

**AFRICAN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION
BUSINESS MEETING
RADISSON HOTEL, LA JOLLA, CA
April 06, 2002: 03:00 P.M. - 06:00 P.M.**

Present: Kandioura Dramé (P), Elisabeth Boyi (VP), Bob Cancel, Kapanga Kasongo (secretary), Anne Adams, Tomi Adeaga, Adeleke Adeeko, G. Oty Agbajoh-Laoye, Patricia Alden, Adgar Alder, Tuzyline Jita Allan, Susan Andrade, Koffi Anyinefa, Anyali Babhu, F. Odun Balogun, E. Breitinger, Fahamisha Patricia Brown, Ahmed Bouguarche, Debra Boyd, Dale Byam, Odile Cazenave, Bernadette Cailler, Anne F. Carlson, Patricia Célérier, Reuben Chirambo, Ngwarsungu Chiwengo, Greta Coger, Edgar Coly, Irène d'Almeida, André Djiffack, Joyce Dixon-Fyle, Arthur Drayton, Maureen N. Eke, Amy Elder, Phanuel Egejuru, Ernest N. Emenyonu, Gillian Gane, Olakunte George, Sonia Ghetlas-Soliman, Shane Graham, Gareth Griffith, Thomas Hale, Roberta Hatcher, Naana Banyiwa Hore, Kenneth Harrow, A. Onipede Hollist, Huma Ibrahim, Tommy Johnson, George Joseph, Cilas Kemedjo, Marie-Hélène Koffi-Tessio, Ambroise Kom, Daniel Kunene, Renée Larrier, Lokangaka Losambe, Abioseh M. Porter, Suzanne MacRae, Ainduwe Magona, Dean Makuluni, Janis Mayes, Patrick Muana, Joseph Mwantuali, Helen Nabasuta Mugambi, Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah, Alain Patrick Nganang, Philip Noss, Frances Novack, Tanure Ojaide, Tejumola Olaniyan, Eustace Palmer, Gache Patrick (?), Richard Priebe, Nasrin Qader, Ato Quayson, Thelma Ravell-Pinto, Micheline Rice-Maximin, Diane M. Russell, Drocella Rwanika, Nathalie Schon, Steve Sharra, Faiza Shereen, Pam Smith, Aliko Songolo, Janice Spelth, Raymonde Tadros, Kwawisi Tekpetey, Louis Tremaine, Ann Elisabeth Willey, Hall Wylie.

The meeting was called to order at 3:25 P. M.

Minute of Silence and Reflection in Memory of those members of the African Literature Association family who have passed away, including Léopold Sédar Senghor, Francis Bebey, Mongo Beti, René Philombé, Sunday Anozie, Anna Rutherford, Joel Adedeji, Wale Ongunyiemi, Lemuel Johnson, Nina Bâ, Ola Rotimi,

The agenda was as follows:

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Ratification of Minutes of the Richmond meeting.
3. Business arising out of minutes
4. President's Report including:
 - a. Treasurer's Report and Auditors' Statement;
 - b. ALA Annual Series Editor;
 - c. Report of Director of ALA Headquarters;
 - d. Committee Chairperson's Reports;
 - Standing Committees: 1. Human Rights; 2. Teaching and Research Committee;
 - 3. Constitutional Reform Committee
 - Ad Hoc Committees: ALA Publication Projects
 - Caucuses: 1. WOCALA; 2. Francophone; 3. Graduate

5. Election Results and Motion to Destroy Ballots
6. New Business
 - a. Conferences: 1. San Diego Conference Conveners; 2. ALA 2003 Alexandria-Dayton (Faiza Shereen & Edris Makward); 3. New Bids for future ALA conferences. 4. New bids for future conferences 2004 (Aliko Songolo); 5. ALA 2005 and beyond.
 - b. Editors for Annual of ALA 2002 conference
 - c. Announcements
 - d. Other Business
7. Handing over to New President and adjournment of Business Meeting.

