

**MINUTES OF THE ALA BUSINESS MEETING  
GHANA CONFERENCE  
Saturday, May 20, 2006**

The meeting began at 3:22 p.m.

**Present:** Cecil Abrahams, Anne Adams, Tomi Adeaga, Moradewun Adejunmobi, Tobi Pierre Ahlonso, Folabo Ajayi, **Austine Amanze Akonda**, Susan Andrade, Koffi Anyinefa, Ahouissoussi S.A. Armand, Monifa Love Asante, Ada U. Azodo, Sarah Barbour, Sandra Barkan, Carol A. Beane, Debra Boyd, Fahamisha Patricia Brown, Abena P.A. Busia, Robert Cancel, Anne Carlson, Michele Chossat, Becky Aybia Clarke, Carole Boyce Davies, Margaret Daymund, Victor S. Dugga, Sunday L. Duruoha, Aaron C. Eastley, Monique Ekong, Amy Elder, Henrietta M. Eyison, Pius A. Ezema, Michael Amadihe Ezugu, Angela Fulara, Wangui wa Goro, Ken Harrow, Manu Herbstein, Gerise Herndon, Janet Hollier, Naana Banyiwa Horne, Dorothy Hurley, Tony Hurley, Tsitsi Jaji, Marjolijn de Jager, George Joseph, Larry Jost, Samuel A. Kafeno, Alexander Dekubo Kakraba, Anthonia Kalu, Cilas Kemedjio, George Lang, Annie Lagiano, Isaac B. Layr, John Lemly, Mark L. Lilleleht, Sharifa Saa-Atma Ma'at, Suzanne H. MacRae, Tom Maroukis, Soraya McKerta, Joseph McLaren, Judith Miller, David Chioni Moore, Joe Ngozi Mokwunyei, Molara Ogundipe, Ojo Olorunleke, Chioma Opara, Akinola Oriola, Eustace Palmer (President), Thelma Ravell Pinto, Abioseh Porter, Micheline Rice-Maximin, Irene Salami, Marcellin Y. Segregnon, Janice Spleth, Lindy Stiebel, Greg Thomas, Emmanuel Yewah, Kouadjo Yovo

**I. Ratification of the Agenda:**

The motion to ratify the Agenda passed.

**II. Ratification of the Minutes of the 2005 Business Meeting:**

With the corrected spelling of Thelma Ravell Pinto's name, the Minutes were ratified.

**III. Business Arising From the 2005 Minutes:**

There was none.

**IV. President's Report:**

**A. Report from the 2006 Conference Conveners: Awam Amkpa, Kofi Anyidoho, Manthia Diawara**

Kofi expressed gratitude to the ALA on behalf of the rest of the Conveners for giving them the opportunity to host this Conference. They were surprised and gratified at the large number of participants who bore the increased airline cost to attend. There were approximately four-hundred papers on the Program; approximately three-hundred people actually registered; approximately one-hundred were guests of the Conference and attended off-and-on.

One major disappointment may be not being able to pay all the bills. He will go back to the Conveners' home institutions and request additional funds, but it may be necessary to turn to the ALA for financial help. NYU has promised \$10,000; the University of Ghana has been very supportive in various ways; visiting writers, with one exception, accepted their invitations without honoraria, just their tickets paid.

airline

The Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana will be the Banquet Speaker. Thirty-five participants came from different African countries: nineteen from Nigeria, four from South Africa, two from Benin, who came with six or more students; he expected more African participants. One came from Japan, one from India, one from Sweden, one from Belgium, and this account is not complete.

Nigeria is thinking of hosting an ALA Conference in the near future.

Debra Boyd asked for a rousing "thank-you" to Kofi and the other Conveners for organizing an extremely successful Conference, and it was expressed.

**B. Memorial for ALA Members and African Writers and Personalities Committed to African Literature Who Passed Away Since ALA 2005: Folabo Soyinka Ajayi**

Gay Wilentz: spoken for by Ada Adozo

Ellen Kuzwayo: spoken for by Fahamisha Patricia Brown

Octavia Butler: spoken for by Fahamisha Patricia Brown

Kalidou Sy : spoken for by Michelin Rice-Maxim

: spoken for by Eustace Palmer

August Wilson : spoken for by Folabo Soyinka Ajayi

: spoken for by Folabo Soyinka Ajayi

Ali Fasse Touré: spoken for by Debra Boyd

Becky Clarke's mother and Folabo Soyinka Ajai's husband were remembered.

A moment of silence was taken by the group in honor of all of these and others not mentioned who have suffered death and disasters this past year.

**C. Treasurer's Report and Auditors' Statement: Anthony Hurley**

Tony distributed a copy of the March 15, 2005 – March 15, 2006 Treasurer's Report. Summary: Total Balance: \$108,639.41; Income: \$19,824.14; Expenditures: \$18,784.57. In February of every year, he will transfer funds to the reserve fund; in February, 2007, he will transfer \$2,300.

