



# ALA NEWSLETTER

nkynin kyin -- changing oneself: playing many roles

since 1975

An independent, non-profit professional society of scholars, teachers and writers dedicated to the advancement of African Literary Studies.

The ALA Newsletter will be appearing regularly again now that ALA Headquarters at Hobart and William Smith Colleges is fully operational. The second Retreat for the Executive Council was held at Headquarters on October 9-11, 2010.

HWS Colleges and the City of Geneva, NY have been very welcoming to the ALA. The HWS Africana Studies Program hosted our breakfast; and at the request of the Provost and some enthusiastic students, HQ proposed that the ALA add an extra half-day to the Retreat. This would enable EC members to do a panel/roundtable presentation; we could open this part of the Retreat to the HWS Colleges. This presentation could be like our participation during the African Studies Association Conferences where EC members presented papers while they attended ALA EC meetings. This may also help EC members to get institutional funding to attend the ALA Retreat.

We would like to encourage members who have items for the ALA Newsletter to submit them to Headquarters via email as an attachment. We are also interested in photos (submit as jpeg files with names and a photo credit name). Deadline for the winter issue is January 1, 2011. Please send your submissions to [headquarters@africanlit.org](mailto:headquarters@africanlit.org).

## RE-INVESTING OURSELVES IN ALA

*Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka, April 15, 2009, Burlington, VT*



"Speaking a culture is very different from speaking a language," says Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka (left), who addressed the recent African Literature Association conference organized by Lokangaka Losambe (right) at UVM. (Photo: Holly Hendricks)

Good evening Mme President, honored guests, friends and colleagues. I assume that I speak for the whole membership of ALA in thanking Professor Mda for his thought provoking talk. Thank you especially for your dialectical exposé of criticism as a discipline; it is a splendid validation of what we are about as a literary Association.

On behalf of the ALA, I extend sincere gratitude to: The University of Vermont, our host institution; President Dan Vogel, Senior Vice President Provost John Hughes, Dean Ellie Miller and Mayor Bob Kiss, The Mayor of Burlington.

We appreciate your generous hospitality in hosting our 35th Annual conference.

To our conveners - Drs. Lokangaka Losambe, Helen Scott and the army of volunteers, great appreciation for all your work. There is no disputing it, this conference has run on well-oiled wheels. Speaking as someone whose Institution (the University of Kansas) has also hosted ALA, I can guess not only the amount of oil you must have poured on those wheels, but also the individual and collective dedication and commitment. I am convinced future conveners will strive to meet, even

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*ALA Newsletter* is produced at ALA Headquarters by George Joseph, Director; Thelma Pinto, Former President; and Dot Vogt, Administrative Support. ALA HQ is located at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY 14456

The newsletter can be accessed online at [www.africanlit.org](http://www.africanlit.org). (Webmaster: Ted Fristrom, [web@africanlit.org](mailto:web@africanlit.org))

## RE-INVESTING OURSELVES IN ALA - CONT.

considering the current economical crisis, and surpass the excellent organizational standards you set this year.

Congratulations to our Fonlon-Nichols Awards winner, my friend and sister, performer, renowned playwright and Distinguished Professor, Tess Onwueme. To our most deserving Distinguished Service Award winner, Professor Ken Harrow, congratulations, and thank you again for all you have done for ALA.



Tess Onwueme

Ken Harrow

Homage to our past Presidents and other officials who have kept the Association going for the past 35 years. I am standing here today, because you have all kept the space of ALA warm, attractive, and relevant so that people keep coming and staying. At the last count this morning, 450 members registered for this conference. This is a great testimony reflecting the strength of our membership.

My immediate predecessor, Maureen Eke with whom I have worked most closely this past year has been exemplary. She is on top of what has to be done and links up with who is to do it at the appropriate time. No doubt, she has a formidable group in the Executive Council, but she also provides a hands-on leadership. I almost asked her if she took a sabbatical to serve ALA, but no, she is on board at her university doing the 40-40-120 (that is, teaching, research and service). Those of us who were in Macomb last year remember the vision she laid out for the Association during her speech. I want to assure you that for Maureen, it is much talk, more action, and much more effective action. Ensnconced in my apartment in St Louis, Senegal as we Skype each other, I have this mental picture of her carrying a 'to do list' everywhere, and ticking off each assignment as it gets accomplished. She has really been very effective and systematic in implementing most, and laying a good foundation for getting the rest done. So I have my job cut out for me; I do not have to go about re-inventing the wheel. Thank you Maureen for leaving me these oversized shoes into which I must grow right away. Fortunately, she remains on the EC for another year at least.

I salute you established faithful ALA members. Thank you for holding up this Association and making it a force to be respected in the annals of academic scholarship; I encourage those who are not yet life members to seriously consider joining the rank. For family members in attendance, we appreciate your support; please don't stop. We have members who live in Germany, England, and Japan, yet they make the pilgrimage to ALA conference every year; what commitment! Thank you for your steadfast support. In particular, I want to acknowledge those just joining the Association. Welcome, we value your membership. Whether you are a fresh graduate or you are a life long student-scholar of Africa and African Literature, we want you to enrich the Association of African Literature with your enthusiasm, innovative ideas, diverse experience and thoughtful scholarship. Please convince your colleagues to join ALA. Together, we will take the Association to greater heights of scholarly renown.

Perhaps from the tone of my greetings, you already guessed the theme of my talk. It is an old song, but I hope it will not sound to you like it is coming from an old broken record. You have heard what I am going to say tonight before - somewhere, sometime, in another way, and by so many other people. This is therefore only a reminder.

