

**AFRICAN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS
Boston Sheraton Hotel
October 30, 2003 9:00-10:30 a.m.**

PRESENT: Irène d'Almeida (for Georges Joseph), Stephen Belcher, Elisabeth Boyi, Robert Cancel, JoAnne Cornwell, Cilas Kemedjio, Ambroise Kom, Janis Mayes (President), Eustace Palmer, Abioseh Porter, Joyce Hope Scott, Janice Spleth, Wangui wa Goro, Hal Wylie.

CALL TO ORDER. The President brought the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

RATIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MINUTES. Minutes of the Executive Council meetings in Alexandria were approved as corrected. It was requested that corrected minutes be sent to members of the Executive Council for their files.

REMARKS AND UPDATE BY PRESIDENT. Janis Mayes thanked the officers and Executive Council members for their work since the Alexandria conference.

She reported that she had contacted Carol L. Martin, the Executive Director of the African Studies Association, and Peter D. Little, Chair of the Program Committee, to request that our panels have a central place on the program and to affirm our commitment to giving more emphasis to literature at ASA. She also contacted Odile Cazenave, an ALA member on the Boston organizing committee, and invited her to organize a roundtable. She also invited Irène D'Almeida, whose research involves children's literature, to organize a panel on the theme of the conference. She also submitted an application that would enable ALA to formalize its relationship as an affiliate member with ASA. The application will be considered at the meeting. Affiliate status will allow ALA to be listed in the program and will give us additional national recognition as an organization. ALA has opted for affiliate status rather than sponsorship because the latter stipulates that a significant percentage of ALA members be members as well in ASA, and we do not currently meet that requirement. The President urged the Vice-President to get in touch with Dennis Cordell, the 2004 Program Chair, to ensure our representation on the program at the meeting in New Orleans.

The Constitutional Committee, which included Janis Mayes, Elisabeth Boyi, JoAnne Cornwell, Kandioura Dramé, and Hal Wylie, was extremely active this year with respect to the handbook revisions.

Other business during the year included various forms of correspondence. A response was read to a letter written during Elisabeth Boyi's term as president to the French Embassy regarding the treatment of African scholars applying for visas. Since the response was not very specific about how such problems might be addressed in the future, Eustace Palmer asked that we take this up with the CIES, and the President agreed to contact them. Abioseh Porter suggested that Elisabeth's letter might serve as a model. Ambroise Kom proposed that the response from the French Embassy be published in the

Bulletin and that a copy of the Bulletin be sent to the French Ambassador. Letters written by President Janis Mayes in response to action taken at the annual business meeting in Alexandria included a letter containing the ALA resolution opposing the war in Iraq sent to President George W. Bush and letters of appreciation to the Governor of Alexandria, the Director of the Alexandria Library, the Star of Egypt Travel Agency, Amira Nowaira, Faiza Shereen, and the Associate Provost at the University of Dayton.

The President reported on her efforts to revitalize the ALA standing committees. She expects to be able to identify the new chairs by November 22.

She has also written to various ALA members concerning the possibility of future venues for ALA annual meetings, including Carle Boyce Davies (Florida International), Henry Louis Gates and Abioleh Irele (Harvard), Mbaye Cham (Howard), Manthia Diawara (NYU), Anthony Appiah (Princeton), Abena Busia and Renée Laurier (Rutgers), Eileen Julien (University of Maryland), Kandioura Dramé (University of Virginia). Irène d'Almeida volunteered that the University of Arizona might be interested in hosting the organization. The University of Wisconsin will host the meeting in 2004, and in 2005 the venue will be the University of Colorado.

Reporting on the state of the Annuals, the President announced that the editors were working well and that the Fez volume might be out by the April 2003 meeting.

The President proposed two initiatives for her term: 1) the reinvigoration of the committee structure; and 2) fundraising. Further discussion of these items will be on the agenda later in the meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT. Robert Cancel reported that total assets for the ALA are \$90,326.88 as of November 2003. This included the first installment of expenses for the shipping of ALA Annuals to African Universities with the remainder of those costs to be paid next year. Requests for renewal have gone out to the membership. Abioseh Porter announced that there would be a bill of about \$6000 for recent bulletins, and JoAnne Cornwell reported that expenses for headquarters had been greater than anticipated. The President committed to writing a letter thanking San Diego for picking up some of those costs. It was suggested that a date be established by which members would have to renew in order to receive a ballot. The President proposed the appointment of Joseph McLaren and Sonia Lee as auditors as required by the ALA Constitution.