Tribute to deceased members of the ALA family. Kandioura Dramé invited various members of the ALA to briefly make a tribute to departed members. Dramé paid tribute to Léopold Sédar Senghor. Ambroise Kom paid tribute to Mongo Beti and commented on some of the wishes of the writer including a radio project his wife, Odile Biyidi, would like to continue. Kom also mentioned the book on Beti's life that had just come out before the writer's death. Another member paid tribute to Francis Bebey as a writer, a musician and entertainer; Breitinger for René Philombe as a tenuous fighter for political rights; Ernest Emenoyu for Sunday Anozie as a scholar and a pioneer of structuralism in African literature; Teju Olayinan for Wale Ogunyemi for his work; Abioseh Porter for Lemuel Johnson as a mentor; Debra Boyd for Bokar N'Diaye as a guardian of treasure that burns each time an old person passes away; Debra Boyd for Boalamusa Keita, the actor who appeared in well-known films such as *Ngimba*; Gareth Griffiths for Anna Rutherford, the editor of *Kunapipi* and someone who promoted the works of others; Odile Cazenave for Osmane; Ola Rotimi; Steve Shara for Edison Mpina from Malawi; Ernest Emenoyu for Ola Ritumi as a pioneer dramatist; Anne Adams for Nina Ba as an African feminist writer.

1. Adoption of Agenda. The motion to accept the president's agenda passed by unanimous vote.

2. Ratification of the Richmond Minutes was accepted by unanimous vote.

3. President's Report. Dramé thanked the members for electing him to the office. His tenure has been filled with a lot of responsibilities, challenges, as well as the pleasure to serve. That was an opportunity given him to make new acquaintances and deepen his relationships with members. He strove to strengthen past gains while looking at innovations for the future in order to advance the cause of African literature. Financially, the association is doing well. But he also invited members to become sponsors in order to strengthen the base. With respect to the Annuals, Tongue and Mother Tongues is out and we need to keep up this trend. The Executive council has appointed Ousseynou Traore as the new editor and the transition will be smooth. He thanked profusely Hal Wylie for his work over the years. He also appealed to members to purchase the annuals. Chicole has accepted to remind the members via the ALA Bulletin to purchase the annuals. The ALA Headquarters is firmly established by Jo Anne Cornwell with new initiatives including a newsletter, the archives,

and an Outreach Service. The Teaching and Research Committee is also doing a good work. The Constitutional Reform Committee is asked to look into the matter of vacancy of the President and the Vice President. Caucuses continue to do a good work: WACOLA, the Graduate Student and the Francophone Caucuses. The Vice-President has worked hard to assure the continuity of the association by successfully organizing the election to the executive council. Dramé pleaded with the members to volunteer to serve the association. He also highlighted the excellent work of the ALA Bulletin Editor for his consistent and sustained service. The ALA bulletin has developed into an important instrument of our association inciting us to seek ways to transform it into a refereed journal. He invited members to come up with suggestions.

- a. **Treasurer's Report and Auditors' Statement.** Auditors (Aliko Songolo and Hal Wylie) conveyed the good impression and the health of the economic situation. Cancel mentioned the assistance he has in doing the work. The endowment has lost money because of the uncertainties of the stock market. As of this report, the account is at about \$39,000. Questions were related to the hiring of a part time permanent staff member at the Headquarters. Expenditures have not gone up because of the moving of the headquarters to San Diego. Concerning the San Diego conference, 330 registered but 286 came and attended the conference. Expenditures are still in flux. Cancel thanked his staff and the hotel staff for their hospitality. The motion to thank the San Diego conveners passed by acclamation.
- b. **General Editor.** Hal Wylie made an overview of his work during the last 10-12 years at the helm of the editorship. He thanked Chikole and the artist who designed the cover. The series is on good track. The Lawrence proceedings will be out in about six months; the Richmond issue will come out very soon; the Fez issue will come out also soon. The series is in good hands with the appointment of Ousseynou Traore. Dramé thanked Wylie for his dedication.
- c. **Headquarters Director.** The move to the University of San Diego seems to have a general plan to internationalize. There are three main tasks: archiving, the updating of the handbook to reflect the various amendments along the years since its revision by Aliko Songolo in 1993, and the newsletter. She pleaded with those who can to help her out in this endeavor. The newsletter would serve as a way to enhance communication. It will be in both hard form and electronic form. It will be an instrument to highlight our mission, to increase our membership, and to enhance the prestige of the organization. Inputs and suggestions would be welcomed. She underlined the fact that she has help; she would welcome any other initiatives in line with her functions. She will work with the bulletin editor and the Teaching and Research committee.
- d. **Committee Chairperson's Reports.**
 - 1) **Human Rights.** Ken Harrow. Harrow mentioned the fact that there are many cases of imprisoned writers, but he focused on two cases, namely Sehimbe

Ben S. He has been arrested because of criticism of the Tunisian judicial system in Tunisia. The second Sechewo Nyatachi? a poet from Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. He is reported to have been arrested for reading a poem critical of the Zimbabwean authorities. The report is filled with arrest cases of journalists and news editors.

