

The University of Florida's

CENTER FOR
**AFRICAN
STUDIES**

presents the

**Gwendolen M. Carter
CONFERENCE**

February 27- 28, 2009

African Creative Expressions

Mother Tongue & Other Tongues



The Center for African Studies

2009 GWENDOLEN M. CARTER CONFERENCE

African Creative Expressions: Mother Tongue and Other Tongues

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This year marks the 25th year that the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida has organized annual lectures or a conference in honor of the late distinguished Africanist scholar, Gwendolen M. Carter. Gwendolen Carter devoted her career to scholarship and advocacy concerning the politics of inequality and injustice, especially in southern Africa. She also worked hard to foster the development of African Studies as an academic enterprise. She was perhaps best known for her pioneering study *The Politics of Inequality: Sounce Africa Since 1948* and the co-edited four-volume *History of African Politics in South Africa, From Protest to Challenge* (1972-1977).

In the spirit of her career, the annual Carter lectures offer the university community and the greater public the perspectives of Africanist scholars on issues of pressing importance to the peoples and societies of Africa. Since 2004, the Center has (with the generous support of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences) appointed a Carter Faculty Fellow to serve as convener of the conference. Dr. Akintunde Akinyemi, an associate professor in the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures is the 2009 Carter Conference Fellow. Please check the back over of this program for a complete list of the Carter conference themes since its inception in 1984.



Conference Convener

Professor Akintunde Akinyemi lectures in the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures at the University of Florida in Gainesville. He specializes in Yoruba language and literature, and does comparative work on African oral literature and popular culture. His articles have appeared in peer-reviewed journals, including *Research in African Literatures*, *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, *Inquiry in African Languages and Literatures*, *Modern Language Journal*, *Proverbium*, and *Translation Review*. Dr Akinyemi is the author of the book on the oral historical tradition of the famous Yoruba city of Oyo, *Yoruba Royal Poetry: A Socio-Historical Exposition and Annotated Translation*, he also co-edited *Emerging Perspectives on Akinwumi Isola* with Toyin Falola, and *Sàngó in Africa and the African Diaspora* with Joel E. Tishken and Toyin Falola. He won the French government's SSHN and CIES fellowships in 1994 and 1995, and held the post-doctoral fellowship and Europe research fellowship of the German Alexander von Humboldt Foundation from 1999 to 2001.

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African Creative Expressions: Mother Tongue and Other Tongues

Friday, February 27 | Reitz Union Room 282

8:00- 8:45	Coffee & Tea
8:45- 9:00	Welcome & Opening Remarks
9:00- 10:15	Keynote Address Karin Barber <i>University of Birmingham, UK</i> “Text and the Unexpected in African Creative Expressions”
10:15-10:30	Break
10:30-12:30	I. African Creative Writing & the Language Question Chair - Naana Banyiwā Horne <i>Santa Fe College, Gainesville</i> Ken Bugul (Mariétou Mbaye Bileoma) <i>Senegal/Benin Republic</i> “What is a Tongue? What is Mother Tongue? What are other Tongues?” Boubacar Boris Diop , <i>Senegal</i> “Langues Africaines et Creation Litteraire” translated and presented in English as “African Languages and Literary Creation” by Abdourahmane Idrissa <i>University of Florida</i> Tanure Ojaide <i>University of North Carolina- Charlotte</i> “I no go Sidon Look: Dialoguing with my People” Akinwumi Isola <i>Nigeria</i> “The Purpose of Literature in Africa”
12:30-2:30	Lunch
2:30-4:30	II. Issues in Contemporary African Literature Chair - Ousmane Sene <i>University Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, Senegal</i> Eckhard Breitinger <i>Bayreuth University, Germany</i> “Cultural Diversity, Linguistic Multiplicity, and National Unity: Rose Mbowā’s Mother Uganda and Her Children” Robert Simon <i>Kennesaw State University</i> “The Poetry of Lúis Kandjimbo in a Post Colonial Context” Rose Sau Lugano <i>University of Florida</i> “Voicing the Silenced through African-Language Texts: A Case Study of <i>Moolade</i> and <i>Tumaini</i> ” Claudia Hoffmann <i>University of Florida</i> “Negotiating the Transnational Discourse: Undocumented Immigrants & Identity Formation in Nigerian Cinema”
4:30-4:45	Break
4:45-6:15	Documentary Film: “Against All Odds: African Languages and Literatures into the 21 st century” Charles Cantalupo <i>The Pennsylvania State University</i>
7:30	Reception Keene Faculty Center - Dauer Hall

2009 GWENDOLEN M. CARTER CONFERENCE

African Creative Expressions: Mother Tongue and Other Tongues

Saturday, February 27 | Grinter Hall Room 404

- 8:30-9:00 Coffee & Tea
- 9:00-11:00 **III. *Translating African Literature/African Literature in Translation***
Chair - **Alioune Sow** *University of Florida*
- Christiane Fioupou** *Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail, France*
“Translating African Literature into French: Texts, Contexts, and Palimpsests”
- Akinloye Ojo** *University of Georgia- Athens*
“*Abinibi* produces the Best Ability: Yoruba Language Splendor & the Poetry of Akinwumi Isola”
- Charles Cantalupo** *The Pennsylvania State University*
“The Story on *Who Needs a Story*”
- Thomas Hale** *The Pennsylvania State University*
“Preserving the Mother Tongue: Toward a Symbiotic Relationship Between Performer & Researcher”
- 11:00-11:15 Break
- 11:15-1:15 **IV. *Language & the Media in Africa***
Chair - **Michael Leslie** *University of Florida*
- Charles Bwenge** *University of Florida*
“Operating Globally, Speaking Locally: Billboard Advertisements in Dar es Salaam”
- Taiwo Olunlade** *Lagos State University, Nigeria*
“The Role of Language in the Print Media in Nigeria”
- Kole-Ade Odutola** *University of Florida*
“Yoruba language on the Internet: State of Affairs and Stating the Fears”
- Adesola Olateju** *University of Wisconsin- Madison*
“Language Engineering in Yoruba News casting on the Electronic Media”
- 1:15-2:30 Lunch
- 2:30-4:00 **V. *Popular Culture, Language, & Creativity***
Chair - **Fiona McLaughlin** *University of Florida*
- Onokome Okome** *University of Alberta, Canada*
“The Language of Nollywood”
- Matthew H. Brown** *University of Wisconsin- Madison*
“The Dialogic Imagination of *Lágbájá*”
- Katrina Daly Thompson** *University of California- Los Angeles*
“Representing Ethnicity through Language in *Bongoflava*”
- 4:00-5:00 Plenary Session
Eileen Julien *Indiana University*
Biodun Jeyifo *Harvard University*

