical details, his keen prognostic sense and a literary style that makes him a delight to read and which must surely rank him among the best of his generation. In chronicling his publications, it is possible to discern marked shifts from Hausa language to Public Administration, then to Politics, but all the time in Nigerian History; and, in later years, to other African countries and the Commonwealth.

Whether writing about serious historical or political issues or about matters of human interest such as university campus fraternities, Makidi (the Hausa drummer) or northern Nigerian schoolboy slang, Tony Kirk-Greene deals with his subject matter in both a robust and witty fashion. Few Africanists would match the quality of his essays, but I know of no Nigerianist with a higher record of publications. I thus feel myself in agreement with the verdict of Dr Robert A. Myers, editor of the Nigeria volume (World Bibliographical Series, Oxford: Clio Press, 1989: xii):

Among the numerous prolific writers about Nigeria, one scholar stands out. A. H. M. Kirk-Greene has authored several hundred individual publications on the country, 265 266 *Legitimacy and the State in Africa* many of them essential historical, linguistic, and political studies. The list could be much longer. I have attempted to make a just and balanced selection that is representative of the wealth of publications.

Nor could I agree more with an editorial profile of him in the weekly African Concord (Lagos, 15 July 1991, p. 15), with its graphic opening:

He is not a Nigerian, but he knows Nigeria too well, like the back of his palms. He speaks the Hausa language with native ease and he has written considerably on the country's political history. What betrays him is his colour. He is white.

A tribute to A.H.M. Kirk-Greene

By Adam Higazi

Jos, 22 November 2018

I regret that I cannot be in Oxford this evening to participate in the memorial event for the wonderful Tony Kirk-Greene. I have another month of fieldwork planned in Nigeria before the end of the year, including in Adamawa and Taraba States, on which Kirk-Greene's writings remain enduring sources of knowledge and mines of information. I like to think Tony, as we all called him, would not mind me being here, studying Fulani pastoralist communities, something he did in the 1950s, though of course the people and places he worked in have changed greatly since then. I knew Tony Kirk-Greene from my time as a DPhil student at St Antony's from 2004-2010, when he was a retired but still active academic. I still vividly remember seeing him from my window over Woodstock Road in 2004-5 cycling down the road every Thursday at 4.30pm on his way to the African Studies Seminar! He was so punctual and like an alarm the sight of the venerable professor on his bicycle reminded me to make my own way to the seminar as well! His commitment and participation in the academic life of the college were always impressive. Tony was approachable and down-to-earth and tremendously supportive and encouraging of students in the college. He even set up a travel bursary to help us get to the field. He was very well liked for his sense of humour and humility, and much respected for his great depth of knowledge and experience of the places where we were working. He had a genuine affection for Nigeria, and not in a paternalistic way.

Kirk-Greene was a unique chronicler of Nigerian history in the second half of the twentieth century. His writing is infused with a sense of place that is rare and must in part stem from his years as a district officer. He combined that direct knowledge of people and places with a scholarly mindset and a real fastidiousness in recording seemingly everything he could. He documented local cultures and histories, national politics, Nigeria's Civil War, and much more. This started early. Kirk-Greene's 1958 book, 'Adamawa Past and Present', must still count as possibly the best single introduction to the history and early political

development of that mountainous and diverse part of Nigeria. Kirk-Greene was clearly a versatile scholar, being an excellent linguist too. He told me Hausa was his primary Nigerian language, followed by Fulfulde, and his writings show knowledge of both. The 'Teach Yourself Hausa' book he co-authored with CH Kraft is still essential reading for Hausa learners (myself included). He also wrote with insight and from direct field experience on the pastoral Fulani – for example, co-editing with Mahdi Adamu the 1986 IAI volume 'Pastoralists of the West African Savanna' – a brilliant collection and still useful for those of us interested in pastoralism. Tony Kirk-Greene was a central figure in the documentation of colonial history in Nigeria (and more widely) and he did us all a favour by preserving and collecting colonial records, for ourselves and future generations to read and analyse. His own writing on colonialism strikes me as being more subtle than most and is valuable because it puts on record his insider knowledge of how the colonial system worked. Tony Kirk-Greene always struck me as being fair-minded and as someone who wanted to see accuracy in his and other scholars' work. He was a remarkable man who will be much missed but he lives on through his unique body of writing and very warmly in our memories.