Auditors Louis Tremain and Adlai Murdock assert That the ALA treasury funds are in good order.

The assembly voted to accept the Treasurer's Report.

**D. Results of the 2006 Elections and Motion to Destroy the Ballots: Eustace Palmer**

The new Vice President of the ALA is Thelma Ravell Pinto; Deputy Vice President is Ngwarsungu Chiwengo; EC Members are Anthonia Kalu, Fahamisha Patricia Brown, and Niyi Afolabi.

The motion to destroy the ballots was seconded and passed.

**E. Annuals Series Editor's Report: Ousseynou Traore**

Debra announced that Traore has resigned as Series Editor. He reported to the EC that the series volumes from the San Diego and Alexandria meetings have been published by Africa World Press; the manuscripts of the Kansas and San Diego volumes are close to completion; he does not know of any other volumes ready for formatting.

**F. Status of ALA Publications (*Bulletin* and *JALA*): Abioseh Porter**

Abioseh explained that the regularly scheduled issue of the *Bulletin* had to be held in order to include

information about the Ghana Conference but will appear shortly.

*JALA* is on track. Six mss. and book reviews have been received. The deadline for essays is June 6<sup>th</sup>., 2006.

He moved to Agenda item H 8, "Publications" and said that the EC decided that the Publications Committee will aid in the publication of the annual Series. Debra invited those present to consider joining the Publications Committee and helping.

**G. Headquarters Report: JoAnne Cornwell**

JoAnne was not present. Debra asked for members to seriously consider taking on some of the responsibilities of ALA Headquarters.

**H. Committees:**

**1. Constitutional Reform: Eustace Palmer**

- It will be in the Constitution that all Caucus members must be ALA members.
- The *Handbook* will be revised.

**2. Issues: Mark Lilleleht**

- Lemuel Johnson's library, twenty-six boxes in all has arrived at the University at Fourah Bay with help from the ALA Finance Committee.
- the Committee is currently discussing the difficulties African scholars have receiving visas to the U.S.
- discussion on the situation in Dafur continues; the Committee continues its support for its Resolution on the Congo.
- Information about the continuing work of the Committee can be found on the ALA web site.

**3. Awards: Thelma Ravell Pinto**

- The Committee will present a number of awards this evening at the ALA Banquet.
- The status of the Committee has been changed to that of a Standing Committee of the ALA because it has taken up the work of administering the Fonlon-Nichols Prize.

**4. Finance: Thelma Ravell Pinto**

- The Committee granted \$10,000 to the Travel Grant Committee to award \$2,500 per year to

fund African scholars to come to ALA meetings in the U.S.

- Africa World Press received \$1,500.
- The Committee set aside \$1,000 that can be used to ship members' and ex-members' books to university libraries in Africa. Mark Lilleleht should be contacted by such members, as he has information about funds for such a purpose, external to the ALA.

A question arose from the assembly about the possibility of ALA funding to send books to the Caribbean or Indian Ocean countries. Thelma replied that she would take this question up with the Committee and welcomed proposals.

**5. Travel: Kandioura Drame**

- Kandioura was not present; Debra explained that he is retiring from this Committee after the first travel award is decided.
- Travel awards are based on evidence of proven scholarship and financial need. The ALA President will break any ties.
- October 1<sup>st</sup>. 2006 is the deadline for applications; application forms can be found on the ALA web site.

**6. Employment: Huma Ibrahim**

- Huma was not present, and there was no report.
- Debra explained that this Committee plans to discuss questions of employment for Africanists and will possibly present a panel at the 2007 ALA Conference in West Virginia.

**7. Teaching and Research: George Joseph**

- There will be two panels at the 2007 Conference: "Removing Critical Dissonance on African Literature," and "Teaching Global Issues Through Literature and Film." Members should check the West Virginia Conference notice for details; all proposals should go to George.
- The Committee wishes to make regular outreach to schools in cities where ALA Conferences are

being held. Next year, this effort will be coordinated with Janice Spleth.

- Archives: the T& R Committee several years ago set up interviews with invited writers to ALA Conferences, films of which were to be archived. Transcripts of these interviews will be made available on the ALA web site.

**8. Publications: Abioseh Porter**

- Already presented.

**9. Media Relations: Fahamisha Patricia Brown**

- This Standing Committee is the newest of the ALA.
- In order to compile a visual archive of ALA meetings, the Committee encourages all photographers to send her their best photos of our gatherings.
- The Committee sent information about the Ghana Conference to appropriate professional organizations, e.g., the MLA website and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. A Press Information packet was prepared also.
- All members of ALA are encouraged to participate in this Committee.

