Connecting the Worlds of the African Diaspora: The Living Legacy of Lorenzo Dow Turner Symposium
November 12–13, 2010
The Smithsonian's Anacostia Community Museum welcomes you to “Connecting the Worlds of the African Diaspora: The Living Legacy of Lorenzo Dow Turner,” a two-day symposium that is part of the public programming related to the major exhibition Word, Shout, Song: Lorenzo Dow Turner Connecting Communities through Language. The symposium is a powerful opportunity for learning and exchange. It explores the ways in which Turner’s seminal investigations in language inspired the research of diverse scholars (including historians, linguists, and anthropologists) in connecting various communities within the worlds of the African Diaspora (Sierra Leone; Caicos; Bahia, Brazil; Mexico; and Texas). Turner’s research, mostly done in the 1930s and 1940s, is still being used today and is highly relevant to an understanding of community identity and continuity. The persistence of Turner’s legacy is a tribute to an African American scholar who went unheralded for a long time.

Lorenzo Dow Turner, PhD, was a man of many accomplishments: a son of North Carolina whose passion for education and academic success led him as student and teacher to the preeminent universities of his day; a popular professor of English and linguistics; a pioneering linguist with a passion for people and fieldwork; a world traveler and cultural explorer; an advocate of following one’s curiosity and imagination. In many ways, Dr. Turner is one of the twentieth century’s most influential scholars—and you have rarely heard of him. “Connecting the Worlds of the African Diaspora” will increase your understanding and change your perceptions of Turner’s work and the longevity of his inspiration.

Beginning with his studies of the origins, structure, and living use of the Gullah language in the 1930s to the 1949 publication of his seminal volume, Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect, to his trips to Africa in the 1950s and subsequent lectures based on that work, Lorenzo Dow Turner has influenced the growth and development of: the academic discipline of Creole studies; linguists and linguistics; Gullah studies; comparative anthropology; African Diaspora studies; and comparative studies of world music and culture. His data and analysis of the contributions of formerly enslaved Africans to the history, language, and culture of America undergird the contemporary investigations of renowned linguists and anthropologists. His stature and enduring reputation as a professor and teacher continue to inspire young linguists—black and white—who study and work with local communities around the globe.

We thank all the scholars who join us for the symposium. Alcione Amos, Herb Frazier, Thomas Klein, Livio Sansone, and Kevin Velvington bring to us their particular insights and personal encounters with Turner. We are especially grateful for the presence of our keynote speaker, Emory S. Campbell, himself a pioneering activist in the preservation and understanding of the Gullah culture and heritage.

We acknowledge the absence of two individuals who have done much to keep alive the life and legacy of Lorenzo Dow Turner. Historian Joseph Opala of James Madison University, primarily known for his research on the Gullah connection between the Sea Islands and Sierra Leone, is now coordinator of the Bunce Island Project, which will conserve and interpret the Sierra Leone slave castle of Bunce Island and establish a museum of the Atlantic slave trade in Freetown. We also miss the presence of the late Dr. Margaret Wade-Lewis, whose full-length biography, Lorenzo Dow Turner: Father of Gullah Studies, provides much of the framework for the Word, Shout, Song exhibition. We hope this symposium reflects the scholarship of these eminent researchers as well as the lasting inspiration of Dr. Lorenzo Dow Turner.
Program

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Friday, November 12, 2010
9:00–10:00 AM  Registration Check-in and Continental Breakfast
10:45 AM  Opening Remarks by Camille Akeju, Director
11:15 AM  Kevin Yelvington, “Constituting Paradigms in the Study of the African Diaspora, 1900–1950”
12:10 PM  Lunch
2:20 PM  Keynote Address: Emory S. Campbell, “Gullah/Geechee Culture: Respected, Understood, and Striving—Sixty Years after Lorenzo D Turner’s Masterpiece”

Saturday, November 13, 2010
9:00–9:30 AM  Continental Breakfast and Registration
9:30 AM  Opening
9:45 AM  Herb Frazier, “Behind God’s Back: Gullah Memories of Cainhoy, Wando, Huger, Daniel Island, St. Thomas Island, South Carolina”
10:45 AM  Thomas Klein, “Sounds of Africa in Gullah and on Middle Caicos”
11:45 AM  Alcione Amos, “Black Seminoles: The Gullah Connections”
12:30 PM  Summation
1:00 PM  Closing Remarks

Special Activities

Friday, November 12, 2010
9:30 AM; 1:00 PM  A Peek at the Turner Papers with archivist Jennifer Morris
10:00–10:45 AM  Tour of Word, Shout, Song exhibition with curator Alcione Amos

Saturday, November 13, 2010
1:00–1:30 PM  Opportunity to view exhibition and to network

Symposium Participants

Alcione M. Amos is a museum research specialist at the Anacostia Community Museum and the curator of the exhibit Word Shout Song: Lorenzo Dow Turner Connecting Communities through Language. Parallel to her work as a librarian, Mrs. Amos maintained a career as an independent scholar studying post-slavery societies. She co-edited in 1996 a book, Black Seminoles: History of a Freedom Seeking People, about Gullah fugitive slaves from South Carolina and Georgia who joined the Seminole Indians in Florida and became part of the tribe. She also researched extensively the history of Afro-Brazilians who, after obtaining their freedom, returned to West Africa and established communities in Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, and Benin. In 2007 she published in Brazil a book titled Os Que Voltaram: a História dos Retornados Afro-Brasileiros na África Ocidental no Século XIX (Those Who Returned: The History of the Afro-Brazilian Returnees in West Africa in the 19th Century.) In 2007 Mrs. Amos volunteered at the Anacostia Community Museum to help process the Lorenzo Dow Turner papers. After working with the collection for a year, she was offered the opportunity to curate the present exhibit on Turner’s life and work. In 2009 she joined the staff of the museum on a permanent basis. Mrs. Amos holds an MSLS degree from the Catholic University of America.