ABSTRACTS

Karin J. Barber

“Text and the Unexpected in African Creative Expressions”

Creative verbal compositions in Africa, whether oral or written, encompass numerous domains of knowledge. Poems are the bearers of philosophy; fiction proposes alternative forms of governance. History can be crystallized in praise epithets, and knowledge of the medicinal properties of plants in proverbs. Because of this, the formal properties of such texts – their textuality, or existence as texts – is often by-passed by historians, philosophers, anthropologists and theologians, who seek to extract the informational kernel from the literary chaff. Textuality is simultaneously overvalued and undervalued. It is *overvalued* in the sense that external conceptions of genre tend to define what is looked at, and in what light. Texts are identified externally as poetry, fiction, history: and those texts that do not fit neatly into those categories are simply overlooked, or reclassified. It is *undervalued* in the sense that historians, philosophers, anthropologists and representatives of other disciplines often by-pass the specific form of a text, in order to extract something relevant to their discipline.

What we as textual critics – “literary” specialists – can restore to this expanded, multidisciplinary domain is attention to textuality itself: to how words are constituted as texts, how forms of utterance are made to stick, and how they relate to other forms. Without this, historians, philosophers and anthropologists are walking blindfold. And in paying attention to genre, language, and intertextuality, we find constant surprises. In old established genres, but also in hip hop and urban street theatre we see multi-generic forms, multi-lingual inventions, genres that balloon out into an array of other genres, symbiotic, mutating, and deeply allusive forms. From a textual point of view, Africa today is truly the continent that “always brings something new”.

Eckhard Breitingger

“Cultural Diversity, Linguistic Multiplicity, and National Unity: Rose Mbowa’s Mother Uganda and Her Children”

Rose Mbowa was Uganda’s most distinguished actress in the 1970s, but also a director, playwright, and long time head of the Department of Music, Dance, and Drama at Makerere University. She was last seen on stage as Mother Courage in the Luganda version of Brecht’s classic on civilian survival in times of war. Rose Mbowa died in 1999. When Rose Mbowa was commissioned to create a play in celebration of Uganda’s cultural diversity in 1986 by the London Africa Centre, Uganda was acutely suffering from the aftermath of more than 20 years of civil war and ethno politics. Like the Germans and the Belgians in next door Rwanda, British colonialism had sown the seeds of discord between the “warlike tribes” in Uganda’s North (recruited into the army and the police force) and the Bantu population in the Centre/South. Rose Mbowa deployed a kaleidoscope of exemplary scenarios from the different regions of the country, based on the empirical folkloric research of her drama students. Seasonal and social rituals are presented in their respective indigenous idiom (language, costume, choreography). Rose Mbowa thus creates a comprehensive picture of the cultural diversity of Uganda. This episodic structure of the “folklore revue” is however superseded by a national superstructure that combines the loose

sequence of episodes in indigenous languages with thoroughgoing plot in English that emphasizes the newly regained, but still unstable national unity. Rose Mbowa thus illustrates the delicate balance between languages policies, cultural policies and the need for national coherence.

Matthew H. Brown

“The Dialogic Imagination of Lágbájá”

Lágbájá is the pseudonym that the Nigerian musician Bisade Ologunde adopted for the release of his first solo album in 1993. The pseudonym is a Yorùbá term that means, roughly, “somebody,” “anybody,” “everybody,” or “nobody.” The musician reifies his pseudonym by persistently donning an *egúngún*-style mask in music videos, on album covers, and in other public appearances. The concealment of his private identity has been so complete that Ologunde claims the ability to walk the streets of Lagos, maskless, without being recognized (Olaniyan 2004). While this serves a practical purpose for the man himself, the mask and the name have primarily philosophical implications for the artist. Rather than drowning into a sea of facelessness, however, Lágbájá has become a unique and well-known icon on the Nigerian popular music scene.

In this paper, the contemporary, popularized re-appropriation of traditional forms—musical, linguistic, and visual—lies at the heart of the Lágbájá aesthetic and what I will refer to as the artist’s “dialogic imagination.” The concept of “dialogism” comes from the Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin, who claims that all discourses engage in a dialogue with prior or salient discourses. Two forms of dialogism that Bakhtin identifies are “stylization” and “parody” (Bakhtin 1981). I will show that, by engaging in stylized and parodying dialogues with a variety of cultural precedents—both old (Yoruba proverbs and oral traditions) and new (the music of Fela Anikulapo-Kuti)—Lagbaja exemplifies Bakhtin’s proposals. One of the most interesting characteristics of Lágbájá’s dialogism is that it is conducted in a range of linguistic forms. Separately and together, the artist has employed Yoruba, English, and Pidgin in his lyrics. On his latest album, however, Lágbájá has abandoned the use of Pidgin. Though he refers to this in the album’s liner notes, he gives no reason why. Questions must therefore be raised about the role of language in the dialogues that he enters. The central hypothesis that will be offered, as well as problematized, is the notion that Lágbájá uses his “mother tongue” to engage in dialogues with Yoruba cultural precedents, and “other tongues” to engage in dialogues with global socio-historical issues.

Ken Bugul

“What is a tongue? What is mother tongue? What are other tongues?”

