

EDITORIAL NOTE

The Study Group working on the Literary Cultures of Africa and of the Diaspora, which has produced this journal, was formed in June 1989, due to the interest in "black cultures" shared by a number of researchers and scholars in Lecce.

The group's main aim is the promotion of studies on the African world and on the diaspora. This term is to be understood not just in the traditional sense of Black America, but also as immigration to Europe. In the last ten years Italy, too, has become one of the target areas of black immigration.

With these articles, the group hopes to help increase interest in and knowledge of a little-known cultural heritage, not only by examining the work of established writers, but above all by identifying new authors and new works. These may range from written literary forms (novels, poetry) to oral forms (where possible) and also to cinema, theatre and music.

Along with its research work, the group intends to organise related cultural activities (exhibitions, film-shows etc.).

The group's main research projects at present focus on the theme "Myth and Literature". A study of African culture cannot in fact disregard the analysis of myth and the relationship between myth and literary expression. It is myth which provides the fixed referent for every concrete and symbolic action in the tradition and which is expressed through oral forms, through religiosity and ritual.

This special issue is a preview, presenting what the group has in preparation in the form of abstracts. In the first issue of the journal, the articles will be published in their entirety.