Herb Frazier is a freelance writer and public relations consultant based in Charleston, South Carolina. He grew up in the Ansonborough public housing projects in Charleston and at the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. As a reporter for his hometown newspaper, The Post and Courier, he covered stories in Asia, Europe, the Caribbean, and Africa. In 2000, the South Carolina Press Association named him “Journalist of the Year.” He also held reporting and editing positions at daily newspapers in Columbia, South Carolina, New Orleans, Dallas, and Charlotte. He studied journalism at the University of South Carolina and taught news writing as a visiting lecturer at Rhodes University in South Africa. He is a former Michigan Journalism Fellow at the University of Michigan. Frazier is the author of the forthcoming book Behind God’s Back: Gullah Memories of Cainhoy, Wando, Huger, Daniel Island, St. Thomas Island, South Carolina.
Thomas B. Klein is an associate professor in writing and linguistics at Georgia Southern University. As a professional linguist he specializes in the linguistics of Gullah/Geechee, Creole languages, and Chamorro, the indigenous language of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. He has worked extensively with the modern Gullah/Geechee communities of South Carolina and Georgia to translate Turner's original recordings. He is the author of numerous articles in the area of Gullah/Geechee studies and has published *Simplicity and Complexity in Creoles and Pidgins* with Nicholas Faracas (2009). Klein has a PhD from the University of Delaware.

Livio Sansone is presently professor of anthropology and head of international relations at the Federal University of Bahia, Brazil, where he is also the coordinator of the Digital Museum of Afro-Brazilian Heritage and Culture, which includes materials from the Anacostia Community Museum's Turner Papers (www.arquioafro.ufba.br). He has carried out research on ethnic and race relations in the United Kingdom, Suriname, the Netherlands, and Brazil (Rio and Bahia). He has published several articles and books, including *Blacksness without Ethnicity* (2003). He has a PhD in anthropology from the University of Amsterdam.

Kevin A. Yelvington teaches anthropology at the University of South Florida. His research interests include ethnic, class, and gender relations, the anthropology of work, development studies, applied anthropology, and the history of anthropology, all in relation to the African Diaspora and Latin American and Caribbean history, literature, and popular culture. Author of several journal articles and book chapters, he wrote *Producing Power: Ethnicity, Gender, and Class in a Caribbean Workplace* (1995). He edited *Trinidadians: Anthropology in the Diaspora* (2006), and he co-edited (with Bridget Breerton) *The Colonial Caribbean in Transition: Essays on Postemancipation Social and Cultural History* (1999). In 2008, Yelvington was awarded the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship for research on the work of U.S. anthropologist Melville J. Herskovits (1895–1963), an ethnographer of the African Diaspora in Latin America and the Caribbean. He holds a D.Phil. in social anthropology from the University of Sussex (Brighton, England).

Emory Shaw Campbell—community development activist, heritage preserver, and passionate advocate of Gullah people and traditions—was born in 1941 on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. At the time, Hilton Head was an isolated Sea Island accessible only by boat and populated primarily by the descendents of enslaved Africans. The Africans who had landed there came from different cultures, tribes and clans. Together they formed a new world people that today are called Gullah in South Carolina or Geechee in Georgia and northern Florida. Before the real estate development of South Carolina’s Sea Islands began in the early 1950s, places like Hilton Head, Daufuskie, St. Johns, and St. Helena islands, as well as Mt. Pleasant, were cultural time capsules where the Gullah continued their family, spiritual, food, language, and craft traditions.

Valedictorian of his high school graduating class, Campbell earned a degree in biology from Savannah State College and received an M.S. in environmental engineering from Tufts University. At that time he worked in the microbiology department at the Harvard School of Public Health. Recalling this time, he recognized that “the urgent need on South Carolina’s Sea Islands was skill among the indigenous citizens to address issues related to their environment and cultural heritage.” Campbell worked for ten years for the Comprehensive Health Agency for Beaufort and Jasper Counties (South Carolina) to implement public health measures in impoverished rural areas and to promote efforts to preserve and enhance the rich Gullah heritage. He served for twenty-two years (1980–2002) as executive director of the Penn Center on St. Helena Island, where he established Penn Center Heritage Days, held in the second week in November; revitalized the center’s family farm program; and expanded the Penn Center’s York W. Bailey Museum’s programs to assist writers, artists, and filmmakers in documenting and interpreting the heritage of the Gullah people. Campbell also spearheaded the effort to translate the New Testament into Gullah and to reconnect the Gullah people with West African communities. Through the Gullah Reunion and Gullah Homecoming in 1988 and 1989 the Gullah people of South Carolina and the people of Sierra Leone exchanged visits, as documented in the film *Family across the Sea* (1990). In recognition of Campbell’s efforts, the Sierra Leoneans made him an honorary paramount chief with the royal title of Kpaa Kori I.

In 2008 Emory Campbell was elected chairman of the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission (U. S. National Park Service), an organization created by the Congress of the United States and charged with developing programs to preserve and promote Gullah culture in the area from Wilmington, North Carolina, to Jacksonville, Florida. He also authored *Gullah Cultural Legacies* (2008), a synopsis of Gullah traditions, beliefs, art forms, and speech. He has received numerous awards, including the 1999 Governor’s Award for Historic Preservation; the 2005 NEA Carter G. Woodson Memorial Award; and, in 2000, an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Bank Street College, New York.

President of the Gullah Heritage Consulting Service, Campbell also operates the Gullah Heritage Trail tours on Hilton Head. He and his wife Emma live on Hilton Head Island on the property where he was born. They have two adult children, Ochieng and Ayoka.