So that it does not sound like too much of a broken record, I am going to borrow a financial term that has rapidly become a cliché but which we all use anyway because of how it touches everything we do, and how deeply it determines our future: Re-Invest. Importantly also, I think this idea of re-investment is so relevant now because ALA affects everything we do as professionals – at least, it should. If we did not realize it before, or if we simply ignored it because it was not visible, suddenly, in the past couple of years or so the handwriting has become clearer on the walls, and it hits us. We realize we have to pay attention or the future will be exceedingly bleak and even dangerously calamitous. So even though our trademarks are words, we start crunching numbers, calculating and wondering: “Should we re-invest? Or not? Where? When?” The stocks are down, the economy is collapsing. Should we dig in, buy now, sell later, and/or just re-invest, now for the future?

When the founders of ALA got together some thirty –something years ago, I doubt if they consciously thought of today; if in their deliberations they said, “in the year 2009, we could be in Burlington Vermont holding the 35th ALA Convention with hundreds of members in attendance.” But they had a dream, a dream to which they were committed and determined to make a reality. They thought of the future, and here we are today – the

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## RE-INVESTING OURSELVES IN ALA - CONT.

concrete reality of their investment in the future. It is now for us, and it is time to re-invest. Let us re-invest in the African Literature Association.

What do we do to carry the torch forth and keep it burning bright for the next 35 years for example, when most of us in this room will have become memories of our works?

At 35 years old, approaching the 40- year landmark, we are at a transitional stage. Our Association is relatively young compared to African Studies Association (ASA), or Modern Languages Association (MLA). ALA is a growing organization; we are evolving from a small sized Association to a bigger one. So we need a lot of help, and consistently too. The mechanisms that my predecessor, Maureen Eke set into motion streamline us into the 21st century, ensuring that we have the space into which to grow.

My vision for the ALA is that we accommodate the growing pains, survive the growth and gain strength for more growth. I want to ensure, and to re-engage all of us in the process. I believe this way, we will survive the growing pains. This is why we all need to re-invest ourselves in this Association. The Yoruba say, Enikan ki ije awa de. Indeed, it does boggle the mind when a solo flyer surveys the empty field and announces, “we have landed.” You have already invested in ALA by becoming members, you pay your dues, and you attend annual conferences when possible, and if you are in an academic institution, you fulfill part of your job description.

However, there is a lot more we can do for the Association beyond the current primary bread and butter issue that currently preoccupy us, otherwise we may not have the butter with the bread. Banish the thought of losing the bread itself.

Working closely with members of the EC and listening to the membership, I have three proposals: i) Efficient communication and continuous conversation ii) Validating Africa World Press (AWP) as a reputable academic publisher, and iii) exploring African-centered theory /or theories for African literature. Perhaps the first vision is more straightforward, but some may argue that the other two are individual academic responsibilities.

i). My first call is to get members fully involved in the activities of the association. It is no longer enough to perform the annual ritual of conference attendance and paper presentation. This association needs to function, and we need people to make it function. We are growing and we can no longer survive on the same small pool of recycled volunteers. We need new people, we need more people and we need young upcoming scholars who are ready to take us to and through the next 35 years.

I would like to see the energy and the brilliant ideas we have at this conference to continue even after we return to our bases, not just among members of the EC, but in the larger membership as well. The website, the magical tool of the 21st century really makes that a non-issue, and as my predecessor Maureen Eke has promised, it is up and running, thanks to our formidable team of web savvy members. ALA information is constantly being uploaded there. However, we have to use it, and use it most efficiently to make it meaningful. We should go there to check, react, and make suggestions – *eni kan ki ije awa de*. We do not have to wait till the next conference to resume conversations.

Making conference calls is another way to seriously consider in maintaining critical continuous communication especially with our various Committees, Caucuses and Councils. As fast as it is, emailing does not always do the job; on occasions, we need simultaneous discussions and face-to face meetings, and there are issues that cannot always wait till the next conference. Maureen and I had a lot of telephone calls on Skype when I was in Senegal; and all it cost us was synchronizing time of calls. It could be a viable option for EC as well. Skype conferencing will especially serve the Executive Council and me since I return to Senegal immediately after this conference, and ALA matters cannot wait until I am back the U. S. in August.

ii) Africa World Press. Many of us publish with AWP. While ALA has always acknowledged the invaluable service Kassahun Checole renders our membership in this regard, some universities are reluctant to accept, and some outrightly dismiss AWP as a viable academic Publishing company. This has to be changed. Who else to assert the academic integrity of Africa World Press but the African Literature Association and its membership? I would like us to put our heads together to ensure AWP takes its rightful position as a credible scholarly publishing company.

iii) Finally, the Theory for African Literary project. (For want of a better name) We are an African Literature Association, i.e., we study the creative works produced in Africa, about Africa and by Africans. In the early decades of our Association, the struggle for independence, and the notion of “developing nations” made Africa and African literatures a palpable academic mode of enquiry in American and Europe; the controversial concept of post colonialism carried our scholarship through the 1990s. For what it is worth, however, academic institutions have moved from the postcolonial distant voices to global urgency, consequently there is increasing hunger in academic institutions, and there is a multitude of fares at the table from which they can choose.

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## RE-INVESTING OURSELVES IN ALA - CONT.

Where is the African continent within the current understanding of global affairs? With the AIDS epidemic, seemingly endless wars raging in so many countries, in addition to the old problems of ineffective rulers, and perpetual economic crisis, the relevance of Africa and its issues in global affairs rank low. Africa has become an “abowaba” – to be attended to later, when time permits. Now do we wonder why there is less demand for African courses, and the scarcity of tenure-track positions for experts in African literatures? Of course, the official reason is that African courses have been mainstreamed in many departments. Mais, quand meme!

The job of presenting, interpreting, theorizing and making Africa relevant to, and in the world has never been more urgent. I believe the writers are doing their bit. Even if as Marabou, the Japanese writer said provocatively, “novelists are liars,” our job as predominantly an Association of critics, is to find the truth behind the lies. Not by being too eager to apply any current concept to the works of our writers, but by applying the tools of analysis relevant, and specific to the conditions these writers speak to eloquently in their works.

