

Additional Tributes To Our Late Founder and Editor from Colleagues, Friends, and Admirers

I first met Dr. Isaacs in the late 1990s. Since then, I maintained contact with him and also met with him a number of times. I found him to be very nice, warm and helpful. He was a gentleman and a scholar in the true sense of the terms. His contribution to Third World studies is enormous. His passing away is an irreparable loss to the academic community in particular and to the world in general.

Najmul Abedin, Professor, Department of Public Management & Criminal Justice, Austin Peay State University, Tennessee

I was a colleague of Dr. Harold Isaacs at Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW) in Americus, Georgia. I first met Harry in August 2009 when I first came to GSW. He was among the first persons I met. He was very welcoming and made me feel at home. We spent some time talking about my research interests in Jimmy Carter and the Carter presidency. Harry told me that he had known Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter for many years and that he published a book about Carter's election in 1976. The book was entitled, *Jimmy Carter's Peanut Brigade*. He was not only a fine historian and teacher; Harry was a witness to history.

Since 2009, Harry and I had several conversations about President Carter and the Carter family; usually, these took place before our 6:30pm Wednesday evening classes. He shared his rich experiences with delight, experiences that dated back to when Carter first ran for governor in 1966. For both his 1966 and 1970 bids for governor, Harry explained that Carter or some member of the Carter family would come to GSW to enlist support. Sometimes, a family member would visit the history and political science department asking for a contribution. Harry was a loyal supporter. He always appreciated that fact that Carter was a friend of the Third World and that he prioritized improving U.S. relations with the Third World as president and as a former president.

In February 2015, Harry asked Dr. Brian Parkinson and me to par-

ticipate in the Third World Studies Lecture Series for April 14. I was very excited about this, and honored to be invited to present. Past programming was very good and there was always a decent turnout from the GSW community. He wanted to do something on the United States and the Middle East. Dr. Parkinson, an associate professor of history at GSW, presented on Iran, specifically the rise and fall of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (1919-1980). The Islamic world is his area of specialty. I discussed the role of U.S. presidential leadership in the Arab-Israeli Conflict, chiefly President Carter's 1978-1979 peace efforts with Israel and Egypt and his desire to see peace and justice in Israel and Palestine.

The April 14th seminar turned out to be Harry's last. We all feared that it would be. We knew about his health and that he would not be with us for long. Harry concluded the evening with a hope that he would see everyone at the next Third World Seminar.

Now, after his passing, memories of the lecture series are even more precious. Some videos of the Third World in Perspective Program Seminar Series, including the last one, are available on the GSW YouTube page, <https://www.youtube.com/user/GeorgiaSouthwestern>. Available are lectures from 2013 to 2015 that cover issues and developments in the Ukraine, Bulgaria, Panama, Vietnam, and the South Pacific.

**D. Jason Berggren, Assist. Professor of Political Science,
Georgia Southwestern State University**

I first met Harold at a Third World Studies conference in Omaha, Nebraska in the 1980s. It was early on in my stay in the hinterland, having spent most of my life on the east coast and particularly in Florida. This was the beginning of a movement to establish organizations concerned with the "Third World" and I was excited that it had made some impact on the Great Plains, my home for six years. That organization ceased to exist last decade long after I returned to the South, while the Association of Third World Studies is in the midst of its fourth decade of existence, with chapters in various parts of the world, thanks in large measure to the dreams and guidance of Harold. I cannot remember now what the subject of my presentation in Omaha was, but I do recall the impression that Harold made on me then. He was always a gentleman and became a good friend. I subsequently participated in many ATWS meetings, working on building up the organization and the Journal of Third World Studies. Along the way, I never felt that I was imposing on him when calling up on the telephone or e-mailing him about

organizational matters or simply to say hello. Harold will be sorely missed!

Michael B. Bishku, Professor of History, Augusta University

When I was at the early stages of my academic career in the United States, I received a letter from Dr. Harold Isaacs inviting me to join the newly-established Association of Third World Studies (ATWS). I did not know Harold at that time, but the goals and objectives of ATWS as described by Harold were compelling. Therefore, I responded right away and joined ATWS and eventually became a life member of it. From its modest beginning, ATWS evolved into the largest organization of its kind with a global membership and active chapters in several Third World regions. It is no exaggeration to say that without Harold's herculean effort and selfless dedication, ATWS may not have gotten off the ground. Over the years, Harold became the public face of ATWS and its most ardent supporter, both during his tenure as the Association's president and after his presidency.