Writing in French does not mean that I am French. I am using French words but I am not writing in French tongue, because I am not French. I was not born from a French mother; I did not grow in French environment. I was not even born or grown in the francophone country called Senegal, I was born in a place called Ndoucoumane where what we call mother tongue is completely different from other parts of Senegal. For me the mother tongue is not only words and sentences.

Mother tongue is feeling, smells, tones, sounds, touch. I am writing in French, but I am not writing French. I am writing in my environment, the environment of my birth, of my growth.

As a young girl I was much closer to the so called mother tongue because I was living and staying in women's environment while boys were growing in men's environment; this is how things used to be in most African traditional societies. I was prepared to be a girl and that means with all the legacy of transmission of the sociocultural traditions that women in most African countries have to be the guardians. As a female and as a writer, the meaning of mother tongue has many senses and I'll go through the different influences which affect my writing and how I am using a "foreign" tongue, which is by the time being French.

Charles Bwenge

"Operating Globally, Speaking Locally: Billboard Advertisements in Dar es Salaam"

With particular reference to the billboard advertisement discourse in Dar es Salaam, the commercial capital of Tanzania, this study attempts to explore how transnational corporations are adjusting themselves or rather responding to the local cultures in which they operate their business.

As the globe has become increasingly integrated both economically and technologically – globalization, local spaces have also increasingly constituting themselves as real global markets, and consequently sites of convergence between global and local cultures to which both sides must adjust. In other words, such convergence has generated fascinating cultural dynamics. One of these cultural aspects central to success of any business is communicative interaction. In this regard, it is indisputable that English has emerged as a global business language and, undoubtedly, it facilitates international business transactions and communicative interactions efficiently. But it does not work effectively in all business spaces as a result leading to what could be referred to as a communicative gap in the global market between global operators and potential local customers. Consequently some communicative pragmatics becomes indispensable. One of the areas in which local spaces manifest is advertising discourse. A transnational corporation may make fluency in English a requirement for hiring local staff members, which is important for business communication, but it cannot make it a requirement for every member of the targeted local community.

It is in this view that such corporations need to adjust themselves to the local cultures and, conversely, local cultures to the global culture. The paper first considers advertisement discourse as a communicative event, and then moves to the specifics of billboard advertisement. Next, it provides a historic and ethnographic description of billboard advertisement in Dar es Salaam and then presents a cultural analysis within the parameters of global products and local linguistic culture with specific illustrations from financial services, mobile phone service, and soft drink products, and finally concluding remarks.

Charles Cantalupo

"The Story on Who Needs a Story"

Who Needs a Story: Contemporary Eritrean Poetry in Tigrinya, Tigre and Arabic presents poems from three of Eritrea's major languages in their original scripts of Ge'ez and Arabic and in English translation. Featuring poets who for the most part have never been translated and have remained unknown outside of Eritrea, the anthology was produced in Africa by a publisher making its first foray into the international bookseller's market. "The Story on *Who Needs a Story*" focuses on the means of cultural production that led to its publication, recounting difficulties with the book's composition, printing, copyright, distribution, and more.

Boubacar Boris Diop

"Langues Africaines et Creation Litteraire" (African Languages and Literary Creation)

This essay examines the reasons which justify and prepare the embrace of African languages by African creative writers. The concept of African literature as usually accepted by contemporary scholars and African writers themselves has been deeply shaped by the colonial implantation of European languages in Africa. The conventional belief is that African literature was born when Africans started writing in European language and script in the early twentieth century. The notion is astonishing and even shocking when we come to think that it applies to a continent which has expressed itself in literary fashions and in its own languages since the birth of humankind – of which it is the cradle. Moreover, it hinges on a very artificial phenomenon, whereby creative individuals disconnect their expressive powers from the words of their own human environment, and end up writing without reaching a genuine public. As a result, colonially-inherited African literature is fated to perish, and a review of literature in the Wolof languages as well as of actions and organizations geared to developing the written usage of African languages indicate the path of the future.

Christiane Fioupou

"Translating African Literature into French: Texts, Contexts, and Palimpsests"

This paper will draw examples from Nigerian literature—and more specifically from the poetry of Wole Soyinka and Niyi Osundare—to investigate some of the issues that are raised when translating their works into French. How significant are the "thresholds" of the poem (for instance its title and subtitle, the author's dedication and his own footnotes, when any)? Is there a specific reader or listener to whom the poem, and hence the translation, is addressed? Is there an « ideal translator » likely to decipher and recapture the literary, linguistic, cultural, historical, and intertextual references of a multi-layered text written in English but steeped in the mother tongue and other tongues? Is there also an "ideal reader;" or are we translating for the "common reader"—and who is the common reader? Can the translator occasionally resort to his own footnotes or other thresholds to conjure

up the context and enhance the sense and sound of a multicultural palimpsest? I propose to use my experience as a translator of Soyinka's and Osundare's poetry to suggest some tentative answers to these challenging questions.

Thomas A. Hale

*"Preserving Verbal Art in the Mother Tongue:
Toward a Symbiotic Relationship Between Performer and Researcher"*

One of the inevitable questions that arises in any conversation about the recording, transcription, translation, and publication of narratives and other forms recorded from oral sources in West Africa is the relationship between the researcher, African or non-African, and the narrator or singer. That contact is fraught with conflict as each party to the encounter negotiates what it expects in the way of recordings or rewards, both short and long term.

During the period from 1980 to 1997, I recorded interviews with and oral art from over 100 griots and griottes in West Africa, France, and the United States. Other researchers, again, both African and non-African, reported their field experiences with these professionals and with non-professional performers in books, articles, and interviews as well as in informal conversations with me. They described many obstacles to working with these artisans of the word as well as situations in which both researcher and informant were on what might call in other contexts the same page.

The purpose of this paper is to show how not only the different expectations of each party to the encounter may conflict, but also how each—and especially the researcher—can contribute to establishing a symbiotic relationship that benefits both people.