The 1st path to achieving this is through the activist section of our Association. I am happy to announce that the Issues Committee proposes to have an academic panel at future ALA conferences.

The 2nd path that I envision is through a theory and criticism series. I hope that in consultation with the EC and existing relevant Caucuses, to set up a process to explore this idea. I see it complementing the already existing Teaching and Research Committee, but with a narrower focus. This will probably encompass the question that has again been raised about our annuals and conference papers. But as I said, these are my visions, and I need vibrant input of ideas, comments and suggestion. I believe that we have tinkered enough with different literary theories and it is time develop original voices to explain the conditions of African realities. Within the spirit of democracy, one enduring concept is, “speaking for oneself in one’s own voice.”

Let me also use this opportunity to extend my deep appreciation to the total membership of ALA for according me the honor of standing here before you as the new President of the African Literature Association. I recognize that this is a great privilege. This is a great Association, and you have given me a great responsibility. I promise I to do my best to do my best and work with the Executive Council to carry out the responsibilities and advance the cause of our Association, ensure the interests of our membership are well served, and the source our continent is well protected. ☒

**ALA Membership**

The ALA dues structure for 2010.

## Membership Levels/Dues

- Sponsor African student in Africa - \$5
- African student in Africa - \$5
- Income under \$20,000 - \$20
- Income \$20,001 - \$45,000 - \$50
- Income \$45,001 - \$75,000 - \$75
- Income \$75,001 and over - \$100
- Sponsor - \$120
- Life Member (May pay \$300/yr over 5 yrs) - \$1500

ALA dues are for the calendar year. The ALA welcomes additional contributions for books for African libraries. Please specify the amount and include it with your payment.

ALA members can also receive the following discounted individual rates for subscriptions to Research in African Literatures:

- Addresses within the US - \$34
- Addresses within Africa - \$42
- Addresses outside the US / Africa - \$48

ALA members receive the Journal of the African Literature Association (JALA) twice a year. All correspondence is sent by airmail at no additional charge to members.

Members should send the following information along with their payment: institutional address, home address, email, and phone. Specify which mailing address you would like the JALA sent to.

Checks must be written in U.S. dollars and drawn on a U.S. bank or U.S. correspondent bank. Send check or postal money order payable to "ALA" to the following address:

Fahamisha Patricia Brown, ALA Treasurer  
Metropolitan College of NY, ACSHE  
431 Canal Street  
New York, NY 10013

Payment may also be made through PayPal, a website which allows electronic transfer of funds. This will allow you to use your bank account or credit card. You will receive an automated receipt stating that your money has been received. You must establish your own free PayPal account. Once you have done that, you may send the ALA dues via the following email address:

[treasurer@africanlit.org](mailto:treasurer@africanlit.org)

In order to facilitate the fee structure incorporated into PayPal, we request that you add \$1 to the membership dues. Also, please enter your mailing address, email address, and phone number in the space provided by PayPal, or send this information in a separate email to the address above.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, do not hesitate to contact the ALA Treasurer by email ([treasurer@africanlit.org](mailto:treasurer@africanlit.org)) or by phone at 212-343-1234, ext. 2419. ☒

**35th Annual Conference of the ALA**  
**University of Vermont, Burlington**  
**April 15-19, 2009**  
**Convener's Report**

**A. Stats:**

- 475 participants, including 120 graduate students.
- 46 States represented from the USA
- 37 Countries represented other than the USA.
- 123 panels
- 440 paper presentations
- 12 Invited Speakers and Performers:  
 Wole Soyinka, Anthony Appiah, Merle Collins,  
 Michael J.C. Echeruo, Theodora Akachi Ezeigbo,  
 Zakes Mda, V.Y Mudimbe, Pius Nkashama,  
 Ngandu, Magdalene Odundo, Tess O. Onwueme,  
 Shailja Patel, and Al haji Papa Susso.

**B. Awards Presented:**

- Fonlon-Nichols Award: This award recognizes excellence in creative writing and contributions to the struggle for human rights and freedom of expression. It is given every year to a selected African writer.  
 The 2009 winner: *Tess O. Onwueme*
- The ALA Distinguished Membership Award:  
 The 2009 winner: *Kenneth W. Harrow*
- Recognition of the Past President: *Thelma Pinto*

**C. Celebrations/ Memorials:**

- Conference Opening by UVM President Daniel Mark Fogel
- Evening of Readings in the Mother Tongue African Languages
- Graduate Students' Mixer
- Poetry Evening in Memoriam Aime Cesaire
- Es'kia Mphahlele Memorial

**D. General Theme: Africa and Blackness in World Literature and Visual Arts**

The previous two ALA conferences had focused on various ways African and African Diaspora literature has functioned as a cultural catalyst that nurtures black people's subjectivity in the age of globalization. As a conclusion to the series, the 35th Annual ALA Conference focused on the ways creative writers and artists from other cultural traditions have imagined Africa and blackness in the past as well as the extent to which that imagining has evolved and can be said to foster intersubjective dialogue

in the age of globalization. As always, the conference also welcomed panels on other unexplored or inadequately explored aspects of African and African Diaspora literature. The following sub-themes were extensively debated at the conference:

- Africa and Blackness in Classical Literature and Visual Arts
- Africa and Blackness in Modern Literature and Visual Arts
- Africa and Blackness in Contemporary Literature and Visual Arts
- Africa in African Immigrant Writers' Literature and Visual Arts
- Africa in African American and African Caribbean Literature and Visual Arts
- Black Artists and Reconstitution of Black People's Subjectivity
- Cosmopolitanism in African and African Diaspora Literature
- African and African Diaspora Literary Criticism and Global Cultural Dynamisms
- Postcolonialism and Postcoloniality in Relation to Africa and Blackness
- Approaches to Teaching African and African Diaspora Literature (Teachers Workshop)
- Other aspects of African and African Diaspora Literature



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## CONVENER'S REPORT CONTINUED

**E. The 2009 ALA Conference Proceedings**

The conveners extend a cordial invitation to all participants in the African Literature Association's Burlington conference (15-19 April 2009) to submit their papers to be considered for publication in the annual volume. Professor Lokangaka Losambe and colleagues will be responsible for selecting and editing papers falling under the broad general theme: "Africa and Blackness in World Literature and Visual Arts". Younger colleagues and graduate scholars are welcome to join their elder colleagues in making this an outstanding volume in the "African Literature Association Annual Series".