Likewise, the *Journal of Third World Studies* (JTWS), ATWS's flagship journal, had a modest beginning but through Harold's yeoman-like effort as its editor, JTWS became an important tool for publishing academic and policy-oriented scholarship on many facets of the Third World. I was honored to have been asked by Harold to become a member of JTWS's Editorial Board. Over the years, Harold sent me several articles to review for JTWS. After each review, Harold always sent a note of appreciation thanking me for helping JTWS. Harold was a true gentleman and a kind and considerate person. He will be truly missed by everyone associated with the ATWS community.

Nader Entessar, Professor and Chair, Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice, University of South Alabama

All of us in the Association of Third World Studies are saddened by the death of Harold Isaacs. He was our founder as well as our leader. He used his power to advance the organization and rose above petty politics. A humble and generous man, he often defrayed the expenses of participants who came from afar and could not afford the travel and cost of international conferences. He was chief editor of our *Journal of Third World Studies*.

What started as a business relationship between Harold and me quickly became a warm friendship. It was a privilege to have known him so well, and I will always remember his thoughtfulness and kindness. He went out of his way to make me feel part of the Association and nominated me for the Board, definitely a warm welcome. He shall be missed.

Virginia Leonard Ewing, Professor, Western Illinois University, Retired

I have read reasonably about Dr. Harold Isaac but further had the opportunity to watch and interact with him very closely at Mount Berry College, Georgia, USA in 2012 during the ATWS conference. His unassuming, humble and simple nature despite his status as the founder of a great Association such as ATWS challenged many of us. As if he knew he would go so soon, he left indelible marks on the sands of time. His death reminds me of an eagle. An eagle does not grow old but when an eagle is aged and about to die, it flies to the mountain top. Imagine the strength a dying eagle possesses to reach the mountain top. On the top of the mountain, it faces the sun and gazes unto it until it drops dead.

Dr. Harold Isaac did not grow old but reached the zenith of his ambition and happily surrendered to the will of his maker. He touched life worldwide. From the far distance America to the remote regions of Africa and other parts of the world. He will be fondly remembered by millions of people who benefit from his ingenuity, thoughtfulness and scholarship. Dear founder, we shall forever miss you.

Goodbye Dr. Harold Isaacs

Goodbye dear founder of ATWS

Goodbye our mentor.

Dr. Elizabeth Onyedinma Ezenweke, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria.

As the editor-in-chief of the JTWS he never failed to write personal notes to all members and contributors, even after the loss of Mrs. Isaacs, his loving spouse. I would like to include her name in this informal obituary. She was so kind to me and to everyone; I knew, the moment I received the sad news of her death, that Dr. Isaacs was bound to follow her shortly thereafter. He was gaining weight steadily, each time I met him thereafter. His handwriting, on the other hand, was becoming increasing-

ly less steady, as was obvious from the notes he would include, every time he sent me a copy of the Journal. The writing was much like that of my own father, when he had reached his eighties and nineties. In fact, I respected Dr. Isaacs as some kind of a father figure, albeit I may be older by a few years. I hope we can live up to his expectations! Respectfully,

Mario D. Fenyo, Coordinator of History, Bowie State University

Each issue I receive of the Journal makes me think of one thing. How much I love Harold and how much he was loved. I am an editor myself now (World History Connected) and the grace with which Harold directed the Journal was a model for me. Just for him, I drove hours from Roswell, Georgia, to speak on his campus. I used to drive back late the same night, despite his insistence I stay over—I always made an excuse: early class; other commitments. However, I did not stay over because I thought it might save him some operational funds by forgoing a hotel room. I wish I had a chance to tell him that. I think he knew. My favorite memory was his inviting me down to talk on post-war Vietnam and when I got there a bit early, there was no sign of an audience. It turned out that the University had utterly failed to advertise his event. Then Harold arrived, and said he would try to get an audience up. Twenty minutes later, an entire bus full of retired State Department analysts (from a nearby Elder-hostel program) rolled up at the venue. I could not have had a better group primed to listen to what I had to say and to share their meaningful views. What can you say of such a man? A tall drink of water, with down-home charm, an incisive mind, and a heart as big as the moon. Heaven is lucky to have him.

**Marc Jason Gilbert, NEH Endowed Chair in World History,
College of Liberal Arts, Hawaii Pacific University**

Just a few days ago, I received an email and a telephone call from Professor William Head, Chief Historian at Warner Robins Air Base. Bill informed me that Harold Isaacs, a colleague and friend for nearly thirty years, had passed away. I am of an age when these kinds of messages have arrived with disturbing frequency. When they do, it has become my habit to reminisce about those people and what they have meant to me. Harold meant a lot to me, both personally, and professionally. I have put

some of my memories of him here to let the rest of his friends, acquaintances, and the scholars who were touched by Professor Isaacs know that I was one of a grateful many who knew him, and that he made a positive difference in my life.