- 2) Teaching and Research Committee. In the absence of the chair, the President gave what he knew from the reports to the executive council.
- 3) Constitutional Reform Committee. Information will be forthcoming in the ALA bulletin. He asks members to carefully consider the suggestions put forward by the committee.
- 4) The ALA Publication Projects. The President asked members to look at the suggestions about turning the bulletin into a refereed journal.
- 5) Caucuses. WACOLA: Oty asked people to join the caucus. The Caucus is doing fine and remains active. Eileen Elder has been elected Vice-President.
- 6) Francophone Caucus. Janice Spleth. The Caucus is growing due in part to the effort of the outgoing president Hal Wylie. The various Francophone panels went smoothly at the San Diego conference. Looking forward to the future, a few panels are already in works especially around the theme of orientalism, Andrée Chédid, and Egyptian Literature in French, Cheikh Anta Diop. Ann and Drocella Rwanika are Vice-Presidents. Dues have been restored in the amount of \$15.00 entitling members to have access to some documents on Francophone literature. The Caucus has a translation committee chaired by Micheline Maximin-Rice in line with the ALA directions.
- 7) Graduate Student Caucus (GSCALA), Steve Shara. Elections took place. There is a project to meet the Executive Council for constitutional changes. They had a panel sponsored by the caucus focusing on teaching. The focus next year is the recruitment of new members and the organization of other panels. Wendy Belcher, the new Vice-President, plans to run a workshop on publication. The caucus has a website linked to the ALA webpage to make the caucus known and recruit other members in both Africa and in the United States. This could be a site of resources for graduate students. He asked the members to help them recruit. Officers include Wendy Belcher (VP), Mark L. (media officer) and the President (Steve Shara).

5. Elections Results and Motion to Destroy Ballots. The VP, Elisabeth Mudimbe Boyi, made a report for the elections. The ballot counting was done here in the presence of two members (Philip Noss & Cathy Noss). The results were as followed: VP two candidates, Janice Mays has been elected VP; two candidates for secretary: Janice Spleth has been elected; for the executive councils, out of the six candidates, Ngwarsungu Chiwengo, Cilas

Kemedjo, and Steve Belcher have been elected. Bob Cancel was elected unchallenged as treasurer.

6. New Business.

- a. **ALA 2003 Alexandria-Dayton.** Faiza Shereen made a brief report on the accommodations, the commitments for the functions, travel arrangements have been made (\$700); Edward Said has accepted to be the keynote speaker especially as it is the 25th anniversary of Orientalism. There is a website with packages. Arrangements have also been made in Dayton, Ohio, in view of security concerns. However, for the sake of planning, firm commitment is to come out after the San Diego conference. Questions arose related to package arrangements, deposit issue, security problems, the geopolitical situation, and the US foreign policy with regard to Iraq. Shereen relayed to the members that echoes from reliable sources such as the African American Research Center and the State Department do not discourage holding the conference in Alexandria. Shereen would like the association to make clearer whether to allow her to start planning with a venue in mind with the clear understanding that, should there be any change in venue, money will be lost. After a heated debate, the motion “we as a body we support Faiza and Edriss in their effort to organize the conference in Alexandria” passed by unanimous vote.
- b. **ALA 2004 conference.** Aliko Songolo and Teju Ola. The bid for Madison, Wisconsin to organize the conference April 04 to 08. Songolo has provided to the Executive Council proofs of financial backing in the amount of over \$40,000. The program of African Studies will be the co-organizer. It will be the 30th anniversary of the association and the 40th of the program. The motion to accept the bid passed by unanimous vote. The President announced that the bid for 2005 was open. Adélékè Adéêko would like to bid for the 2005 ALA conference at the University of Colorado, at Boulders. Mildred Mortimer could be the co-convener. Adélékè Adéêko was asked to submit all relevant documentation supporting his bid to the President.
- c. **Motion to destroy the ballots passed unanimously.**
- d. **Other business.** Questions about visas. Emonyenu moved that the ALA waive the registration fee. Discussions involved the procedures to follow in order to implement this suggestion, the time for deciding, the input of the association, the creation of a visitors’ program. As far as next year is concerned, Shereen has applied for a grant from the Ford Foundation so that fee for scholars from Africa would be waived.

7. Handing over to New ALA President and Adjournment of the Business Meeting.

Kandioura Dramé handed the presidency to Elisabeth Boyi. Micheline Rice-Maximin’s motion to thank the outgoing president passed by acclamation. The new president adjourned the meeting at 06:40. P.M.