REPORT OF AD HOC COMMITTEE ON ANNUAL SERIES. Eustace Palmer reported on the work that he and Kandioura Dramé had done concerning the future editorial structure for the annual. He concluded that there should be both a series editor and a volume editor(s) and that they should share responsibility for the quality of the journal, but that there should also be specific responsibilities associated with each editor as outlined by the committee's report. (See Appendix.) The series editor's changes to the volume should in general be minor and made in conjunction with the volume editor(s). The committee consulted with previous Series Editor Hal Wylie and with Kassahun Checole of Africa World Press, the publisher of the series. A motion to accept the report was approved unanimously, and Hal Wylie offered to work with Eustace Palmer so that the essence of the report could be included in the new ALA Handbook for Officers.

HANDBOOK AND CALENDAR REVISIONS. Hal Wylie, as chair of the Constitutional Reform Committee, reported on revisions of the handbook as sent to Executive Council Members. He thanked JoAnne Cornwell for the contribution of ALA Headquarters to the project, and he expressed his appreciation as well to Elisabeth Boyi, Kandioura Dramé, Janis Mayes, and their assistants for their very active role in the revision process. Objectives for the revision included the elimination of obsolete passages and the addition of information about the new position of Deputy Vice-President. It will also be necessary to add material from the report concerning the series editor's role and language that deals with the new constitutional amendment concerning the ALA Bulletin and new online journal, JALA. The President asked that ALA Headquarters be responsible for the production of the handbook. Individual officers are asked to review the language related to their duties. The Executive Council approved a motion to accept the revised handbook.

ADJOURNMENT. The President adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a. m.

**AFRICAN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS
Boston Sheraton Hotel
October 31, 2003 7:00-8:15**

PRESENT: Stephen Belcher, Elisabeth Boyi, Robert Cancel, Ngwarsunug Chiwengo, JoAnne Cornwell, Carole Boyce Davies (for Anthony Hurley), Kandioura Dramé, Georges Joseph, Ambroise Kom, Janis Mayes (President), Mimi Mortimer, Tejumola Olaniyan, Eustace Palmer, Abioseh Porter, Richard Priebe (for Koffi Anyinefa), Peter Quella, Thelma Ravell-Pinto (for Amy Elder), Aliko Songolo, Janice Spleth, Ousseynou B. Traore, Hal Wylie.

CALL TO ORDER. The President brought the meeting to order at 7:15 a.m.

RATIFICATION OF AGENDA. The Agenda was ratified as presented by the President.

CONFERENCE REPORTS.

DAYTON/ALEXANDRIA (2003). The President informed the Executive Council that neither convener would be able to attend the meeting but that Faiza Shereen would submit a final written report on the Alexandria conference by November 22.

MADISON (2004). Aliko Songolo described the preparations for the conference to be held in Madison, Wisconsin, April 14-18. Conveners will be the African Studies Program in conjunction with the Departments of African Languages and Literature and the Department of French and Italian as co-sponsors. He distributed his preliminary budget for \$109,000 but noted that there might be additions. Any shortfall would be covered by the African Studies Program. The preliminary program calls for nine invited guests plus the WOCALA speaker. Several performances are tentatively scheduled. A web site has been set up at <http://africa.wisc.edu/ala2004>. Participants will be able to register and pay registration on line. A reception is scheduled on Thursday evening at the Elvehjem Museum to celebrate the acquisition of the Bareiss Family Collection of African Art. Other panels and presentations have been planned along with three-panel seminars focusing on specific themes. The library will be featuring an exhibit on the occasion of the bicentennial of the Haitian Revolution, and there will be a program of films. Members are encouraged to reserve early and submit proposals by the deadline. In response to a request from Thelma Ravell-Pinto as representative for WOCALA, Aliko responded that the conveners would fund travel and room for Mildred Hill-Lubin and lodging for Micere Mugo. Aliko agreed that late proposals might be tabled according to ALA guidelines and said he would consider putting papers on line. The President inquired about the possibility of the Executive Council's meeting the first day of the conference. Asked about the representation of North African literature, Aliko noted that invitations were being extended. The President congratulated the University of Wisconsin on its advance work and excellent organization.