In the fall of 1985 I was hired as an assistant professor of Asian history by Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. Martin Yanuck, my department chair at that time, suggested that I attend an upcoming conference of the Association Third World Studies (ATWS). It was, he said, a relatively new organization, founded by his friend Harold Isaacs. The ATWS was indeed a new creation. It was founded by Professor Isaacs in 1983 at his home institution, Georgia Southwestern University in Americus, Georgia.

At that time, I had no full appreciation of the value of academic conferences for my professional and scholarly advancement. But my specialties in the history of China, Japan, and Vietnam helped me fit nicely within the overall scope and purpose of the ATWS. Also my participation in Spelman College's special program called the African Diaspora and the World further cemented my interests to the overall scope of the ATWS. I attended my first meeting of the ATWS primarily as a spectator, but I was personally and warmly welcomed by Professor Isaacs. It impressed me greatly that the founder of the association would take the time to make one of the nobodies welcome. I sat in on a number of panels and during breaks, receptions, and luncheons, Harold personally introduced me to other scholars too. Over time, those introductions evolved into a network of personal friends and scholarly associates who became very important to my career over the next three decades.

The journal associated with ATWS is the Journal of Third World Studies. (JTWS). When I came to the next ATWS meeting in January of 1987, I hesitantly entered the world of scholarly publication with the submission of a review of David L. Anderson's monograph, *Imperialism and Idealism, American Diplomats in China, 1861-189* to the JTWS. The editorial staff, headed by Harold Isaacs, accepted my work and published it in the journal. So, with Harold's assistance, I acquired that first piece of publication that assistant professors so dearly need.

During the next academic year, I had discussions with the network of friends and China scholars like Marc Gilbert, and Bill Head and others too that I had met at the ATWS meetings. With their encouragement, I presented a paper that became a refereed article in the JTWS. It was called "the Reforms of 1978: Revolution, or Continuity?" That piece was an evaluation of the reforms in the People's Republic of China that were sponsored

by then Premier, Deng Xiaoping. As we all now know, those reforms were the catalyst for China's development into its current place as the world's second biggest economy. The publication of my essay at that time was an important milestone. It marked me as a scholar who was current on important affairs in China. It also allowed me, through my membership in Harold's ATWS, to establish a good reputation in the world of scholarly discourse and refereed publication.

I continued the pattern of discourse and writing I learned at ATWS meetings, and in 1990, I applied for promotion to associate professor. I received the promotion and tenure at Spelman College where I remained for the rest of my academic career. Harold was one of my recommenders. I have always been sincerely grateful for that assistance.

From the time I began professional networking with the ATWS until I retired in May of 2014, I maintained the network of friends and scholars that stretched back to 1986, and those colleagues and I did what professional scholars do: we encouraged, and helped each other in our growth as teachers, scholars, and contributors to our academic specialties. We also spread our involvement to membership in, and the development of, other professional organizations. Some of those old friends made me aware of funding opportunities to go to the People's Republic of China so that I was able to conduct research into China's post Mao economic development as a Fulbright Scholar. Some of them helped me get to Japan as a guest of the Monbusho, Japan's Ministry of Education. Others in the network helped me return to Vietnam as a scholar after having been there as a soldier.

The century changed from the 20th to the 21st, and that was about the time that I made some interesting and useful changes in my classrooms as well as the nature of my scholarly publications. Both were direct results of Harold's encouragement to incorporate media and information technology in my courses. Because of our talks about video I recorded in China and Vietnam, I decided to edit the raw footage into a series of documentaries on life in China during the second decade of economic reform. Then, I made another set of documentaries on cultural, economic, and political change in post war Vietnam. Some of those documentaries were presented at regional conferences on Asia, and because of the favorable responses to them I was invited to be a part of two documentaries for HBO. The first one was called "Passages of the Dead". It was about the tomb of Qin Shih Huang-Di, the first emperor of China. The next one was

called "Passages: the Conduct of Tunnel Warfare in Vietnam". This was also the period when I took Harold's advice about the value of online archives and incorporated some of them in my course on historical research at Spelman. At the end of that academic year, I was presented with the Spelman College Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching. It is an award that is held in high esteem at my college, and in the comments made at the presentation, the documentaries I used in my Vietnam seminar were prominently mentioned as reasons for the granting of that award. The historical research class was also very well thought of. It received a near perfect 4.98 of a possible 5.0 in the provost's evaluation. Score two more for Harold!