Claudia Hoffmann

*"Negotiating the Transnational Discourse:
Undocumented Immigrants and Identity Formation in Nigerian Cinema"*

Transnationality, diaspora, and migration as concepts have been firmly embedded in social scientific as well as humanistic disciplines such as literature or film studies, but what is still missing, I argue, is a theoretical framework of undocumented migration and its representation in cinema. There is clearly a need to add to the debate of globalization and diaspora those global flows of people who have to remain invisible because they are largely unwanted in their respective host culture and the significance of their representation in cinema.

For the transnational subject who does not have legal status or has gained legal status through illegal action, agency is severely limited, which shapes discourse formation in the negotiation of the new transnational living space. In this paper, I attempt to analyze how this discourse formation is represented in recent Nigerian video films. I argue that Nigerian video films are especially interesting in this context because they have become more readily available in the diaspora in recent years. In contrast to literature, therefore, these movies are more likely to reach Nigerian expatriates, both legal and illegal, which emphasizes the significance of how visual images and the interpretation of a

diasporic discourse are informed by the diaspora, become part of global information flows, and consequently themselves inform the diaspora.

Akinwumi Isola

"The Purpose of Literature in Africa"

The primary purpose of literature is to empower culture, through the mother tongue, to define each group, or society's ways of living together and to understand the world. The paper discusses how this is done generally all over the world, but most especially in Africa. The problems that arose to destabilize African cultures, from "the curse of Columbus" through colonization to globalization are discussed. When the mother tongue was disempowered and other tongues learned to travel, literatures acquired other purposes, with disastrous developmental implications.

Rose Sau Lugano

*"Voicing the Silenced through African Languages:
A Case Study of Moolaade and Tumaini"*

Female circumcision or cutting is a very controversial topic. Like most issues related to sexuality, it has for a long time been clouded in secrecy and considered a taboo outside the acceptable forums in many African societies. Today it has been relocated from the deepest recesses of personal and private domain into the public debate. Historically, there has been many external interventions seeking to address the issue and many have had some measure of success. It has strongly been argued that effective campaign against the practice would most likely be that from the societies themselves, through their own means. This paper seeks to examine how two African creative artist, Clara Momanyi in her Swahili novel *Tumaini* (2006) and Ousmane Sembene in his Wolof movie *Moolaade* (2007) utilize African languages to destroy the silence that has surrounded this issue. In particular, it looks at how the writers allow the viewers and readers to critically experience an inward perspective of their societies.

Kole Odotola

"Yoruba language on the Internet: State of Affairs and Stating the Fears"

About eight years ago SIL International, a language development organization which helps in preserving lesser-known languages stated that "[i]n many parts of the world, speakers of previously 'unknown' languages (that is, unknown to speakers of 'major' languages) are beginning to make their mark on the world Wide Web and are using their own languages to do so." In this regard it is important to revisit the state of affairs of Yoruba language online. On that premise this presentation attempts a reconstruction of the state of affairs of Yoruba language online through the lens of privately funded technological interventions and user-friendly innovations. Beyond the hardware and software developments, it also focuses on a few of the websites and discussion groups where Yoruba language is used as a medium of communication and cultural education. Moving from the general to a

particular, the presentation probes into the heart of “*Tiwa-n-tiwa*” a Yoruba online discussion group with a view of constructing a picture of the effect of technology and dislocation on the kind of discussions participants to the discussion group engage in. In conclusion, it seeks to present how well Yoruba language with its complex orthography is fairing online.

Tanure Ojaide

“I No Go Sidon Look: Dialoguing with my People”

Since much of my writing has the Niger Delta region not only as its background but also its source of inspiration, images, and vision, Pidgin English, the region’s lingua franca, easily becomes an appropriate linguistic medium. Predicated on subject matter, themes, mood, and relevant communicative mode, my choice of the use of Pidgin in specific poems has to do with being socially and culturally relevant in the contexts of my Niger Delta background and ranging on the side of the common and underprivileged people. Expressing the plight of these people and of the area by giving voice to their fears and aspirations, as well as speaking to them and for them, using Pidgin becomes an imperative to affirm relevance and a measure of poetic and aesthetic validity. Using Pidgin English becomes one of the means of decolonizing and indigenizing modern African poetry. Furthermore, with its linguistic nuances and in-built wit, performance qualities, and aesthetics, Pidgin engages academic and non-academic audiences in ways that poetry written in Standard English does not.

Akinloye Ojo

“Abinibi produces the best Ability:

Yoruba Language splendor and the Poetry of Akinwumi Isola”

The mother tongue by simple definition is a person’s first acquired language and it is predictable in most cases that this will be the code in which the level of linguistic competence and performance of an individual (such as an African creative writer) will be highest. By this token, the mother tongue is the ‘*abinibi*’ language in which the writer’s native ability is best displaced. This view along with Africa’s complex social, linguistic and political history has greatly impacted the discussion about African languages and the production of literature on the continent. This presentation will attempt to highlight merits of this argument by discussing some of the unique features and bravura use of language in the poetic writings of the renowned African writer, Akinwumi Isola. As Akinyemi & Falola (2008) noted, Isola is “one of the very few highly productive African authors writing in indigenous languages whose works are original, creative, imaginative, and satisfying.” Isola, who writes in all the three genres of drama, fiction and poetry, has significantly contributed to the African language promotion efforts by producing most of his literary works in his mother tongue, Yoruba. Finally, as evidence for the indispensable value of African languages in African creative expressions, the presentation will provide some of the notable cultural and sociolinguistic challenges that we have encountered in translating Isola’s poetry to English.

