



**Oromo Studies Association  
OSA Newsletter**

**July 2008 (Supplement)**

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**Message from the President**

Dear OSA Family,

Greetings! This supplement to the July issue of our Newsletter is being published to provide you certain updates on our annual conference scheduled to take place in about a week.

One of the items I wanted to bring to your attention has to do with the conference schedule. Since I sent out the schedule last week, I have received several constructive comments from OSA members and program presenters. I very much appreciate those who have called or contacted me online with their suggestions. Based on the feedback received, I have revised the schedule and a final copy is attached for your review.

The schedule reflects the need to optimize use of our time. In addition, some of our presenters have shared with me their itinerary and have requested scheduling adjustments to meet their

travel needs. The revision also addresses the needs of those presenters who have flight arrangements departing from Minneapolis before the closing of the conference.

On a separate note, I would like to inform you that we have prepared a program brochure. At the time of registration, you will be provided a booklet containing a schedule and synopsis of each of the topics to be presented. I hope you will find the brochure helpful as you browse the schedule to select sessions of interest to you.

In closing, I would like to stress once again the importance of getting started on time. We have planned a lot of issues to address and we are working with a compressed schedule. I am sure you all will agree with me that we can best achieve our goals in the two days if all of us commit to closely observing the time line specified in the schedule.

I wish you a safe trip to Minneapolis and I look forward to seeing you at the conference.

Best regards,

Melaku Mekonnen Ph.D.  
OSA President

**OROMO STUDIES ASSOCIATION  
2008 ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
SCHEDULE OF PROGRAMS AND EVENTS**

*Saturday, August 2*

<b>TIME</b>	<b>EVENT/PROGRAM</b>	<b>PRESENTER</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
9:00 – 10:00 AM	Registration	Local Organizing Committee	Lobby
10:00 – 12:00 Noon	Welcome & Opening Remarks Opening Prayer	Melaku Mekonnen – OSA President Bonnie Holcomb – Chair – OSA Board of Directors Ricky Hall – University of Minnesota Dabasa Guyo	Great Hall
12:00 – 2:00 PM	Business Meeting	OSA Members	Great Hall
2:00 – 3:00 PM	Lunch Break	Local Organizing Committee	Lobby
3:00 – 4:30 PM	Keynote Address	Professor Ali Mazrui	Great Hall
4:30 – 6:30 PM	<i>Oromo Political Movements: The way Forward</i>  Professor Ezekiel Gebissa Moderator	Panelists: Professor Mohammed Hassen Professor Assafa Jalatta Mr. Lubee Birru Mr. Lencoo Latta Mr. Dimma Noggo Dr. Fido Ebba - Local Committee	Great Hall
6:30 – 6:45 PM	Break	Refreshments – Local Committee	Lobby
6:45 – 7:45 PM	<b>Session I</b> Demographic Patterns and Trends  Gobena Huluka Chair	Getahun Benti <i>“Majority” within Majority: The Demographics of Major Urban Areas in Oromia and Oromo-Minority Relations</i>  Haile Hirpa <i>All Oromos Must Have Permanent Last Names</i>  Daba Gedafa <i>Causes and Effects of Oromo Migration Since 1900</i>	Great Hall
	<b>Session II</b> Health  Asfaw Beyene Chair	B. Dugassa, Ph.D; T. Taye, MD; A. Negassa, PhD <i>Iodine Deficiency Disorder: A Major Public Health Problem in Western Oromia</i>	Mississippi Hall

