

OSA Newsletter

Oromo Studies Association



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1. Message from OSA President

Dear OSA Members,

I would like to extend my personal greetings on behalf of the current OSA Executive Committee members. The newly elected OSA Executive Committee are President elect, Dr. Beyan Asoba; Treasurer, Adde Tsehay Silga; Secretary, Dr. Melaku Mekonnen and JOS Editor, Dr. Ezekiel Gebissa. In addition, Dr. Asfaw Beyene, Dr. Gudata Hinika, and Dr. Mesfin Abdi were elected to OSA Board of Directors. Complete list of OSA officers is given at OSA website: <http://www.orumostudies.org>.

The brand new OSA Executive Committee including myself would like to thank you for believing in each of us to lead you collectively during our term in office. We humbly accept the responsibility with great accord and request your involvement by making presentations, submitting manuscripts, making financial donations, recruiting new members and volunteering to serve in different ad hoc committees. OSA Executive Officers expect your participation to make OSA an exemplary Oromo institution that has endured the test of time and is still growing. These Officers are elected to serve and lead you individually and collectively and are at your fingertips if you want to contact them and share your ideas and inspirations. OSA officers will do their utmost best to accomplish their specific

and collective responsibilities to realize OSA objectives.

2. The 2006 OSA Annual Conference

I would like to thank the great efforts of our past OSA President and my good friend Dr. Asfaw Beyene who worked creatively, actively and tirelessly to serve OSA. He invited and secured the presence of internationally recognized Gada experts, academicians, politicians and individuals of different professions to 2006 OSA Conference. This resulted to very high attendance, increased OSA membership and international exposure. The keynote speech was delivered by Obbo Dabbassa Guyyo, a living legend and an internationally recognized authority on Gada principles.

There were thirteen panels with 3-4 presenters in each panel who made very interesting quality presentations. Most of the abstracts of these papers are published in the 2005 OSA Proceedings, and complete text of these papers will be published in the 2006 OSA Proceedings. Presenters, please send your paper to Dr. Beyan Asoba at bhasoba@msn.com as a Microsoft word attachment (if possible) as soon as possible.

This year's OSA awards went to Obbo Dabbassa Guyyo, Obbo Sissay Ibis (post mortem), Obbo Lenco Lata and Dr. Hamdessa Tusso. Congratulation to all! In addition, Dr. Asfaw

recognized and awarded Dr. Bonnie (Qabbane) Holcomb, Dr. Bahiru Duguma, Dr. Asafa Jalata, Dr. Misigana Muleta, Dr. Abebe Adugna and Dr. Guluma Gamada for their outstanding contributions to OSA.

Dr. Asfaw's achievements are the collective efforts of an executive committee that included Dr. Abebe Adugna, Dr. Gudata Hanika, Dr. Guluma Gameda and me who worked ceaselessly behind the scenes to produce such a success. They vigorously discussed issues, made suggestions and worked hard collectively and produced a Mid-term OSA Conference lead by Adde Qabbane, twelve OSA Newsletters, a protest letter and news releases, an outstanding OSA annual conference, the 2005 OSA Proceedings with the 2006 OSA conference abstracts and Volume 13 (1&2) of Journal of Oromo Studies (JOS). Improvements to OSA website, financial transactions, record keeping, and many others were accomplished. In fact, the work of the past executive committee was the result of the ad hoc committees and OSA members at large who participated at every level whenever they were asked to do so. Truly, OSA members are the backbone of the organization.

The Minneapolis local OSA organizing committee headed by Obbo Radwan made us feel at home. It would be almost impossible for organization like OSA to conduct annual meetings without the full support and participation of the local organizing committee. Obbo Radwan's team secured hall,

manned registration, provided beverages, arranged for on site lunch and helped in selling books and JOS. The Conference Hall was equipped with multimedia accessories with dinning hall style arrangement. I personally loved it because of its majestic look with very high ceiling and large windows. Truly, the Twin Cities are an Oromo country and we all enjoyed being in the midst of so many Oromos outside of Oromia. I lift my hat to all the local organizing committee members. Since you made us so proud, and you were so good, OSA members have awarded you to host us again. We all are coming back and expecting even better from you guys.