It is the express desire of the Executive Committee of the ALA to ensure that the annual volume of papers appear regularly once more in the interests of providing up-to-date research to the scholarly community at large and offering visibility to participating members of the ALA within the shortest possible delay.

Interested contributors should submit one print copy with an electronic file (CD or e-mail attachment, formatted in MS Word) addressed to:

Professor Lokangaka Losambe  
 Department of English  
 University of Vermont  
 Burlington, VT 05405  
 E-mail: <[llosambe@uvm.edu](mailto:llosambe@uvm.edu)>

Length and format of papers: 20 pages maximum; one-inch margins; 12-point standard font; endnotes; bibliography or "works cited". Format and style in accordance with the MLA Style Manual (a recent edition).  
 Deadline for receipt of submissions: 1 October 2009.

The volume will be edited by Lokangaka Losambe (University of Vermont), Maureen Eke (Central Michigan University), and Helen Scott (University of Vermont). ☒



ALA MEMBERS  
35TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ALA  
University of Vermont, Burlington



Abioseh Porter and Debra Boyd



Jeannette Ariane Ngabeu  
Boston University  
Graduate Student and TFA



Keiko Kusunose and Kwame Anthony Appiah



Jeanne Garane and Jean Ouedraogo



Pamela Olúbùnmi Smith, Shailja Patel, Phanuel Egejuru,  
and Magdalene Odundo

**37TH ANNUAL AFRICAN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE**  
**APRIL 13-17, 2011** **OHIO UNIVERSITY, ATHENS, OHIO**

**"African Literature, Visual Arts, and Film in Local and Transnational Spaces."**



**Conference Keynote Speaker**

**Haile Gerima** was born on March 4, 1946 in Gondor, Ethiopia. He received his MFA in film from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). Currently he is a professor in the radio, television and film department at Howard University in Washington D.C. He is one of a handful of African filmmakers to earn international fame. His films include: *Hour Glass*, *Child of Resistance*, *Bushmama*, *Harvest: 3000 Years*, *Wilmington 10-USA 10,000*, *Ashes and Embers*, *After Winter: Sterling Brown*, *Sankofa*, *Adwa "An African Victory"*, and *Teza*. Gerima distributes and promotes his films himself through Myphedu Films Inc., a distribution company for low-budget, independent films that he and his wife of 12 years, Sirikiana Aina (who is also a filmmaker), established in 1984. Over the course of his career, Gerima has received a considerable number of awards and distinctions in film festivals, saluting his work as a director and a screen writer. For more information about Haile Gerima, visit: [www.zimbio.com/Haile+Gerima](http://www.zimbio.com/Haile+Gerima)



**Women's Caucus Speaker**

**Laila Lalami** was born and raised in Morocco. She attended Universite' Mohammed-V in Rabat, University College in London, and the University of Southern California, where she earned a Ph.D. in linguistics. Her work has appeared in the *Boston Globe*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Nation*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and elsewhere. She is the recipient of a British Council Fellowship and Fulbright Fellowship. She was shortlisted for the Caine Prize for African Writing in 2006 and for the National Book Critics' Circle Non Balakian Award in 2009. She is the author of the short story collection *Hope* and other *Dangerous Pursuits* and the novel *Secret Son*. Her work has been translated into ten languages. She is currently Associate Professor of Creative Writing at the University of California at Riverside.

For more information about Laila Lalami, visit: <http://lailalalami.com>



**Graduate Student  
Caucus Speaker**

**Sefi Atta** was born in Lagos, Nigeria. She was educated there, in England and in the United States. A former chartered accountant and CPA, she is a graduate of the creative writing program at Antioch University, Los Angeles. Her short stories has appeared in journals like *Los Angeles Review* and *Mississippi Review* and have won prizes from *Zoetrope* and Red Hen Press. Her radio plays have been broadcast by the BBC. She is the winner of PEN International's 2004/2005 David TK Wong Prize and in 2006, her debut novel *Everything Good Will Come* was awarded the inaugural Wole Soyinka Price for Literature in Africa. Her short story collection, *Lawless*, received the 2009 Noma Award for Publishing in Africa. *Lawless* is published in the US and UK as *News From Home*. She lives in Mississippi with her husband Gboyega Ransome-Kuti, a medical doctor, and their daughter Temi.