**Sunday, August 3**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>EVENT/PROGRAM</b>	<b>PRESENTER</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
9:00 – 10:00 AM	Registration	Local Organizing Committee	Lobby
10:00 – 11:00 AM	Youth Panel	Lense Solomon – Convener Habptamu Abdissa and Messay Tamrat – Panelists Kulani Jalata The Political Economy of Diseases in Oromia	Great Hall
11:00 -11:10	Commemoration	Dr. Asfaw Beyene – Reflecting on the life of Obbo Taye Taffarra	Great Hall
11:10 – 12:00 Noon	Keynote Address II	Obbo Diribi Demissie Boku - President Macha-Tulamma Association	Great Hall
12:00 – 1:00 PM	<b>Session III</b> Art and Culture  Mesfin Abdi Chair	Daga Abdulle Said & Damitu Mamma Argo <i>Oromo Art as a Political Resistance</i>  Zakia Posey <i>A Look at Ethnicity in America: the Challenges and Prospects of its use in Oromo Diaspora Social Mobilization</i>  Steven W. Thomas <i>The Oromo Renaissance within the Marketplace of World Literature</i>	Great Hall
	<b>Session IV</b> Agriculture & Economics  Assafa Jalata Chair	Harwood David Schaffer <i>Boserup and Ag/Econ Policy in Oromo-led Government</i>  Musa Guro Hawasi <i>The Impact of Land Privatization on the Pastoral Life of the Karrayyu Oromo</i>  Bichaka Fayissa <i>The Contributions of Social Movements to the Oromo National Struggle for Political and Economic Power in Ethiopia</i>	Mississippi Hall
1:00 – 2:00 PM	Lunch Break	Local Committee	Lobby
2:00 – 3:00 PM	<b>Session V</b>  Education /Social Issues  Abebe Adugna Chair	Kebede Feda <i>Challenges and Significance of Education in Oromia: Evidence from Family Size, Birth Order and income Diversifications</i>  Debissa Arero Godana <i>Oromo Culture and Language</i>  Rundassa Eshete <i>The Oromo Identity, the Story of Spin, Scandal and the Selling of Oromo Cause</i>	Mississippi Hall
	<b>Session VI</b>  Human Rights  Dunee Benti Chair	Fowsia Abdulkadir <i>The Role of Mothers in the Struggle for Self Determination: The Case of the Somali Mothers in the Ogaden</i>  Garoma Wakessa and Tesfaye Deressa <i>Human Rights and Development in Oromia</i> Habtamu Dugo <i>Oromo Diaspora, Quest for Freedom and Democracy, and New Media</i>	Great Hall

TIME	EVENT/PROGRAM	PRESENTER	LOCATION
3:00 – 4:00 PM	<b>Session VII</b>  Historical Perspectives  Bichaka Fayissa Chair	Mekuria Bulcha <i>Some Notes from Unacknowledged History: Episodes of Oromo Resistance against and Complicity in the Abyssinian Conquest of Western Oromia in the late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century</i>  Mohammed Hassen <i>A forgotten Oromo Nationalist</i>  Seifudein Adem <i>Ali A. Mazrui and the Oromos</i>	Great Hall
	<b>Session VIII</b>  Philosophy  Mosisa Aga Chair	Charles C. Verharen <i>Comparing Oromo and Ancient Egyptian Philosophy</i>  Lubee Birru <i>Culture of Reconciliation Among Oromo Nation</i>  Jimma D. Tuffa <i>A Roman Summer: The Role of Geography, Culture and Social Environment in the Development of Oromo Athlete and athletics in the Ethiopian Empire</i>	Mississippi Hall
4:00 – 4:15 PM	Break		
4:15 – 5:15 PM	<b>Session IX</b>  Culture & Language  Mekuria Bulcha Chair	Sorasay Ragassa <i>Oromo Cultural Revival</i>  Kadiro Amae Elemo <i>Afaan Oromo for the Federal Working Language</i>  Debela Goshu Amante <i>The Sociolinguistic Profile of Afaan Oromo for the Federal Working Language</i>	Mississippi Hall
	<b>Session X</b>  Government  Guluma Gamada Chair	Mohammed Hussein <i>Ethiopian nation State: Theory and Practice</i>  Michael Mamo <i>Electoral Competition, Checks and Balances, and Economic Development: Growth prospects in an independent Oromia</i>  Debissa Arero Godana <i>Oromo Political Movements: Challenges and opportunities for Unity</i>	Great Hall
5:15 – 6:15 PM	<b>Session XI</b> Peace and Conflict Resolution Bonnie Holcomb and Ezekiel Gebissa Co-Chairs	<i>Panel Discussion: Toward Understanding and Interpreting the Oromo Concept of Peace Philosophical and Practical Dimensions</i> Panelists: Charles Verharen Bonnie Holcomb Lubbee Birru Ezekiel Gebissa	Great Hall
	<b>Session XII</b> Faith Dararaa Maati Chair	<i>Round Table Discussion: The Book Daaniyaa and Waqeffannaa</i> Participants: Ibsa Ahmed Haile Hirpa Lammu Shunna	Mississippi Hall
6:15 – 8:00 PM	2 <sup>nd</sup> Business Meeting & Closing Remarks	OSA members	Great Hall