3. OSA at 21!

Dear OSA Family,

OSA has not only made it to two decades of service but has broadened its role, vitality and vision of purpose. Please refer to OSA Newsletter Vol.20 (1) on OSA website for a brief summary of what OSA has accomplished in its twenty years of existence. Age is a very important category in gada system and the total sum of what each generation contributes determines the success or failure of that society. OSA has grown through the tender years of childhood and the hormone ravaged teenage years and is now rushing for the 21gun salute in less than a year. Twenty-one is very special because it is 3x7. Both 3 (=2+1) and 7 have astrological and biblical significances. In this corner of the earth where I

reside (Alabama, USA), you must be 21 years of age before you can legally buy and consume alcohol though you can vote, join military services, get married, etc., at age 18. There must be something that makes you a complete adult once you turn 21 as opposed to when you are 18 or 20. Let us together help OSA turn 21 with enthusiasm, excitement and anticipation that is accorded to it. Adulthood could be as tasking and self-destructive as any other growth stages. Hence, OSA needs all the necessary precautions to grow as a normal as it possibly can. I hope and believe OSA will zoom through the coming many challenging years with flying colors.

OSA is filled with promises and expectations during this calendar year. OSA's objective of promoting Oromo studies from A-Z, producing first rated Oromo studies experts, cooperating with non-Oromo scholars to increase Oromo scholarship and facilitating a means to achieve it can be realized if all OSA members dedicate and rededicate themselves to these causes. OSA is alive and growing. This statement by itself is historical since many similar organizations have come and gone for different reasons. OSA is alive because of its dedicated members who carried all the necessary burdens at very high personal sacrifices. They worked together, contributed money, sacrificed their time, made presentations, submitted manuscripts and volunteered for every position the association needed to accomplish its goals. They still do, but I request your participation so that you step in and pay the scarifies OSA demands. Because

OSA belongs to you, it can only grow if you are willing to do your part. No role is too little or unimportant. It is the collective effort of the doers that will keep OSA rolling. I, as your president, humbly request nothing less than your full participation and call on each of you to do just that. Your elected OSA Officers collectively believe there will not be any indifference in OSA that we cannot tackle together, because OSA is too valuable and each member is too important not to embrace OSA. We all are a member of an OSA family.

4. OSA Ad hoc Committees

We have envisioned many tasks that would be accomplished through ad hoc committees and your unreserved participation:

- (1) **Membership:** OSA needs loyal, diverse and active members. New members with fresh ideas, talents and disciplines will help OSA rejuvenate. OSA should make conscious efforts to recruit more women and youth to membership and leadership, and utilize their contributions to Oromo studies. If each current OSA member just recruits one member (Oromo or non-Oromo) within one year, OSA membership will easily double. Let us do that because OSA lacks both quantity and quality members to adequately accomplish its objectives. OSA is a reflection of its members. We have already three individuals, Dr. Seifudein Adem, Dr.

Eshsetu Beshada and Obbo Daba Shabara Gedafa, a Ph.D. student, who have joined OSA last month. I do say welcome home to each of them on OSA behalf. Dr. Assefa Regassa (gelet006@umi.edu) has volunteered to lead the new membership drive. Please e-mail him name of your recruits and/or any way he could help you accomplish this goal.