For more information about Sefi Atta, visit: [www.sefiatta.com](http://www.sefiatta.com)

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## 37TH ALA CONFERENCE INFO CONTINUED

### Francophone Caucus Speaker

**J. Michael Dash** is a professor of French, Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University. He received his B.A. from the University of West Indies and his Ph.D. from the same university in Mona, Jamaica. His research interests includes: Francophone/Caribbean Literature, literary theory and translation of French to English. Some of his selected works are: Culture



and Customs of Haiti, *Libete: A Haiti Anthology*, *The Other America: Caribbean Literature in a New World Context*, *Haiti and the United States* and *Edouard Glissant*. He has received the U.W.I Award for Excellence in Research, the Senior Fulbright Hays Award and the Senior Fulbright Research Award. For more information about J. Michael Dash, visit: <http://as.nyu.edu/object/jmichaeldash.html>

### TRACALA Speaker

**Alamin Mazrui** is a Professor of African Languages and Literatures at the State University of New Jersey, Rutgers. He graduated with a Masters in Education from Rutgers and a Ph.D. in Linguistics from Stanford University. His areas of interest are: political sociology of language in Africa and the African Diaspora; African Literature in English and Swahili; Politics of cultural production in East Africa; cultural discourses on human rights in Africa; Islam and Identity in Africa and the African



Diaspora. His current research projects focuses on (post) colonial translation in Africa and explores the political dynamics in the interplay between text and context in the Swahili experience. He has special interests in human rights and civil liberties and has written policy reports on these subjects. He has had many books and essays that have been published. To see a full list of these publications and for more information visit: Rutgers, Department of African Languages and Literatures. ☒

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### 37th Annual ALA Conference CALL FOR PAPERS

Date for Submission of Abstracts:

May 10 - December 1, 2010

The conference theme is: "African Literature, Visual Arts, and Film in Local and Transnational Spaces."

Critical studies of African literature and arts in the past few decades have primarily focused on the categories of 'post-coloniality', 'hybridization', and 'syncretization' in their methodology and theorization of the fields. While these notions have been salient and useful, there is a wide recognition that they may not be adequate to map the contemporary concerns and forms of African literature and arts in a time chiefly defined by proliferating dynamics of trans-boundary cultural and material formations. According to contemporary critical thought, it is no longer possible to think of the "local" simply as a fixed entity within a nested global hierarchy or as an enclosed space, event, or cultural expression, just as it is impossible to imagine

the "global" without recognizing (at least) its "partial embeddedness" (Saskia Sassen, 2003: 4) in the "local," which itself is complex, specific, and "thick" with its own particular conditions and histories of "struggles" (Samir Amin, 2002). The success or failure of impacting transnational forces, images, ideas, artistic genres, cultural products, and globalizing technologies, etc., generally depend on the structure and scale of the linking fostered and/or forced upon "those more local communities, tactics, and symbolic strategies of cultural location that confront and challenge them in the production of locality, local subjects, national situations, and the making of everyday space and public spheres of existence." (Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake, 1996: 1)

The conference aims to initiate important academic and intellectual conversations about the complex interconnections of local and transnational practices and articulations, as inscribed in African literary, visual arts, and filmic representations. It particularly invites scholars and practitioners to identify and address the varied strategies of how local variants, contingent contexts, influences, agencies, or

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## 37TH ALA CONFERENCE INFO CONTINUED

even trans-local and neo-global power circuits, reconfigure themselves to recast, facilitate and, sometimes, contest the effects, limitations, and excesses of the economy of material, social, and cultural production. At the same time, presuming that the "local" is more than an ossified or silent victim of the "global" but instead a space in motion, the conference encourages nuanced and engaging/provocative contributions on the historical and continued structural (material, cultural, and political) hegemony of the global on the local, and the consequences thereof for the future material and cultural well-being of the African continent as we, hopefully, move from a monocentric world-system to a polycentric world-space.

Sub-Themes: The sub-themes of the conference include, but are not limited to:

- Globalization and effects of denationalization of the African nation-state
- African memoirs and autobiographies (including narratives of conflict and reconciliation, writings by and on child soldiers, war children, orphans, street children, and by children parenting children, etc.)
- African film and images of global incorporation/disputation/local contestation
- Border-crossing of bodies, border zone identities
- Politics and aesthetics of writing in local/transnational languages
- Translation as transnationalization
- Gender in the local/transnational
- Class, culture, and specific environments as elements of localization and/or transnationalization
- Ecological degradation/disasters
- Urban and rural space subjectivities
- African literature and arts in cyberspace
- Cultural practices of mobility and new African identities in world cities
- Translocal agents and spaces (NGOs, tourism, religious movements, solidarity groups, refugees, migrant hostels, diasporic neighborhoods, etc.)
- Aesthetics of local violence, memory and forgiveness

- Cre'olite'/transculturality
- Diasporic incarnations/interventions as sites of alternative normative visions
- Production, reception, and teaching of African texts, and images in local and transnational contexts
- Local and transnational flows of texts, arts, narratives, ideas, memories, cultures, symbols

Following the ALA tradition, papers and panels on all other aspects of African literature, arts, and film are also welcome.

Please send panel proposals or individual paper abstracts as a Word Document or PDF attachment by the deadline (December 1, 2010) to the convener, Ghirmai Negash, at: [ala2011AthensOH@gmail.com](mailto:ala2011AthensOH@gmail.com).

The email must include:

- Name
- Affiliation
- Complete Mailing Address
- Country
- Telephone
- Email

If proposing a panel, please also include:

- Panel Chair
- Panel Title
- Panel Members, Affiliations, Paper Titles ☑

### 2011 ALA CONFERENCE

The [website for the 2011 ALA Conference to be held at Ohio University is now LIVE](#).

The conference will be held April 13-17, 2011 in Athens, Ohio.

The [deadline for submission of proposals is December 1, 2010](#).

Visit the [site](#) for complete details on deadlines, programming, transportation, and all the rest.

<http://www.ohio.edu/conferences/ALA.cfm>

**37TH ALA CONFERENCE INFO CONTINUED****ACCOMMODATIONS FOR THE ALA CONFERENCE****Ohio University Inn & Conference Center**

331 Richland Avenue  
Athens, OH 45701  
Contact: Betsy Baringer  
Phone: 866/593-6661  
Visit Website for more information: [www.ouinn.com](http://www.ouinn.com)  
Amenities: Closest hotel to the campus of Ohio University and Athens only full service hotel. Complimentary hi-speed wireless internet, 24 hour business and fitness centers, Cutler's restaurant, Bunch of Grapes Tavern, in-room coffee makers, irons with ironing boards. The bike-jogging path is within walking distance of the hotel as well as many uptown restaurants and shopping.