When it was founded, the ATWS had other foci beyond Asia where three quarters of my training and expertise is founded. Those other areas are South Asia and 45 of the nations on the African continent. That breadth of interest at the ATWS, and the decision by Spelman College to develop its African Diaspora and the World (ADW) course into a major for its students during the mid-1990's led me to curriculum development for the ADW program. I also began a systematic study of the cultural, political and economic linkages between China and various African nations. In addition to teaching pilot sections of ADW, I turned my readings and discussions with ATWS members about the program into a Fulbright summer in China. One of the results of that summer was a seminar at Spelman called Mao Zedong Thought in African Rebellions. There was also publication entitled "Mao Zedong Thought in Lusophone African Rebellions." Both accomplishments were closely related to my long term association with ATWS members.

In the spring of 2012, Harold Isaacs, and William Head, invited me to Georgia Southwestern University to give a lecture on the Tet Offensive as a Catalyst for Change. I was happy to go to that beautiful campus in the midst of a South Georgia spring. I was also happy to give the lecture. I was one of many conscripts who filled in for the Army's losses during that offensive. I went to Vietnam and Cambodia as a soldier, and those military experiences catalyzed my formal scholarly interest in Asia. And most importantly, I got a chance to spend time in the company of Harold Isaacs, a man who either directly or indirectly guided, influenced, and assisted my career for three decades. He helped me broaden, deepen, and professionalize my scholarship. He helped me in many ways to acquire the requisites for tenure and acceptance by my colleagues in the profession as a knowledgeable peer. He also helped me to promotion beyond the associ-

ate professor level to full professor. In short, he helped me achieve all the goals of a professional scholar that I have reached, and I am sincerely grateful to him for that. I shall miss him greatly, and I despair for the scholar who replaced me at Spelman because she will never know the kindness of Harold, or benefit from his gentle and insightful guidance.

James Gillam, Professor, Spellman College, Retired

Harold Isaacs was a great man. He cultivated a vision of a scholarly organization devoted to better understanding the Third World. Under his leadership that organization –The Association of Third World Studies—expanded its membership to several continents and developed a highly regarded peer-reviewed journal. He became a well-known and highly regarded international figure, admired for his character, persistence, genuine friendship, and devotion to the Association. Harold was always ready to support ATWS members. He probably wrote hundreds of letters recommending colleagues, young and old, for employment and promotions. We all looked forward to seeing him at the Association’s annual meetings. His spirit will continue to be with us. We are all richer by having known and worked with him.

**Paul J. Magnarella, Ph.D., J.D., Peace & Justice Studies,
Warren Wilson College**

The words that came to my mind when I first met Professor Isaacs were “inclusive” “encouraging” and “engaging.” As a new member of ATWS, I was so impressed that the most important person, indeed, the founder of the organization, would take the time to single me out and welcome me to the group. As I observed during that meeting hosted by Troy State University and the many meetings since, that was just Harold being himself. Including new people and engaging everyone as he promoted ATWS and its mission to bring together scholars devoted to the study of the Third World. That’s the “encouraging” aspect. After a few years as an active member, he, as Editor-in-Chief of JTWS, tapped me at a meeting and asked if I would be interested in serving as the Asian Editor of the Journal. I happily said yes. What an honor it has been for me to be included, encouraged and to become even more engaged with the ATWS family. That first impression was an enduring one. All this has enriched and

promoted my professional work, extended my network of friendships in the field and expanded my personal knowledge and commitment to Third World Studies. For these, I credit Dr. Isaacs and honor his memory.

Dr. Dorothea A.L. Martin-Hoffman, Professor Emeriti of E. Asian History, Appalachian State University

I was stunned and saddened to hear of Harold's death. I worked with Harold for years, long-distance, as the Editor of Latin American Sections and he was always a wonderful colleague, a skilled editor and organizer, and a warm person with whom it was a pleasure to work. It's amazing to me that we only met once, at an ATWS conference many years ago, because our working relations were friendly and cordial. I wanted to share my sorrow with the ATWS community and express my condolences. While I no longer have a role at the Journal I look forward to many more years of collaboration with ATWS. I feel a deep respect and fondness for the Association and for the Journal.