James Currey, Publisher

Tony Kirk-Greene and Rex Collings at Oxford University Press in Amen House, London struck up a practical publishing friendship from 1962. His books on Nigerian colonial history were needed to help build a serious foundation for the development of the study of pre-colonial Africa. I inherited Rex Collings's authors and list in 1965. He was impeccably reliable and easy to work with. It was a pity that Tony Kirk-Greene wasn't there for the recent Burma Soldiers seminar. It is just the sort of occasion to which he would have made a valuable contribution when he came back to Thursday seminars after his retirement from the African Studies Centre.

Gavin Williams, Emeritus Fellow, St Peter's College

Anthony (Tony) Kirk-Greene served in India during the Second World War. He graduated from Cambridge in 1950, and joined the Colonial Administrative Service. In 1967, he came from Nigeria's Ahmadu Bello University to Oxford on a five-year fellowship and was elected to a Senior Research Fellowship until his retirement in 1992.

Tony made it possible for St Antony's to provide support for student travel and to establish the Kirk-Greene Fellowship, whose first holder was the late Abdul Raufu Mustafa.

Tony's scholarly interests in Nigeria began during and out of his colonial service. His study of *Adamawa: Past and Present* was first published in 1958, while he was an administrator in Adamawa. His scholarly contributions were extensive and varied in their form, their subject, and their geography. He was a researcher and writer of books (upwards of thirty), shorter pamphlets, articles, reviews, and contributions to the weekly *West Africa*. He wrote about the Hausa language, and its proverbs and its everyday usage and about Fulfulde (Fulani). His most widely-sold book, with C.H. Kraft, was *Teach Yourself Hausa* (1973 and 1983). He wrote about colonial administrators, and therefore the forms of colonial rule and of interactions among the administrators and the administered, and about aspects of Nigerian politics, in the co-edited volume *Transition without End: Nigerian Politics and Civil Society Under Babangida*. Britain's Imperial Administrators 1858-1866 (2000) brought into a single volume Britain's famous overseas civil services: the Colonial Administrative Service, the Sudan Political Service and the Indian Administrative Service.

Kirk-Greene's most impressive achievement, that will be his greater legacy, were the extraordinary volumes of documents and anthologies he published on, for example, Nigerian provincial gazetteers, *Crisis and Conflict in Nigeria*, and colonial records and biographies. In Oxford, he provided teaching for African Politics in PPE and Colonialism and Nationalism in Modern History, at a time when faculty provisions hardly existed.

It was in Kirk-Greene's honour that Terence Ranger and Olufemi Vaughan published *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth Century Africa*, a volume of essays by contemporaries, students and former students in Politics and in History. He was also recognized by fellow Africanists when he was awarded to 2005 Distinguished Africanist Prize by African Studies Association UK, and it is evident from the tributes to him how much was especially appreciated by his students.

As Raufu Mustapha once said, he was very proud to hold a Kirk-Greene Fellowship because of everything Tony had done for Nigerians. Mustapha and Adekeye Adebajo dedicated their collection of essays on *Gulliver's Troubles: Nigeria's Foreign Policy after the Cola War*, to "Anthony Kirk-Greene, a.k.a. *Mutumin Kirki*", the Hausa concept of the good man.

Andrew Whitehead, former student of Anthony Kirk-Greene and former BBC correspondent

I've just discovered that Anthony Kirk-Greene – a colonial administrator who became an exacting historian of colonialism – died last month. He was 93. Tony spent the 1950s helping to govern northern Nigeria. (I seem to remember he told me he was once a district officer – a foot soldier of the colonial endeavour). After Nigeria became independent, he taught at Ahmadu Bello University. He was fluent in Hausa.

I came across Tony when he taught me for the 'Imperialism and Nationalism' special subject in the final year of my history degree at Oxford. It was the most exciting and rewarding part of my studies there. I'd never been to Africa, or indeed anywhere outside Europe – but I really took to the subject, and especially the rise of nationalism in sub-Saharan Africa.

Tony suggested that I consider doing a PhD – he wanted me to look at the rise of Nyerere's TANU in what is now Tanzania. I didn't bite – but the confidence he showed in me did encourage me to pursue postgraduate research, though in British social and political history rather than Africa during colonialism.

I do wonder whether the interest stirred and nurtured by Tony Kirk-Greene made me more open to living and working in India and to becoming immersed in its history and politics. We didn't keep in touch after I left Oxford, and it's chastening to realise that Kirk-Greene, when he was my tutor, was about ten years younger than I am now.

But let me, belatedly, say thanks to A.H.M. Kirk-Greene. I'm grateful to you!