BOULDER (2005). Mimi Mortimer, speaking on behalf of the conveners from the University of Colorado, announced the theme of the 2005 conference as "Beyond the Printed Word: African Literatures and African Cultures." Her current budget is \$43,000. Rooms have been reserved, and five speakers and artists have been invited. Funding will be from the University of Colorado, with the departments of French and English serving as co-conveners. Other nearby institutions will be participating as well. Outreach efforts are planned for the secondary schools. The Executive Council suggested that other sources of funding be explored.

REPORT OF HEADQUARTERS DIRECTOR. JoAnne Cornwell reported that the arrangement at San Diego is coming to the end of the original five-year contract. She suggested that the ALA commit \$1000 in specific expenses to the Headquarters and provide letters to document the importance of Headquarters to aid in the renegotiation process. Membership renewal is planned for just after the first of year. Headquarters will also be taking over some of the functions of the ALA Bulletin, including conference announcements, job announcements, and organizational history. JoAnne asked for suggestions and responded to questions about the financial picture. She estimates expenses as around \$2000 per year.

REPORT OF BULLETIN EDITOR. Abioseh Porter reported difficulties in getting materials in a timely manner. He is looking forward to publishing a journal on line as an economical alternative to a print journal. He requested permission to acquire software that will allow for on-line corrections. There was a discussion concerning the editorial board, and the President asked for a timeline so membership could be informed. Changing the name of ALA Bulletin to JALA would have to be voted on by the membership and would require a constitutional change. Kandoura described the history of the journal idea and the decision to put it on line. The journal is intended to be refereed, to have an Editorial Board, to be under the supervision of the ALA Executive Council, and to require blind review of submissions. The President asked for volunteers to draft wording for a constitutional amendment to be published in the next issue of the Bulletin, changing the Bulletin into a journal, and for the amendment to be on the agenda for the next meeting. It was determined that the concept of transforming the bulletin into a refereed journal had already been suggested at the Annual Business Meeting in San Diego and had been published in the Bulletin.

ADJOURNMENT. The President adjourned the meeting at 8:20 a. m.

**AFRICAN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS
Boston Sheraton Hotel
November 1, 2003 7:00-8:45**

PRESENT: Stephen Belcher, Elisabeth Boyi, Robert Cancel, Kassahun Checole, JoAnne Conrnwell, Ngwarsungu Chiwengo, Kandiouara Dramé, Ken Harrow, Anthony Hurley, Georges Joseph, Ambroise Kom, Janis Mayes (President), Eustace Palmer, Abioseh Porter, Richard Priebe (for Koffi Anyinefa), Thelma Ravell-Pinto (for Amy Elder), Micheline Rice-Maximin, Janice Spleth, Ousseynou B. Traore, Hal Wylie.

CALL TO ORDER. The President brought the meeting to order at 7:05 a.m.

RATIFICATION OF AGENDA. The Agenda was ratified as modified to begin with a discussion of a constitutional amendment regarding the ALA Bulletin.

CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE. Hal Wylie presented the following constitutional amendment to be published in the Bulletin and put before the membership in Madison: "The African Literature Association will publish a journal to be called The Journal of the African Literature Association. JALA will replace the ALA Bulletin." A motion was passed to start the amendment on its way. Language was also provided for the handbook.

ALA COMMITTEE AND CAUCUS REPORTS.