- (2) **Fundraising:** OSA without money will not have a hall to meet, multimedia set up, no invited guest speakers, cannot publish JOS and OSA Proceedings, no website, and many more. Money is not everything, but it is central to OSA activities. So far, most of OSA incomes are generated from membership and registrations fees, and donations. Dr. Bahiru Dhuguma (bahiruduguma@aol.com) has graciously volunteered to tackle this task again. He did superbly last calendar year and needs your help. Please plan and give to OSA so that money will not hinder OSA's growth and services. We need to raise a minimum of \$5000.00+ until July 2007, and you can imagine what OSA can do if we raise \$10,000.00! Please send your donation to Adde Xahaay, OSA Treasure, P.O. Box 32391, Fridley, MN 55432.
- (3) **Bylaw:** This committee will continue with the same agenda of reviewing OSA bylaws, make recommendations to the general assembly and incorporating approved

bylaws. I am asking the same individual as last calendar year, Dr. Guluma Gamada, Adde Qabanne, Dr. Ezekiel Gebissa and Obbo Abraham Mosissa to continue working on these very important component of our organization. Through reviews and amendment to OSA constitution, we can address ambiguities, concerns and working practices of OSA.

- (4) **Review:** I have asked Adde Qabanne to lead a team of OSA insiders and experts so that OSA reach its realistic potential by addressing important organizational, financial and outreach components of the association. Honest and objective assessment of OSA activities will help address existing and future problems.
- (5) **Oromia:** The goal of this ad hoc committee is to distribute important OSA and other Oromo-related publications to major educational libraries in Oromia in particular and Ethiopia in general. This outreach team uses established and yet to be established contacts to realize its goals. It will encourage Oromo and non-Oromo intellectuals in Oromia and Ethiopia to be OSA members and also contribute to OSA publications. OSA belongs to them as much as it belongs to each of you. Dr. Ezekiel Gebissa has volunteered to spearhead this mission and I ask you all to join in and help him accomplish this task.

- (6) **Unity:** I would like to directly quote what Dr. Asfaw jotted down last year for this team, “Obviously OSA is a neutral research body, but it is not neutral on collective Oromo needs. In fact, as a collection of Oromo minds, OSA has a scholarly duty to play a leading role in addressing serious Oromo issues to facilitate the unity of the Oromo people without favoring any Oromo political organization. Fear of partiality should not paralyze OSA, and we should take calculated, careful, and scholarly measures to address current problems of the Oromo struggle”. Two days of annual conference and presentations a year is not what OSA is all about. OSA members are diverse functionally and that talent should be exploited to draw a roadmap and facilitate Oromo liberation. I am again asking Dr. Asafa Jalata (ajalata@utk.edu) to create a team of scholars and address these issues to optimize cooperation among Oromo political organization.
- (7) **Youth:** The Qubee Generation is flexing its muscle all over the town and they are here to stay. OSA without its talented and idealistic Oromo youth members is a dead organization. I am inviting our youth to make OSA their organization where they will shine and make known their presence by participating in every function of this organization. The future of OSA depends on and will be defined by our youth who are

populating university campuses and high schools. Adde Arfasse Gamada (arfasseg@yahoo.com) has volunteered to lead this team to energize OSA with youth power.

- (8) **Oromo Medical Association in North America:** One of OSA’s objectives is to create a pool of Oromo experts on a given discipline who will cooperate and form subcommittees within OSA to fully articulate the crucial need of our people in their specific fields. Such pool of experts will know the burning issues of the day in their fields and professionally contribute to the knowledge base it demands. Our past OSA secretary and current Board member Dr. Gudata Hinika (gudata@msn.com) will lead this effort to finalize the working mechanism and goals of this subcommittee. OSA enthusiastically supports this endeavor and anticipates more discipline oriented subcommittees in the future.
- (9) More ad hoc committees, short and long-term initiatives, and OSA 2007 Theme and Conference will be upcoming in the next OSA Newsletter.

In the coming many months, OSA Executive Committee will be addressing many critically important issues as related to OSA. We also want to hear from you and do expect your inputs. As you might have noticed above, we did not pick yet the theme for the 2007 OSA

Conference. Your timely suggestion is appreciated.

Thanks for your time and I do promise short and brief newsletters in the future.

If not now, when? If not you, then who?

Together, we can do more!!

Nagaan,

Jobana Huluka

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