**Holiday Inn Express and Suites**

11 E. Park Drive  
Athens, OH 45701  
Contact: DJ Kitts  
Phone: 740/592-4640  
Email: [djkitts@gmail.com](mailto:djkitts@gmail.com)  
Rate (Double): \$100.00  
Amenities: Athens newest hotel. Complimentary hot breakfast, 10% discount at Applebees, close to shopping district, CVS and Applebees on site. Athens City Park and Dog Park next door. 32"HD LCD Flat panel TV with expanded cable package and 3 HBO channels in each room. Free internet/wi-fi available. Onsite indoor pool.

**Hampton Inn**

986 East State Street  
Athens, OH 45701  
Contact: Gloria Hooper  
Phone: 740/593-5600  
Email: [gloria.hooper@hilton.com](mailto:gloria.hooper@hilton.com)  
Rate (Double/King): \$99 for Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday, \$129 for Friday and Saturday  
Amenities: Complimentary hot breakfast, USA Today Newspaper, microwave/refrigerator in each room, exercise room, indoor pool and whirlpool, complimentary high speed wireless and hard-wired internet and business center. Adjacent to Bennigan's Restaurant, Athens University Mall and Athena Grand Theater.

**On-Campus Housing - Bromley Hall**

Convenient and affordable housing is available on-campus in suite style rooms (2 rooms share one bathroom) or in VIP rooms that have a private bath. Bromley Hall is located 2 blocks away from Baker University Center, which is serving as the conference headquarters. There are standard double suites available at \$31/person/night and VIP rooms and suites that are available for \$44/person/night which includes full linen and towels provided. A limited number of rooms are available now, please contact Judy Martin in Event Services at [martinj3@ohio.edu](mailto:martinj3@ohio.edu) to make your reservation now. ☑

**We would like to thank our sponsors for their support and generous contributions to the  
2011 African Literature Association Conference:**

African Studies Program	Center for International Studies
1804 Grant	Africa World Press
Office of the Provost	Ohio University Women's Center
College of Arts & Sciences	Ohio University Multicultural Center
Department of English, Creative Writing Program	

**General Conference Contact:**

For questions related to registration, accommodations and travel please contact:

Kristin Stanley, Associate Director of Event Services  
Phone: (740)566-9702  
Email: [steckmes@ohio.edu](mailto:steckmes@ohio.edu)

## 37TH ALA CONFERENCE INFO CONTINUED

### TRAVEL AND HOST SITE INFORMATION

#### **About Ohio University:** ([www.ohio.edu](http://www.ohio.edu))

Established in 1804, Ohio University is the oldest public institution of higher learning in the state of Ohio and the first in the Northwest Territory. Ohio University has been cited for academic quality and value by such publications as U.S. News and World Report, America's 100 Best College Buys, Princeton Review's Best Colleges, and Peterson's Guide to Competitive Colleges. The John Templeton Foundation has also recognized Ohio University as one of the top character-building institutions in the country. Currently, Ohio University ranks first in the state of Ohio for nationally competitive awards won by its students.

Located in Athens, Ohio, the University boasts the following statistics: 390+ registered student organizations, 29 fraternities and sororities, nearly 1,000 students from different countries, 210 buildings on 1,800 acres of land, and 16 NCAA Division I teams in the Mid-American Conference.

#### **Travel Information from the Columbus Airport to Athens, Ohio**

Ohio University will be provided limited shuttle service for conference participants from the Columbus Airport to Athens hotels. The schedule for the shuttle service will be distributed to all participants, the plan is to provide two pickups at the airport on April 13th, one pick up time on April 14th and two return trips on Sunday, April 17th. The times will be set, are first come first serve on the 55 passenger bus, and there is no charge for the service.

For participants who's flight times do not match with the provided shuttle service there is a newly established bus service from that is also provided for a nominal fee of \$10 from the Columbus Airport to Ohio University. GoBus is the name of the line and it will pick up individuals at the airport and transport them to West Green Drive on campus. The trip will take approximately 2 hours with 4 stops in between. The

pick up times at the airport are 8:35 am and 2:40 pm each day. The pick up times on campus (at the West Green drive location) are 10:35 am and 4:35 pm. Reservations are not necessary, however there are three ways to get bus tickets for transportation. Individuals can purchase tickets online at: [www.ridegobus.com](http://www.ridegobus.com), over the phone (888-95-GOBUS) or purchase a ticket as you are boarding the bus. (Please note the driver cannot make change so the exact amount must be provided.) To see the complete bus schedule [upload the GoBus schedule](#) or go to the website: [www.ridegobus.com](http://www.ridegobus.com).

#### **Travel Directions to Ohio University:**

[www.ohio.edu/athens/travel.html](http://www.ohio.edu/athens/travel.html)

#### **Campus Map:** [www.ohio.edu/athens/ioumap.html](http://www.ohio.edu/athens/ioumap.html)

#### **Conference Headquarters:** [Baker University Center](#)

Named for Ohio's 14th President John Calhoun Baker, the Center opened in January, 2007. It replaced the original Baker University Center which was located on Union and College Streets. The building provides facilities, programs, services and amenities that serve the University community, the Athens community and visitors.

The Center holds 17 different sized conference rooms, a state of the art theater and grand ballroom. The majority of the spaces have built in projection screens and audio capabilities. There is a coffeehouse on the 4th floor, along with a College Apparel store, a post office. On the 1st floor there is a billiards lounge, a fine dining restaurant - Latitude 39 and a multi-faceted food court - West 82. Multiple dining options and plenty of lounge and study space make this building a popular meeting and central place for students and staff.