GSCALA. The President summarized the report submitted by Mark Lilleleht concerning the activities of the Graduate Student Caucus. She noted that Wendy Belcher ably represented the Caucus in Alexandria. With respect to the Graduate Student initiative to sponsor Africa-based graduate students, the report announced that the Caucus had found sponsors for 16 students from Egypt, Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, and South Africa thanks to individual ALA members who have responded to the call for sponsorship. The Caucus continues to be interested in expanding the number of students who are sponsored and the pool of possible sponsors. Members of the Caucus continue to canvas their contacts for the names of Africa-based students. Anyone interested in serving as a sponsor can write to Mark as Media Officer to express interest. Mark then prepares a letter with information about the sponsoree that he e-mails to the potential sponsor who then writes out a check for membership dues and sends it to Bob Cancel. The Caucus was pleased to see the option for sponsorship on the renewal notice and suggests that the line asking for name and address be expanded to include the language "or contact the GSCALA for more information." The GSCALA does not handle any of the monies but serves rather as facilitator. The Caucus responded to the Executive Council's concerns that it would be privileging the GSCALA and that sponsorships be distributed equitably. Wendy Belcher included

plans for the annual meeting. Regarding the idea of graduate student panels, developments are still not finalized, but there will be a professional workshop for graduate students involving journal editors to be followed by the GSCALA business meeting. The President commended the Caucus for its work and proposed the Executive Council give the students a hand. She asked that we promote this project in the newsletter.

WOCALA. Thelma Ravell-Pinto, acting on behalf of Amy Elder reported that the Women's Caucus at the ALA meeting in Madison would be honoring Mildred Hill-Lubin. Last year in Alexandria, Mildred was the recipient of an award, and a poem was composed in her honor and presented by Micere Mugo, but since she could not be there, the Caucus decided to invite Mildred to Madison to hear Micere read the poem. The conveners will be bringing in Mildred, while the Caucus will support Micere Mugo's visit. The Caucus will have two panels at Madison and a roundtable: Feminist Interventions: Edward Said Remembered, South African Women Writers, and Women Writing from the War Zones. Janis Mayes commended the Women's Caucus. She mentioned the Caucus was open to everyone and thanked Robert Cancel for including a membership option for WOCALA on the ALA membership renewal notice. Plans for the WOCALA luncheon are still in flux.

TEACHING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE. The President announced that she has been in touch with committee chairs and had very fruitful discussions. Odile Cazenave, the previous chair of the committee, agreed to serve during a transition, and Sonia Lee has agreed become the new chair. The President reiterated her interest in revitalizing the committees and guaranteeing that the committee structure really works. She proposed expanding committee membership and encouraging the membership beyond the Executive Council to join committees. She proposed a committee structure in which membership on committees would be for three years, the committee would select its own chair, and it would make recommendations to the Executive Council. She observed that the new technologies would mean members who might not attend meetings could still participate in Committees. Hal Wylie suggested that the newsletter carry regular updates about committee membership and objectives.

AWARDS COMMITTEE. Micheline Rice-Maximin reported that the President had asked her to chair the Awards Committee and handed out copies of the 2001 Committee Report. The members of the committee are currently Cilas Kemedjio, Joyce Hope Scott, Naana Horne, and Ngwarsungu Chiwengo. She summarized the report and proposed that the award for service to the organization and the two graduate student awards be made this coming year in Madison. Discussion of procedure followed. For this year, it was suggested that the committee make recommendations for the service award, and the Executive Council would ratify the nomination. In the future, nominations would be solicited from the membership at large. Nominations for the graduate student awards will be made by the local organizers of the annual conference. Checks would be issued by the

Treasurer. With respect to the Human Rights Award, the committee has asked the Issues Committee to put forward an extended definition of "human rights" for the purposes of the Award. Deadlines will be submitted for the other awards so that they can be included in future years. The President suggested that the Past President and the editor of RAL be named to the Awards Committee and noted the importance of having the awards in place on the 30th Anniversary of ALA.

ISSUES COMMITTEE. Reporting for the committee, Ken Harrow described activity on behalf of Amina Lawal of Nigeria. Another issue identified by members of the committee is the treatment of women involved in conflict in the Congo. Mark Lilleht proposed that ALA take action with respect to the book famine and the growing digital divide. Ken proposed burning CDs to share data on Africa. The ALA also needs to support collaboration with African scholars and publishers. Finally, he suggested that ALA select names of individuals identified by International Pen for special support. The Issues Committee would be asked to create model letters, and names could be placed on a website that would be regularly updated and provide links to PEN and other local groups interested in writers who are prisoners of conscience.

