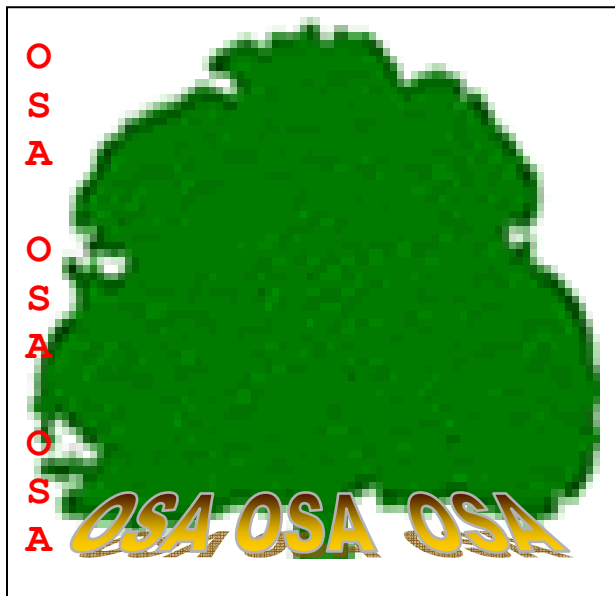


OSA Newsletter

Oromo Studies Association



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1. Message from OSA President

Dear OSA Family,

I would like to extend my personal greetings on behalf of the OSA Executive Committee members again. I hope you all are having a productive year. We, OSA Officers, have been busy with OSA business and are in full swing to serve you better. If you have been attending OSA Annual Conferences, it is not difficult to produce a very long “to do lists”. We are setting priorities and planning to tackle those that are critically important and are within our reach considering our time and financial limitations.

We have made a few changes to OSA website lately. You will find the whole text of the 2005 OSA Proceedings with 2006 Abstracts in pdf format in the Publications section. By the way, if you still need a hardcopy of the 2005 Proceedings and you are an active member of OSA, you can e-mail me your full address and I will send you one copy on first come first served basis. I have a few copies left from additional reprint orders. The annual lists of OSA Theme titles from 1991-2006 are now completed and updated. All OSA Newsletter are posted on the site as soon as they are released and our welcome messages now include Afaan Oromo versions with text animation. We want OSA website to be attractive, informative and up-to-date. Please make sure you visit OSA website at <http://www.romostudies.org> as often as possible

for new updates and send us your suggestions about what you like to see and what needs to be changed on the site.

2. 2007 OSA Annual Conference

The 2007 OSA Annual Conference will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota during July 28-29. A local organizing committee lead by Obbo Radwan Hamza has enthusiastically volunteered to host us again with open arms and Oromo jubilation. They will make us feel at home away from home once we are surrounded with multitudes of Oromos. We will enjoy their professional services because we have seen it firsthand during the 2006 OSA Conference.

Your OSA Officers do cordially invite you to participate in the 2007 OSA Annual Conference. It is a great opportunity to meet new and old friends, listen to many outstanding presentations from Oromos and non-Oromos on different aspects of Oromo life (past, present and future) and other topics related to Oromo geopolitical conditions. We expect a broad spectrum of presentations. Some could be out of our buffer zones that will generate interest and hope you will participate at some capacity. The annual Oromo Sports Federation in North America (OSFNA) and many Oromo civic and political organization meetings also take place during the same week (usually few days before OSA meeting) in the Twin-Cities. These are at your disposal should you be interested to attend and

make your OSA attendance more eventful, memorable and enjoyable.

This is my first call for you to make a voluntary presentation at the 2007 OSA Conference. Please send me your tentative title and a summary of your presentation BEFORE or ON February 28, 2007 and your full abstract BEFORE or ON May 31, 2007 as e-mail attachments. You will receive acknowledgement of your e-mail promptly. These due dates will be strictly enforced so do not wait until the last minute. This information is also available at OSA website under Conference thread. OSA will be honored to have you participate and share your knowledge on your research, observations and personal experiences on important Oromo issues. I would like to encourage you whether you are regular or first timer to take this opportunity and share your knowledge on your subject matter with a very attentive OSA audience.

3. OSA21: Challenges and Opportunities for Oromo Quest for Self Determination in the 21st Century

We have selected, “OSA21: Challenges and Opportunities for Oromo Quest for Self Determination in the 21st Century”, as the 2007 OSA Conference Theme. I have shared with you what it means and the significance of being 21 years old especially in the USA in my August Newsletter.

I believe OSA as an Oromo organization is imbedded in Gada Democracy with enough space for all Oromos to participate accordingly. It was also established in a democratic country and by now must have internalized democratic culture, the supreme of law, the importance of free elections and the majesty of democracy where votes are not a futile exercise in vain but the basis of democratic tenant where all power originates. OSA also knows that it will continue to exist to accomplish its goals if democratic processes reign supreme in all its functions and democratic procedures and protocols are followed to the letter of the bylaws to address problems, concerns and ambiguities by its active members. OSA at 21 and as it has been before is in a joint custody of all OSA members who freely elect those who should shoulder leading responsibilities democratically. It belongs to all no matter what serves an individual rendered in the past, is rendering now or in the future and how long one has been an OSA member. No individual member or group is above OSA bylaws. I urge you to safeguard OSA because you own it. OSA survived twenty years not because of “a few good men” and its might army, but because of its active member’s civic culture, Gada tradition, tolerance, accommodation and sacrifices. I know OSA at 21 has many challenges to overcome and many opportunities to do better and propel to the next level of maturity and service.