## OSA Network

It has been reported that on March 28-29, 2008 one of our esteemed scholar Dr. Mohammed Hassen Ali was invited by Cornell University and New York African Studies Association (NYASA) to speak on the issue of human rights in Ethiopia. Dr Mohammed presented a paper titled: "*Human Rights Abuses in Ethiopia: The Case of the Oromo*". The presentation was so-well received by the audience, as the words of appreciation and positive feedback afterwards testify. The report further highlights that nearly all of the audience knew little or nothing about the Oromo situation before the lecture. Dr Mohammed also attended the symposium organized in honor of Dr Ali A. Mazrui's 75th birthday at

Cornell University concurrently held with the annual meeting of the New York African Studies Association. Dr. Mohammed served as chair of one of the two panels on the life and scholarship of Dr Mazrui.

At this event, Dr. Seifudein Adem also presented two papers - one at the NYASA meeting and the other at Mazrui symposium. Dr. Seifudein was later on unanimously elected to serve on the executive board of the association.

OSA would like to extend its congratulations to Drs Mohammed and Seifudein.

## Letter from Dr. Trevor Trueman

Dear OSA Members,

I am writing this short note for three interrelated purposes. The first is to draw OSA members attention to the August 2008 Oromia Support Group's (OSG), report on human rights abuses in Ethiopia, which was just completed. I urge OSA members to buy the current report from OSG members, who will participate in OSA Conference in Minneapolis. I am sorry I will not be able to join you during the conference. Though absent physically, I will be with you in spirit during the conference. The second is to inform you that OSG has very serious financial problems. I request conference participants to make small donations as they did last year. I requested Dr. Mohammed Hassen, Obbo Tasisa Moti and Obbo Redwan Hamza to collect donations for OSG the third is to briefly introduce OSG to new OSA members and provide you with the content of the current issue of OSG.

The Oromia Support Group (OSG) is a non-political organization which attempts to raise awareness of human rights abuses in Ethiopia. OSG was established in

1994 by Trevor Trueman, a medical doctor, who worked among the Oromo refugees in the Sudan from 1988 to 1990. Since 1994 OSG has produced massive data which establish patterns of human rights violations in Oromia, Oromo regional state in Ethiopia. OSG has now reported 4,160 extra-judicial killings and 944 disappearances of civilians suspected of supporting groups opposing the government. Hundreds of thousands of civilians have been placed in illegal detention, where torture and rape are commonplace. Most of these detainees are Oromo. The documented extrajudicial killings and disappearances of those suspected of supporting groups opposed to the government, represents no more than small percentage of the actual killings and disappearances, especially in Oromia. The 46 page Oromia support Group report catalogues not only the killings, disappearances and detentions in Oromia, but also in other regional states in Ethiopia. It also includes Ethiopian government death squads in Kenya as well as the torture and forced deportations of refugees from several countries to Ethiopia, where many will face detention and torture, while some may be executed as it happened a number of times in the past.

**Human Rights Abuses in Ethiopia**  
**2007 – 2008**  
**OROMIA SUPPORT GROUP REPORT**

44 Pages

August 2008

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Dr. Trevor Trueman  
Chairman of United Kingdom based OSG