**I. Caucus Reports:**

**1. WOCALA: Anthonia Kalu**

- She expressed thanks to those who attended the WOCALA Luncheon.
- The Caucus presented two panels at this ALA and will do so again next year.
- Term limits for the EC of WOCALA need to be regularized and noted correctly in the *Handbook*.
- At the WOCALA Business Meeting, three nominations emerged for the 2007 Luncheon speaker: Nancy Morejon, Elizabeth Nuiñez , and Angela Muñoz. More nominations are welcome, but they must be made quickly, as it is necessary to vote on the speaker before the end of June.

- All ALA members are welcome to join WOCALA, including men. Dues are \$15, \$5 for African members.

**2. Graduate Student: Mark Lilleleht**

- This Caucus is in a crisis because of so few members.
- He made a sincere appeal for all ALA faculty to urge their graduate students to join this Caucus.

**3. Francophone: Gerise Herndon**

- She offered thanks to the Conveners of the Conference for providing time for the Caucus meeting and for inviting Veronique Tadjou.
- The Caucus will present three panels at the next ALA.
- Dues are an optional \$15.

**4. Translation: Wangui wa Goro**

- Ninety members signed up for this Caucus.
- Two panels are set for the 2007 Conference.
- Dues are \$15.

**J. Next Conveners:**

**1. 2007: West Virginia University: Janice Spleth**

- She invited members to come to Morganstown, West Virginia for the Conference, March 14 – 18, 2007
- The deadline for panel proposals and papers is December 1, 2006.
- The Conference theme is “African Literature and the Culture of Globalization” with a focus on Afro-Hispanic literature and culture.
- Continental is the only airline flying into Morganstown.
- She gave us information that WV seceded from VA and joined the Union side in the Civil War because it was anti-slavery.

**2. 2008: Western Illinois University: Abdul-Rasheed Na’Alla**

- Abdul was not present, but had submitted his bid in writing, and the Conference looks on track.

V. **New Business:**

A. **Bids for Future ALA Conferences:**

1. **2009: North Carolina A&T University?: Chimalum Nwanko and Gibreel Kamara**
  - This venue is not definite and will be discussed at a later date.
  
2. **2010:**
  - a. **South Africa: Thelma Ravell Pinto and George Joseph**
    - Thelma reported that investigations will be made to determine if it is possible to have the Conference in 2010 in Durban.
    - The Conference would be sponsored by Syracuse University.
    - The World Cup will be held in South Africa, so ALA might be able to use those facilities one month earlier for the Conference.
    - More information will be presented to the ALA EC at the ASA in November.
  - b. **Rutgers University:** no report
  - c. **Université du Mali:** no report
  - e. **University of Michigan:** no report
  - f. **University of Texas at Austin (in conjunction with the UT African Studies Conference Held Each Spring):** no report

B. **Recognition of Outgoing ALA Officers:**

- Hal Wylie
- Wangui wa Goro
- George Joseph
- Oty Agbajoh-Laoye (for Anthony Hurley)
- Thelma Ravell Pinto
- Debra Boyd

All the outgoing Officers were thanked by the assembly.

C. **Resolutions: EC Resolution to Respond to the Article, "Testing Boundaries," and Re-colonization:**

- Eustace Palmer moved, and it was seconded, that he send a protest letter to the NY Board of Regents, the



British and French Embassies, and UNESCO to protest the assumptions in this test.

The motion passed.

- At the Business Meeting, he was asked to write a letter of protest to the Bush Administration for making it very difficult for foreign scholars to obtain visas to come to the United States in the wake of 9/11. He will write this letter.

**D. Announcements:**

1. There will be a search for a new Series Editor.
2. Members are urged to donate books to the University of Legon and the W.E.B. DuBois Center.
3. The ALA is launching a visual history project to visually record ALA meetings. The members to be contacted to help with this project are Don Morales, Joseph McLaren, Abioseh Porter, Debra Boyd, Maureen Eke, and Wendy Belcher.

**E. Other Business:**

- ? Hernstein? Complained that ALA is based in the U.S., and African scholars and writers in Africa need help; he proposed the ALA consider organizing regional meetings in different African countries. He mentioned that the Organization of African Universities is based in Accra, and that the ALA should contact them.

Anne Adams commented that the ALA does have contact with African-based scholars at many African universities; efforts at connections have been ongoing for over a decade.

Wangui wa Goro mentioned that Europe ASA has an organizational presence in Africa, but that literature is not represented.

Another member mentioned that Nigeria might be a strong candidate for a connection in the future.

- Mark Lilleleht passed around a Resolution and moved, and it was seconded, that he wished the ALA to support against the difficulties imposed by the U.S. government on African students and scholars attempting to study and teach in the U.S.

The Motion passed.

- The Stool of the ALA Presidency was passed from Debra Boyd to Eustace Palmer.

The Meeting was Adjourned at 5:35