Sincerely,

J. Patrice McSherry, Professor of Political Science, Long Island University

A heavy loss I experienced with the departure of our brother and friend Dr. Harold Isaacs. When I heard the news, I felt his departure was too early. He departed, but he has a lasting and spacious abode in our hearts, what a great man who, with vitality, dedicated himself to the service of humanity, to building bridges between peoples, irrespective of their locations, to promoting our knowledge of the less lucky people who aspire to learning and nutrition.

ATWS, under our brother's leadership, has made a great contribution to these efforts. I have been lucky to meet Dr. Harold Isaacs a few times at the ATWS conferences. When he is talking, one would feel that he has a sense of humanity and of responsibility for items that were on his mind, and one would feel that, in his behavior, he was discharging of a mission for understanding of, and salvation for, orphans, in the more general sense, on this miserable world. May your soul rest and mingle with the unseen entity. Sep. 2, 2015

Taysir Nashif, Associate Professor of Arabic Language and Culture at Mercer County College, New Jersey, and Chief, Arabic

Reporting Section, Dept. of Conference Services, United Nations, NY

Dr. Harold Isaacs was a gentleman and a scholar, in every sense of the word. He was a friend to all and a mentor to many fledgling scholars who went on to become the expert in their chosen field of study. He was very much a part of my own professional success, as my mentor. Without his advice and encouragement, my goal of establishing a servant focused George and Eleanor McGovern Center for Leadership and Public Service would never have been truly realized, and I surely would never have become the executive director. During my tenure as academic dean, he was a readily available source of advice on faculty relations on numerous occasions. He never once hesitated to offer his assistance to anyone when it was needed. Without his encouragement, many very important academic books and much research would have never come to fruition. His loss to the greater academic community around the globe cannot be overstated. He was a friend to all.

**Rev. Dr. Donald C. Simmons, Jr., President, Obion Group,
Adjunct Graduate Professor of Leadership, Department of Political
Science, University of Nebraska-Omaha**

I have tried several times to write this. I miss Dr. Isaacs very much, especially since I am working on this journal and have worked on every journal since day one.

I met Dr. Isaacs when I first started working at Georgia Southwestern State University in 1980. We met and talked frequently. In 1987 he approached me telling me that he wanted to start having a journal printed and he asked if I'd be able to assist him. Of course I said yes and we had several meetings to discuss how to make this happen. In 1987 we didn't have computers, so I talked to several of the department secretaries and asked for their assistance with this project. The first journal was typed on typewriters, which all the secretaries had in their offices. There were 10 secretaries who typed the first journal, which was Spring 1987. It was 8 ½ x 11 and printed at a small print shop here in Americus, Georgia.

In 1986, Georgia Southwestern added the Computer Science Division and I applied to be the Administrative Assistant, which I got. This was a new beginning for the Journal. The fall issue of 1988 was the

first issue done on computer, with Wordperfect. I had the backing of my department and learned everything I could to assist in making this a better issue. Shortly after, the departments all over campus got computers and Dr. Isaacs was very happy to start using one. We met frequently and discussed the Journal and ways to make it better. During one of our talks in his office I noticed all the books he had and he told me they were for review for the Journal. I asked if anyone knew he had all these books, which the publishing companies sent to him, and he said just a few people knew. I made the suggestion that we add a section "Books Available for Review" to let the members know he had them. We added this section in the spring 1989 issue. Michael Hall has taken on the books for review and I hope members will contact him and review them for the Journal.

Dr. Isaacs got a computer for his home and he learned something new every day. Most of you don't know that Harold loved his 3 ½ disks. Gary can tell you how many he found at the house. Harold tried very hard to advance as computers did – but I couldn't get him to use a flash drive if I tried. My best memories are when he would call me late at night because the computer did something or his printer and he didn't know why.

One night he was trying to print out a test for his class the next day and the printer would not print it. I went to his home to find that a 3 ½" floppy had been put on top of the paper and got stuck in the roller. Another night he called and said that when he took his 3½" floppy out, he didn't have the metal piece, which I got out with a pair of needle nose pliers. I removed the spring, too. When Harold got a new lap top he was amazed at the speed it did things, but he also was not happy because it was so different from his computer tower and monitor. We worked on getting him comfortable with it, but he was unhappy that there was not a 3½" floppy drive. I went and purchased an external drive for him and we were off and running again.

When I left the college for a position with the City, we made a pact that I would continue working on the Journal with him, and as Gary stated I still am. He will be greatly missed by many.

I still miss my friend and know he is proud of all of you and that his legacy will continue.

Kathryn Zak, Editorial Assistant