Onookome Okome

“The Language of Nollywood”

There has been a spate of documentary films on Nollywood lately. They all lay claim to reading this Nigerian cinematic “wonder” from the “inside.” One common trend in the narratives of these documentary films is the emphasis on the extraordinary “third worldliness” in the films produced by Nollywood articulates. The consensus is that Nollywood is popular beyond itself. Perhaps the most lucid of these documentaries is *This is Nollywood*, which was released by California Newsreel in 2007. The blurb is heady and very apt: “*This is Nollywood* follows a typical shoot from first day to last, while the director, producer, actors, crew members and notables from the industry tell us how it all works, how they do it and why they believe locally produced media is essential to Africa.”

While it is now typical to raise the points that the Nollywood film is popular locally and that it is drawing concerted attention from the outside, not a lot is discussed in these documentary films (and in the spate of recent scholarly essays) about the linguistic character of the Nollywood film. I argue that the deployment of language is a crucial aspect of the Nollywood film. It is what has endeared it to the local public for the most part. This scholarly lacuna is at the heart of my presentation. My paper will deal with the linguistic character of the Nollywood film. I will argue, for example, that the popular appeal of the video film relies heavily on its deployment of common and accessible linguistic codes that cater for the varied needs of its internally differentiated audience.

This variety of linguistic codes inscribed in the spoken and cinematic language of the Nollywood film produces a field of aesthetically textured and culturally layered representations of the quotidian culture of contemporary city life in Nigeria. It takes into consideration the linguistic pluralism of the Nigerian city without forgetting the language of the city itself—the Pidgin English. My paper will also discuss the uses of the major ethnic languages— Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa and the Pidgin English in Nollywood. The ultimate point that the paper argues is that it is the deployment of the “cited” versions of these ethnic languages that makes the video film a truly African cinema. It is this “wise” and pragmatic deployment of language that is also partly responsible for the new, if not “aberrant,” cinematic coding that we see in the Nollywood film. Following from these points, I will conclude that it is the dialectical synthesis of the verbal and linguistic coding of the Nollywood film which is likely to spark a debate about the redefinition of cinematic symbolism in African cinematic discourse.

Adesola Olateju

“Language Engineering in Yoruba News casting on the Electronic Media”

The Yoruba Newscaster is a professional whose duties involve transmitting news items to his/her listeners/audience via the electronic media, the radio and the television. S/he faces a number of challenges in the course of his job, namely: translating news materials from English to the local language, in this case Yoruba, with highest degree of fidelity; the linguistic constraints involved in translating new

words and terminologies emanating from globalization and latest developments around the world from English to Yoruba; and finally, the question of professional integrity. Given the above challenges, the paper focuses on the Newscaster's coping strategies and adopts the theory of Standard Language for its analysis and discussion.

It is established in the paper that the coping strategy of the Newscaster is language engineering; a technique involving the employment of certain linguistic devices and translation techniques in creating new words and expressions. The paper concludes that the Newscaster may not be a literary artist, but s/he is a language artist of a sort, who, like his/her counterparts in the print media, requires linguistic competence, creativity and training in applied linguistics/translation studies to enhance professionalism.

Taiwo Olunlade

"The Role of Language in the Print Media in Nigeria"

English, the language of the former colonial masters of Nigeria, and three of the nation's indigenous languages (Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo) dominate all aspects of the print media in Nigeria; be it newspapers, magazines, books, handbills, posters, billboards, cartoons, and graffiti. This paper will examine the role of language in the print media in Nigeria. The paper will argue that the multi-lingua setting of Nigeria will continue to promote the relevance of the aforementioned languages in the production of their print media. However, the paper is quick to add that as long as English language continues to enjoy its elevated position as the official language (or *lingua franca*?) in Nigeria, the use of indigenous languages in the print media will continue to face serious challenges.

Robert Simon

"The Poetry of Luís Kandjimbo in a Post Colonial Context"

This paper proposes a discussion and analysis of the poetry of Luís Kandjimbo, a contemporary Angolan poet and scholar, within the greater context of Angola's Post Colonial literary and socio-historic

experience. Luís Kandjimbo's poetry reflects the Luso-African duality that the same word encompasses – the belonging to the African and Lusophone spaces while carving a unique identity from the two. I propose to study one poem in particular, "Lisboa" from *De De Vagares a Vestígios*. Through this poem we see the above-referenced themes, as well as the application of deconstructive techniques common in other works pertaining to the Lusophone literary space, such as those by Vasco Graça Moura, Joaquim Pessoa and the later works of Jorge de Sena. The study proposed will apply Post-Colonial critical theory in a socio-literary approach, utilizing the critical perspectives of Edward Said's *Orientalism* as its fundamental theoretical base.

Katrina Daly Thompson

"Representing Ethnicity through Language in Bongoflava"

Bongoflava, music with a "Tanzanian flavor" produced by young people, is a huge phenomenon in Tanzania and has received much scholarly attention in recent years. The majority of studies, however, have focused on the content of the lyrics at the expense of their form. While most *Bongoflava* is sung or rapped in (more or less) Standard Swahili, with occasional borrowed English expressions or popular slang, there are a number of artists who use other African languages in their work or use dialects of Swahili that mark their ethnicity. In this paper, I use Mr. Ebbo, a Maasai rapper, as an example, analyzing his use of both non-Standard Swahili and Maasai vocabulary and demonstrating that he marks his own ethnicity in both empowering and problematic ways.

BIOGRAPHIES



Akintunde Akinyemi lectures in the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, University of Florida in Gainesville. He specializes in Yoruba language and literature, and does comparative work on African oral literature and popular culture. His articles have appeared in peer-reviewed journals, including *Research in African Literatures*, *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, *Inquiry in African Languages and Literatures*, *Modern Language Journal*, *Proverbium*, and *Translation Review*. Dr Akinyemi is the author of the book on the oral historical tradition of the famous Yoruba city of Oyo, *Yoruba Royal Poetry: A Socio-Historical Exposition and Annotated Translation*, he also co-edited *Emerging Perspectives on Akinwumi Isola* with Toyin Falola, and *Sàngó in Africa and the African Diaspora* with Joel E. Tishken and Toyin Falola. He won the French government's SSHN and CIES fellowships in 1994 and 1995, and held the post-doctoral fellowship and Europe research fellowship of the German Alexander von Humboldt Foundation from 1999 to 2001.