#### **Athens County Convention and Visitor's Bureau:**

[www.athensohio.com](http://www.athensohio.com)




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#### **General Conference Contact:**

For questions on the submission of abstracts and all other questions, please contact:

Bose Maposa

Graduate Assistant for the African Studies Program

Phone: (740)274-1624

Email: [bm745207@ohio.edu](mailto:bm745207@ohio.edu)

**37TH ALA CONFERENCE INFO CONTINUED****CALL FOR NOMINATIONS****ALA Distinguished Membership Award**

The ALA Executive Council invites nominations from the African Literature community for the ALA Distinguished Membership Award, which honors a member's or past member's outstanding record of service to ALA and commitment to teaching and scholarship in African literature.

Please send a brief (500 words) justification for your nomination by email or as an attachment to [olaoye@monmouth.edu](mailto:olaoye@monmouth.edu). A hardcopy of the nomination can also be mailed to Dr. Oty Agbajoh-Laoye, ALA Distinguished Membership Award, African Literature Award Committee, Dept. of English, Monmouth University, West Long Branch, NJ 07764.

Deadline: 15 January 2011.

All awards will be publicly presented at the

[37th annual conference of the African Literature Association](#)

April 13 - 17, 2011

Ohio University

(Athens, Ohio, USA)

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS****Fonlon-Nichols Award**

The ALA Executive Council invites nominations from the world African community for the Fonlon-Nichols Award for Excellence in Creative Writing and Contributions to the Struggle for Human Rights and Freedom of Expression. It is given every year to an African writer.

Please send a brief (500 word) justification for your nomination in the body of emails and as an attachment to: Dr. Oty Agbajoh-Laoye: [olaoye@monmouth.edu](mailto:olaoye@monmouth.edu). Hard copy of the nomination can also be mailed to Dr. Oty Agbajoh-Laoye, Fonlon-Nichols Award, African Literature Award Committee, Dept. of English, Monmouth University, West Long Branch, NJ 07764.

For more information on the Fonlon-Nichols Award, please consult:

<http://www.fonlon-nichols.org>

Deadline: 15 January 2011.

**CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS****ALA Graduate Student Award**

The ALA Graduate Student Award is given to the best graduate student paper presented at the annual ALA conference. The award-winning student will receive \$500.00 and a certificate of accomplishment and the paper will be published in the next issue of the Journal of the African Literature Association (JALA).

We encourage graduate students who plan to attend and present at the conference to submit their papers for consideration.

Submissions should include:

- Letter of application with contact information for the upcoming academic year
- MS Word or pdf copy of the conference paper

In order to be considered, submissions should be emailed to the African Literature Award Committee Chair, Dr. Oty Agbajoh-Laoye at:

[olaoye@monmouth.edu](mailto:olaoye@monmouth.edu).

Deadline: midnight, 30 January 2011.

**ALA TRAVEL GRANT AWARD**

The African Literature Association (ALA) is pleased to announce the establishment of an ALA Travel Grant Award of \$3,000 to be awarded to three of its members traveling from Africa to the association's conference. Eligible applicants should demonstrate: scholarship, financial need, and the ability to supplement grant award. Please send 1) a two page cover letter including title and abstract of conference paper to be presented; 2) a two page résumé (including ALA travel grant awards received within the past three years, teaching and/or research experience and interests, professional meetings/conferences attended, with dates, place and titles of papers presented, current university affiliation, if applicable); and 3) two letters of recommendation. Each letter shall be no more than two pages and shall include contact and brief biographical information of recommender. Please send your complete application to [Mohamed Kamara](#) by e-mail ([kamaram@wlu.edu](mailto:kamaram@wlu.edu)) or by surface mail (Department of Romance Languages, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA 24450 USA). Deadline: December 15, 2010.

## CHILDREN'S AFRICANA BOOK AWARDS ANNOUNCED

The Outreach Council of the African Studies Association (ASA) has announced the winners of the 2010 Children's Africana Book Awards. The Outreach Council annually honors outstanding authors and illustrators of children's books about Africa published in the United States.

The 2010 awards will be presented on Saturday, November 6, 2010 at the National Museum of African Art Washington, DC.

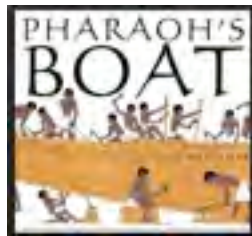
### Winners & Honor Books

#### Best Book for Young Children

##### ***Pharaoh's Boat***

(Houghton Mifflin Books)

With poetic language and striking illustrations, David Weitzman tells the story of how one of the greatest boats of ancient Egypt came to be built and built again. In the shadow of the Great Pyramid at Giza, the most skilled shipwrights in all of Egypt are building an enormous vessel that will transport Cheops, the mighty pharaoh, across the winding waterway and into a new world. But no one could have imagined just where the journey of Pharaoh's boat would ultimately lead.



As a boy David Weitzman spent countless hours studying hieroglyphs and viewing Egyptian artifacts in museums. He eventually made his way to Egypt where he heard about the Cheops's funerary boat. Weitzman lives in the mountains of northern California.

#### Best Book for Older Readers

##### ***Nelson Mandela: The Authorized Comic Book***

(W.W. Norton Publishers)

Created by the Nelson Mandela Foundation and Umlando Wezithombe, this graphic novel is, as the title suggests, a visual representation of the life and times of Nelson Mandela also affectionately known by his clan name, Madiba. First released in South Africa as a series of eight separate comics, the international one-book version unfolds in beautifully drawn graphic images accompanied with narrative text.



