

(continued from p. 1)

volume so that there is always room for over-the-transom submissions. Teams will take turns producing themed and unthemed issues in alternate years. As new submissions come in, they are assigned in rotation to the next editorial team on the list; when papers are accepted, they go into a hopper that the unthemed teams can choose from to assemble their issues. Themed issue proposals are presented to the whole consortium for assessment, and teams decide among them who will work on accepted themed issues with the guest editors. For the rest of volume 49, we are concentrating on clearing the books of articles that have already been accepted or were in review when the consortium was established. Scheduling may become a little more complicated than in the days when accepted papers just went into the queue and were published in order of acceptance, but we feel that by quadrupling the number of editors involved in the process, papers will move through review much more quickly than in the past.

Of course, our new colleagues at Florida, North Carolina, and Rhodes are not just welcome toilers in the publication mills that have ensnared the UCLA contingent for so long (*mwa-ha-ha-ha-ha!*). Every institution develops its own habits of thought and approaches to scholarship, and opening up the editorial board(s) will bring fresh ideas and projects to the journal.

As we settle in to the new regime, we hope to explore new ways of presenting research, institute new columns exploring issues in curatorship and pedagogy, and who knows what else? (We are open to suggestions!) As the journal's first half-century draws to a close, we believe that the *African Arts* consortium will enable at least another half century of presenting the best scholarship in all areas of African visual culture to the academy and to the world.

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dialogue

Frederick Grant, Ghanaian Photographer

My attention has been drawn to an article published in the Summer 2012 issue of *African Arts* (vol. 45, no. 2): Rachel Ama Asa Engmann, "Under Imperial Eyes, Black Bodies, Buttocks, and Breasts. British Colonial Photography and Asante 'Fetish Girls'."

I think the author allowed herself to be seriously misled when she implies that the photographer of the portraits she analyses, Frederick Grant, was an Englishman. Grant is a well-known family name in Cape Coast, a Ghanaian coastal settlement. Furthermore, in a database of Basel Mission photographs which was put on general access online almost fifteen years ago, and for which I was co-director, "Fred Grant" is listed in the alphabetical browsing list of photographers and can be identified as a professional who was taking photographs in Cape Coast in 1874. The database, which is now in the hands of the University of Southern California, can be found online at bmpix.usc.edu.

Naturally there could have been two Frederick/Fred Grants taking photographs in Ghana in the second half of the 1870s and the early 1880s—but this is highly unlikely. And the fact that the photographer was registering his images for copyright protection and had a business address in London could very well be more an interesting insight into the attempt of an African photographer to profit from the undoubted interest in images from Asante in Great Britain—rather than 100% evidence that this Grant was an Englishman.

Perhaps I could allow myself to express a little the emotion of frustration about all this. For thirty years, with the backing of the Basel Mission and finance from a number of serious

foundations, like the Getty Grant Program, I was engaged as archivist in making the materials in the Basel Mission archive accessible to international scholarship—for example by making sure that the 25,000 images in *bmpix* are not only generally accessible online and equipped with the maximum possible catalogue detail, but that this catalogue detail was translated 1:1 from German into English. So it is extremely disappointing to find that there is no trace that Ms Engmann's methodology included a search of *bmpix*. Further: in a CD-appendix to the *Journal des africanistes* 2005 (subtitle: *Approches croisées des mondes akan II*) I published a "Provisional Survey of Nineteenth Century Photography on the Gold Coast and in Ashanti" with a summary discussion, admittedly somewhat speculative, about the potential holdings of photographs taken in pre-1896 Asante which might be found in European collections, other than those in the Basel Mission, in which I point out that anonymous images of people in or from Asante which I have seen from the years after the 1874 war could well have been taken by Fred Grant, the photographer from Cape Coast.

It is also a matter of some frustration for me that Dr. Jürg Schneider, a former academic assistant of mine, who wrote a dissertation in the History Department of the University of Basel on African photographers over the years 1840 to 1885 on the African coast between Luanda and Dakar (which I co-examined), also does not appear in Ms. Engmann's bibliography. Admittedly the thesis is in German, but Schneider has published in English, and his interest in nineteenth century African photographers is well known among most people in the field.

A final point—did anyone ask whether these are perhaps actually portraits of girls dressed for the Krobo *dipo* puberty rite and relabelled "Asante" for the sake of the higher price an image said to be from Asante could command?

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