Karin J. Barber is professor of Cultural Anthropology in the Center for West African Studies, The University of Birmingham, United Kingdom. She is internationally recognized as a leading scholar in the fields of Yoruba oral and written literature, Yoruba religious ideas and practices, and Yoruba popular traveling theater. Her principal research interests are the sociology of literature and popular culture, with special reference to the Yoruba-speaking people of Nigeria. In 2003, Dr. Barber was elected a Fellow of the British Academy. Her book, *The Generation of Plays: Yoruba Popular Life in Theater*, won the international Herskovits Award for the most important scholarly work in African Studies published in English during the preceding year, in 2001. Among Dr. Barber's other books are *West African Popular Theater*, with J. Collins and A. Richard, and *I Could Speak Until Tomorrow: Oriki, Women and the Past in a Yoruba Town* that won the Amaury Talbot Prize for African Anthropology, awarded by the Royal Anthropological Institute. Professor Barber is the current editor of *Africa*, the journal of the International African Institute.



Eckhard Breitinger is professor of African literature at the famous Institute of African Studies of the Bayreuth University in Germany. He completed his PhD on Gothic Novels in 1968, engaged in another study on American Radio and Film, but his main focus had definitely changed to postcolonial literatures. Research and visiting lectureships took him to Nsukka/Nigeria, Makerere Uganda, Kumasi/Ghana, Kenyatta and Moi University in Kenya, but also to Chancellor College Malawi and Stellenbosch/South Africa. Beyond his many academic publications and activities, he gained recognition as a translator of plays and poetry, but particularly with his theater photographs.



Matthew H. Brown is a graduate student in the Departments of English and African Languages and Literatures University of Wisconsin, Madison. A cultural studies scholar in the making, Matt's interest in Africa, includes Anglophone and Yoruba literature, music, and film. He works primarily with the writings of Wole Soyinka, contemporary Nigerian popular music, and the Nigerian popular film industry. He has been a Project Coordinator for the National African Language Resource Center, and Project Assistant for the African Storytelling on Wheels outreach program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is currently pursuing a major research project on the transnationalization of the southern Nigerian film industry and its implications for migration, diaspora, and globalization studies. Presently at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Brown has also studied at Truman State University, the University of Ghana-Legon, and Obafemi Awolowo University.



Ken Bugul is the pseudonym used by the Senegalese writer Mariètou Mbaye Biléoma. Her novel *Riwan ou le chemin de sable* [Riwan or the sandy track] was awarded the 1999 prestigious literary prize Grand Prix littéraire de l'Afrique noire. Born in Senegal during the French colonial period, Mariètou presently lives in Cotonou, Benin Republic as a full time creative writer. Following her primary school studies in her village, Mariètou Mbaye undertook her secondary schooling at the Lycée Malick Sy at Thiès, after which she spent a year at the University of Dakar from where she obtained a bursary that enabled her to continue her studies in Belgium. From 1986 to 1993, Mariètou Mbaye was an International Official, based successively in Nairobi (Kenya), Brazzaville (Congo), Lomé (Togo) as Head of Programs within the African Region of the IPPF (International Planned Parenthood Federation), an NGO concerned with projects related to family planning. She has also convened a number of writing workshops in underprivileged areas (Therapeutic Writing Rehabilitation) and has worked in the promotion of cultural works, objects of art and Art and Craft (2003). Her other titles are: *Le Baobab Fou*, *Cendres et Braises*, *Riwan ou le Chemin de Sable*, *La Folie et la Mort*, *De l'Autre Côté du Regard*, *Rue Félix Faure*, *La Pièce d'Or*, and *Mes Hommes à moi*.



Charles Bwenge is assistant professor of African sociolinguistics and coordinator of the program in African languages at the University of Florida. His research focuses on institutional communicative interactions particularly in political and commercial advertisement discourses in the Swahili-speaking east Africa as well as on the African language pedagogy. His most recent published articles include "Language choice in Dar-es-Salaam's billboards (forthcoming chapter in Fiona McLaughlin, (ed.) *The Languages of Urban Africa* 2009), "Codeswitching in Tanzanian Parliamentary Discourse: A Communicative Innovation" (*Issues in Political Discourse Analysis*), "Is 'msonge' a house? Visualizing a Novel in the L2 classroom: The Case of Swahili" (*Journal of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages*) and "Bringing Codeswitching into an L2 Communicative Classroom: The African Experience" (*Journal of African Language Teachers Association*). His current research focuses on the interactional dynamics between Swahili and English languages in the globalized marketplace of eastern Africa.



Charles Cantalupo is a translator of three books of Eritrean poetry: *We Have Our Voice*, *We Invented the Wheel* and *Who Needs a Story? Contemporary Eritrean Poetry in Tigrinya, Tigre and Arabic*. He has written and directed the documentary, *Against All Odds: African Languages and Literatures into the 21st Century*. He is also the author of two books of poems, *Light the Lights* and *Anima/I Wo/man and Other Spirits*, the editor of two books of literary criticism – *The World of Ngugi wa Thiong'o*, *Ngugi wa Thiong'o: Texts and Contexts* – and the author of *A Literary Leviathan: Thomas Hobbes's Masterpiece of Language*. Professor of English, Comparative Literature, and African Studies at Penn State, Schuylkill Campus, Cantalupo is completing a memoir, *Joining Africa*, and editing a new collection of contemporary Eritrean short stories. He is a co-author of the "Asmara Declaration on African Languages and Literatures."