The Nelson Mandela Foundation was established after Mandela's retirement on August 19, 1999 and leads the

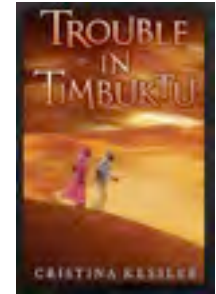
development of a living legacy that captures the vision and values of Mr. Mandela's life and work. Umlando Wezithombe (History of Pictures) is a comic production company using the visual medium for education, training and entertainment.

#### Honor Books for Older Readers

##### ***Trouble in Timbuktu***

(Philomel Books)

Cristina Kessler's new novel takes place in Mali. Local twins Ayisha and Ahmed know something is not right with an American tourist and his wife. Why are they so interested in the ancient manuscripts of Timbuktu? Could they really be plotting to steal one? Well, the manuscripts are more than old manuscripts to Ayisha and Ahmed; they are a rich part of their own heritage. No way are the two teens going to let this happen! They risk everything to stop them, embarking on a desperate quest that takes them across the desert, through a deadly heat, a sweeping sandstorm and finally to the port city of Korioume to confront and trap the wily thieves, and save a treasure of Timbuktu.

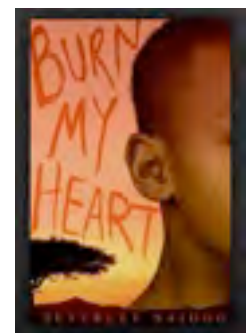


Cristina Kessler began writing for children in 1981 when she sold her first manuscript to Highlights for Children. She has lived in Sierra Leone, Niger, Mozambique, Sudan, Ethiopia and Mali. Her personal writing agenda is, "to get the good news out about Africa."

##### ***Burn My Heart***

(Amistad/Harper Collins)

This novel by celebrated author Beverley Naidoo tells a serious story of colonialism in Kenya during the Mau Mau rebellion through the eyes of two boys, Mathew and Mugo; the embodiment of oppressor and oppressed respectively. Mathew is the grandson of British colonialists while Mugo is the grandson of Kikuyu farmers whose land was taken by the British government and sold to Mathew's grandfather at a giveaway price. The book provides important moral lessons that can be applied in situations where stereotypes, injustices and other discriminatory practices thrive.



Beverley Naidoo grew up in South Africa under apartheid. She was detained without trial when she was twenty-one and later went into exile in Britain, where she has since lived. She has two former CABA winners, *Out of Bounds* (2004) and *No Turning Back* (1998). ☑

## ALA Job Postings

### Assistant Professor of Arabic (tenure-track) University of Wisconsin-Madison

The Department of African Languages & Literature at the University of Wisconsin-Madison invites applications for a full-time, tenure-track faculty position beginning August 2011 at the rank of assistant professor.

Applications must have a Ph.D. in the appropriate area with a specialization in Arabic. Candidates must be able to teach Modern Standard/Classical Arabic at all levels; have native or near-native fluency in Modern Standard Arabic and familiarity with at least one spoken dialect; have knowledge of the historical development of Arabic, of Islamic civilization, and of Arabic-based cultures of Africa; and be competent in linguistic approaches to literature.

For the application procedure and additional information regarding duties, please visit: [http://www.ohr.wisc.edu/pvl/pv\\_065366.html](http://www.ohr.wisc.edu/pvl/pv_065366.html). To ensure full consideration application materials must be received by November 24, 2010. UW-Madison promotes excellence through diversity and encourages all qualified individuals to apply.

### 2-Year Kay Postdoctoral Fellow Culture/Politics in the Francophone World Brandeis University

Brandeis University invites applications for a two-year Kay postdoctoral fellow working on culture and politics in the francophone world, to begin in Fall 2011. Areas of interest could include, but are not limited to, legacies of colonialism and post-colonialism, literary and cultural representations of the immigration experience, or language, culture and politics in francophone countries. Every year, the fellow will teach one class in French in the French and Francophone Studies program and another in English in the International and Global Studies Program and receive a stipend of \$54,807, plus a research fund of \$4,000. Please send dossier, teaching materials and three letters of recommendation to Michael Randall, Chair, Kay Fellowship Search Committee, Shiffman 102, MS 024, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA 02454-9110. First consideration will be given to the applications received by December 1, 2010. Brandeis University is an equal opportunity employer and encourages applications from women and minority candidates. ☒

## Haiti Needs Your Help

The ALA extended heartfelt sympathy to Haiti after the tragic devastation last January that left more than a million homeless. Currently Haiti is recovering from Hurricane Tomas, which left 900 homes destroyed, 5,000 homes damaged and triggered flooding and mudslides. May the people of Haiti transcend the current, natural sense of grief and overwhelming hopelessness, and emerge more capable and resolute to put the pieces of their lives together and rebuild their country for a greater future.

We encourage our members to please donate generously to legitimate relief bodies and organizations accepting relief funds for Haiti. No amount is too little; every dollar counts.

Websites for some relief funds organizations:

- Yele Haiti - Supported by the Haitian-born Wyclef Jean. You can also text "Yele" to 501501 to make a \$5 donation, and the donation will be added to your cell phone bill.
- Clinton Bush Haiti Fund - The Obama administration initiative.
- American Red Cross - Or text word "HAITI" to 90999 for a \$10 donation which will be added to your cell phone bill.
- Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) - Or call toll-free phone number 1-888-392-0392.
- CARE - In addition to delivering emergency health services, this group distributes food, hygiene kits and water to those in need. In order to make a donation, go to their website.
- Oxfam International & Oxfam America - Click on the "Haiti Earthquake Response Fund". ☒

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## 2010-2011 Executive Council

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**37<sup>TH</sup> ALA CONFERENCE****Ohio University, Athens, OH****April 13 – 17, 2011**

**Convener:** Ghirmai Negash  
[ala2011AthensOH@gmail.com](mailto:ala2011AthensOH@gmail.com)

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