REPORT OF ANNUAL EDITOR. Ousseynou Traore announced that papers for the Fez volume have been run and proofs sent out. He explained that the editor's role will be to provide consistency in terms of such things as fonts and margins and expressed some concerns about the cover and title. The guidelines submitted by the ad hoc committee were discussed. Ousseynou announced that San Diego will be submitting its volume shortly and that there has been communication about the Kansas volume.

OUTREACH INITIATIVE. The President developed her plans for an initiative to help build membership. She proposed that ALA contact graduate departments about sending at least one graduate student to ALA and include information about the graduate student awards. Old members of ALA need to be contacted and invited to participate more actively. The inclusion of scholars from the Diaspora requires that ALA engage in fundraising in order to bring them to conferences. Since visas for African scholars have become increasingly difficult to obtain, she suggested that the ALA be prepared to fax supporting letters to consulates upon request for those making visa applications. Grants should be identified that would fund scholars from Africa and the Diaspora, and proposals should be in place to support international travel by the next meeting of the Executive Council.

JoAnne Cornwell proposed setting up a committee to identify grant possibilities, noting that grants have their own requirements and parameters. The president named Robert Cancel to chair a committee that would also include Anthony Hurley, Thelma-Ravell-Pinto, and Janice Spleth. George Joseph suggested that we should begin thinking of priorities for fundraising and funding.

As part of the outreach initiative, Janis Mayes stressed the importance of enhancing our national visibility. Kassahun Checole agreed to send a copy of the Annual to the MLA bibliography so that it could be included in the on-line data base. He informed the Executive Council that he normally sends Annuals out to thirty-seven

standard journals for review. The ALA web page provides links. Kassahun proposed displaying the annuals at African conferences such as the Book Fair held in Zimbabwe and CODESARIA. He asked that we consider making the Annual fee a part of ALA conference registration. Kandioura Dramé proposed that the ALA Newsletter provide space for Africa World Press to advertise. It was also suggested that the opportunity to buy the Annual should be included on the membership form. Hal Wylie moved that membership dues be used to subsidize the production of the annuals. The motion passed and the proposal will be put before the membership. Other efforts to improve the visibility of the organization involve strengthening relations with the journal Présence Africaine and revitalizing the translation project.

REPORT FROM ANNUAL PUBLISHER. Kassahun Checole reported that the original transitional difficulties are over and that the Fez volume could be out by April. There is only one outstanding volume that needs to be expedited. In the future, he proposed that there be no more than a two-year delay in publishing an annual. He thanked the organization for sending volumes to African libraries and noted that recipients have expressed appreciation for the donations. He hopes to be able to send the next volumes soon.

ADJOURNMENT. The President adjourned the meeting at 8:40 a. m.

**AFRICAN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS
Boston Sheraton Hotel
November 2, 2003 7:30-8:45**

PRESENT. Irène d'Almeida (for Chiwengo Ngwarsungu), Koffi Anyinefa, Stephen Belcher, Robert Cancel, Anthony Hurley, Cilas Kemedjio, Ambroise Kom, Juliette Machoba, Sam Matsangaise, Janis Mayes (President), Eustace Palmer, Thelma Ravell-Pinto (for Abioseh Porter), Janice Spleth, Wangui wa Goro, Hal Wylie.

CALL TO ORDER. The President brought the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

RATIFICATION OF AGENDA. The agenda was approved as modified.

ACTION PENDING.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON ANNUAL SERIES. Eustache Palmer presented material related to the volume and series editors outlining how their functions will be delineated in the handbook. Janis thanked the Committee for its work. The President asked that the document be modified so that there would be a specific reference to the blues and copy editing as responsibilities of the series editor. It was also requested that the word "proceedings" be replaced by "volume." George Joseph moved to accept the description of editorial duties as modified. The motion was approved.

CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE. Hal Wylie read a proposal to put in place a procedure to replace Executive Council members: "In the event that an Executive Council member needs to be replaced before completion of her/his term of office, offers will be made to the candidates for that position in the most recent election who did not win, starting with the candidate who received the highest number of votes and then to the candidate with the next highest number of votes until the position is filled." Steve Belcher moved to accept