Boubacar Boris Diop is a Senegalese novelist, journalist, and screenwriter. His best known work, *Murambi, le livre des ossements* (translated by Professor Fiona McLaughlin of UF as *Murambi: The Book of Bones*) is the fictional account of a notorious massacre during the Rwandan genocide of 1994. His many professional endeavors include: university professor of literature and philosophy at University Cheikh Anta Diop of Dakar; visiting professor at the University of Rutgers; journalist for both the Senegalese paper, *Le Matin*, and the Swiss paper, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*; and esteemed novelist and playwright honored with several literary awards including: “Prix du Bureau Sénégalais du Droit d’Auteur”, “Grand prix de la République du Sénégal pour les Lettres” and “Prix Tropiques.” His most recent book is *Doomi Golo*. The only novel ever written in Wolof, it deals with the life of a Senegalese Wolof family.



Christiane Fioupou is professor of English at the Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail, France. She specializes in African studies, particularly Nigerian and Ghanaian literature. She taught English and African literature at the University of Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) for 12 years. She has published a monograph on Soyinka — *La route: réalité et représentation dans l’œuvre de Wole Soyinka*—, and translated two of his plays into French: *The Road* and *King Baabu (Baabou roi)*. She edited *Thresholds: Anglophone African Literature* and her other publications include the French translation of Niyi Osundare’s volume of poems, *Waiting Laughters / Rires en attente*.



Thomas A. Hale is Liberal Arts Professor of African, French, and Comparative Literature, and Head of the French Department at Penn State University. He also holds an appointment in the Department of Comparative Literature. Under a NEH Research Fellowship, Dr. Hale conducted extensive research in The Gambia, Senegal, and Mali on female griots. His work in this area was published in *Griots and Griottes: Masters of Word and Music*. He is also known internationally as an authority on oral epic, having published a comparative study, *Scribe, Griot and Novelist: Narrative Interpreters of the Songhay Empire*, followed by the *Epic of Askia Mohammad Recounted by Nouhou Malio* and co-edited an anthology, *Oral Epics from Africa: Vibrant Voices from a Vast Continent*, collection of excerpts from 25 African epics (Indiana University Press, 1997). The latter book was selected as an “Outstanding Academic Book” for 1998 by Choice. He served as co-PI on a Collaborative Research Grant for the National Endowment for the Humanities with Aissata Sidikou-Morton, Princeton, and a team of 20 scholars, for research on “Women’s songs from West Africa,” 2001-2004.



Claudia Hoffmann is a PhD candidate in the English Department at the University of Florida with a concentration in Film and Media Studies as well African Studies. Before joining the University of Florida, Hoffmann received a Master’s degree in English from Purdue University and a Bachelor’s degree in American Studies from the University of Hamburg in her native country Germany. Currently Hoffmann is working on her dissertation, which is concerned with the representation of undocumented African Immigrants in international cinema. Her research interests further include African film and literature with emphasis on Nigeria, Yoruba language and literature, migration and globalization studies, as well as postcolonial film, literature, and theory. Apart from working on her research, Ms. Hoffmann has taught a variety of classes such as, College Composition, American and World Literature, and International Cinema, for the University of Florida’s Writing Program and English Department.



Akinwumi Isola, novelist, playwright, poet, and film producer is a retired professor of Yoruba literature at Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, Nigeria. He has received the Nigerian National Order of Merit, (NNOM) and is a Fellow of the Nigerian Academy of Letters (FNAL). Akinwumi Isola writes mainly in Yoruba. His creative works include *Efúnsetán Antúwàrà*, a play. (Translated into French by Michika Sachnine, Paris: Karthla, 2003, and into English by Pamela Smith, Trenton: AWP 2005) *Ó le Kú* a novel, *Ogún Omodé*, a novel, *Kòseégbé*, a play, *Abé Ààbò*, a play, *Olú Omo*, a play, *Saworoide*, a novel, *Àfàimò*, a collection of poems, and *Fàbú*, a collection of Jokes. He has also translated Wole Soyinka's play *Death and the King's Horseman* and his novel *Ake, The Years of Childhood* into Yoruba. His works in English include *Madam Tinubu* a play, *Belly Bellows*, a play, and *The Campus Queen*, a novel. Two of his short stories, 'The Uses of English' and 'Grammar of Easter' have been published at www.wordswithoutborders.org by Words Without Borders. Isola has also directed the production of some of his Yoruba films such as *Kòseégbé*, *Ó le kú*, *Saworoide*, *Agogo Èwò* and *Campus Queen*.



Biodun Jeyifo is professor of African and African American Studies and of comparative literature in the Department of African and African American Studies, Harvard University. His scholarly and professional interests include African and Caribbean 'Anglophone' literatures; theatrical theory and dramatic literature, Western and non-Western; comparative African and Afro-American critical thought; Marxist literary and cultural theory; colonial and postcolonial studies; twentieth-century revolutionary social philosophy and literature. Professor Jeyifo is the author of *The Truthful Lie: Essays in a Radical Sociology of African Drama* (1985), and *Wole Soyinka: Politics, Poetics, Postcolonialism*, (2004), winner of the American Library Association's 2004 OATS – "Outstanding Academic Texts" – award.



Eileen Julien is professor of comparative literature, African American and African Diaspora Studies, and French and Italian at Indiana University. She holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in French from Xavier University of New Orleans and the University of Wisconsin respectively. Her research and teaching interests are the novel and postcolonial theory, and, broadly speaking, twentieth century literature and culture, especially the literatures of Africa, the African diaspora, and Europe in their relationships to one another. She is the author of *African Novels and the Question of Orality* (IUP, 1992). She is completing a study, *Modernity and Multiple Imaginaries in Literature and the Arts: The Example of Senegal*. Professor Julien has been a Bunting Fellow at Radcliffe College, a Fulbright Senior Scholar, and a Guggenheim Fellow. She was president of the African Literature Association in 1990-91, founding director of the West African Research Center, Dakar, Senegal in 1993-95, and executive director of the David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the African Diaspora, University of Maryland, in 2002-04.



Rose Sau Lugano is lecturer of Kiswahili language and literature in the Department of Languages, Literature, and Cultures at the University of Florida (UF). She received her B. Ed. (first class honors) from the university of Kenyatta in Kenya (1981), and her M.A in Linguistics and Swahili Literature from the University of Nairobi, Kenya (1989). She received her PhD in comparative literature with a minor in women studies from The Pennsylvania State University in 2005. She joined the University of Florida in 2004 where she teaches Swahili language, Swahili oral literature, and African women writers. Her interests include African literature, Swahili language and literature, women studies, cultural studies, children's literature, and translation. Her doctoral dissertation focused on issues of identity in the African female texts written in both Swahili and English languages. She is currently working on a book that centered on criticism of African Bildungsromane.



Kole Odutola lectures in the Department of Languages, Literature, and Cultures at the University of Florida (UF). He is a member of the Association of Nigerian Authors and a founding member of the Coalition of Nigerian Artists. While working as a photojournalist he also coordinated the film viewers' forum for the Goethe Institute in Lagos, Nigeria. Creative writing for him is one of the outlets for internal conversations ignited by economic, environmental political injustices. His collection of poetry, *The Poets Fled*, was published in 1992. His second, *The Poet Bled*, appeared in 1998. His poetry has also been featured in on-line publications, campus publications, literacy magazines, journals, such as *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*. He has given many poetry readings at locations in the United States especially in New York City.



Tanure Ojaide is currently the Frank Porter Graham Professor of Africana Studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. A renowned poet, Ojaide has won major national and international poetry awards, including the Commonwealth Poetry Prize for the Africa Region (1987), the BBC Arts and Africa Poetry Award (1988), twice the All-Africa Okigbo Prize for Poetry (1988 and 1997), and thrice the Association of Nigerian Authors' Poetry Prize (1988, 1994 and 2004). Tanure Ojaide's fourteen poetry collections include *Labyrinths of the Delta*, *The Fate of Vultures*, *The Blood of Peace*, *Daydreams of Ants*, *Invoking the Warrior Spirit: New and Selected Poems*, *In the Kingdom of Songs: A Trilogy*, *I Want to Dance & Other Poems*, and *In the House of Words*. His other writings are: a memoir, *Great Boys: An African Childhood*, a collection of short stories titled *God's Medicine Men & Other Stories*, two novels, *Sovereign Body* and *The Activist* and four books of literary criticism, including *The Poetry of Wole Soyinka*, *Poetic Imagination in Black Africa*, and *Poetry, Performance, and Art: Udje Dance Songs of the Urhobo People*. Some of his poems have been translated into Chinese, Dutch, Spanish, and French.



Akinloye Ojo is assistant professor in the Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Georgia, Athens. His research interests include Yorùbá language and linguistics, applied linguistics and language teaching, and language, culture, and society. He is the coordinator of the Program in African languages and a core faculty member in the African Studies Institute. He has published articles on African language pedagogy and programming, Yorùbá language acquisition, and the issues of language, culture and society in Africa. He has written on the poetry of Akínwùmí Ìsòlá and has published translations of some of the poems. He is currently completing work on the translation into English of Isola's lone poetry anthology, *Ajùmò*. In 2005, his co-edited book, *Ìlò-Èdè àti Èdà Èdè Yorùbá* (Yoruba Linguistics and Language Use) was published by Africa World Press. He also has a collection of poems, *In Flight*, published by Kraft Books, Nigeria in 2000.



Onookome Okome is currently associate professor of African literature and cinema at the Department of English, University of Alberta, Canada. He coauthored *Cinema and Social Change in Nigeria* (Jos: Nigerian Film Corporation) with Jonathan Haynes of Brooklyn College, New York. He edited *Before I am Hanged: Ken Saro-Wiwa, Literature, Politics and Dissent*, a book of essays on the slain minority rights activist published by Africa World Press, New Jersey. In 2004, he edited a collection of essays on Africa's first Nobel laureate for literature, Professor Wole Soyinka-Ogun's *Children: The Literature and Politics of Wole Soyinka Since the Nobel*. He has also edited and introduced a book of essays on the Niger Delta poet and scholar, Tanure Ojaide, *Writing the Homeland: The Poetry and Politics of Tanure Ojaide*. He has published numerous essays on the video film phenomenon in West Africa, including the co-authored essay, "Evolving Popular Media: Nigerian Video Film," (*Research in African Literatures*, 29/3, 1998). Dr. Okome is a Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Germany.



Adesola Olateju, a senior lecturer in the Department of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria is currently a visiting professor in the Department of African Languages and Literatures, University of Wisconsin in Madison. His areas of specialization are Yoruba stylistics, literature and culture, while his research interest, at the present, is in the language of Yoruba political discourse, precisely in the documentation, characterization, and stylistic analysis of language of Yoruba political discourse.



Taiwo Olunlade is associate professor of Yoruba Literature in the Department of Africa Languages Literatures & Communication Arts at Lagos State University Ojo, Lagos, Nigeria. His research interest includes use of Oral and written Literature in the print and electronic media. He is the current interim chair of the Department of African Languages Literatures & Communication Arts, Lagos State University, Nigeria.



Robert Simon is assistant professor of Spanish at Kennesaw State University. He has earned academic degrees and certificates in the United States, Spain, and Portugal. He has taught both Spanish and Portuguese languages, and has investigated the presence of surrealism, mysticism, and postmodernism in contemporary peninsular literatures. Dr. Simon's academic publications include the recent title *Understanding the Portuguese Poet Joaquim Pessoa, 1942-2007: A Study in Iberian Cultural Hybridity*.



Katrina Daly Thompson received her PhD. in African Languages and Literature from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2004. She teaches all levels of Swahili language courses, as well as Swahili culture, and coordinates the instruction of other African languages. Her research concerns the literatures and popular cultures of Zimbabwe and Tanzania, particularly with respect to representations of ethnicity and the relationships between language, identity, and language attitudes; as well as the effects of globalization on Shona and Swahili speakers' use of films, television programs, comics, music, and popular literature. She is currently Chair, African Studies IDPs and Assistant Professor of African Languages.

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