You might have heard many times before that we live in a critical time in the history of the Oromo

people's quest for self-determination. I could not agree more because of the dynamics changes that are taking place in the dying Ethiopian Empire. Current news and reports testify to a crumbling old State whose demise is accelerated by the TPLF lead dictatorial minority government and others refusal not to be ruled without consent. Our people are resisting these unparalleled repression and injustice by all means necessary on daily basis. Students, farmers, soldiers, young and old from all corners of Oromia are participating to make the quest for Oromo self-determinations a new reality. Tapping this active rejection of the TPLF rule by the vast majority of the Oromo populace is an opportunity, but leading and empowering the Oromo people to realize this objective in a very dynamic environment is a big challenge for Oromo political organizations.

We live in the 21st global village in a "flat world". Globalization and technological advances have destroyed barriers of communication and the world has become smaller and closer. Oromos in Minneapolis can be almost equally informed about Oromos in Oromia on daily basis by telephone or other means of communication. Real-time telephone conversations, "hearing-witness", can be as acceptable as eye-witness under the current condition in Oromia where freedom of press and information is nonexistence. Hence, 21st Century is changing our people's access to news and consciousness as it has never been done before. It is an opportune time and a challenge for OSA to be

relevant and significantly contribute to the information pool by sifting through gibberish materials congesting the information highway.

My first job as an OSA President was writing a protest letter to the President of Mekelle University for denying certificate of graduation to Oromo students

(http://www.romostudies.org/UpComing_Events.htm). You will also see similar letters written by past OSA president in the same thread. OSA should articulate and help publicize human rights violations, Apartheid style discriminations, environmental degradations and subjugation of the Oromo people by the TPLF regime. OSA has the duty to document and disseminate information about the true nature of the Ethiopian government with sharp academic pens. OSA, as an Oromo study organization is not a bystander in an ivory tower institution waiting until the dust settles and the storm subsides. OSA encourages sober analysis of the past, current situation and possible outcomes when all the important factors are considered in the current Oromo circumstances. The collective mind of Oromo scholars is needed now more than ever to rediscover Oromo survival modes and methods to apply in today's predicament. We believe the 2007 theme, OSA21: Challenges and Opportunities for Oromo Quest for Self Determination in 21st Century", captures the current slogan of the situation in Oromia, the dilemma facing Oromo political organizations and OSA's role as a source of Oromo information reservoir in this digital age.

4. Ad hoc Committee OSA Liaison Officer

The following OSA Executive Committee members are assigned as liaison officers should each committee leader needs to contact OSA Executive Committee for help or have questions. We hope this will be more efficient to respond promptly if need arises.

- (1) **Membership:** Responsible OSA member is Dr. Assefa Regassa (gelet006@umn.edu) and Dr. Beyan H. Asoba (bhasoba@msn.com) will be an OSA liaison officer. Please note Dr. Assefa's corrected e-mail above.
- (2) **Fundraising:** Responsible OSA member is Dr. Bahiru Dhuguma (bahiruduguma@aol.com) and Adde Xahaay Silga (Tsilgaa@hotmail.com) will be an OSA liaison officer
- (3) **Bylaw:** Adde Qabanne (Bkholcomb@aol.com) (request to lead) and Dr. Beyan H. Asoba (bhasoba@msn.com) will be an OSA liaison officer and a member of the committee.
- (4) **Review:** Adde Qabanne (Bkholcomb@aol.com) (request to lead) and Dr. Melaku Mekonnen (mekonnen@umich.edu) will be an OSA liaison officer

- (5) **Oromia:** Dr Ezikiel Gabissa (egebissa@kettering.edu) will lead this.
- (6) **Unity:** Dr. Assafa Jalata (ajalata@utk.edu) will lead this committee and Dr. Melaku Mekonnen (mekonnen@umich.edu) will be an OSA liaison officer.
- (7) **Youth:** Adde Arfasse Gamada (arfasseg@yahoo.com) will lead this committee and I (hulukgo@auburn.com) will be an OSA liaison officer.
- (8) **Oromo Medical Association in North America:** Dr. Gudata Hinika (gudata@msn.com) will be the responsible OSA member and Dr. Beyan H. Asoba (bhasoba@msn.com) will be an OSA liaison officer.

5. Miscellaneous

- (1) **2006 OSA Proceedings:** Please send your 2006 presentation manuscript to Dr. Beyan H. Asoba (bhasoba@msn.com) as soon as possible if you have not already done so as an attachment file (preferably using Microsoft word).
- (2) **Women Committee:** We need volunteer(s) who will lead our Women Committee. A woman would be preferred but anyone can do the job. The committee will help us recruit at least five (5) new women members and help with organizing a panel that is fully devoted to significant Oromo women issues. All OSA members will be helping and

please send me an e-mail if you have questions or are ready to take on this challenge.

- (3) **Oromo Agricultural, Environmental and Natural Resources Association:** We are looking for individuals who are experts or have interest (activists) in agriculture (animal science, agronomy and soils, agricultural economics, etc), environmental, natural resources and other physical sciences to form a professional association like the Oromo Medical Association. Please send an e-mail to Dr. Assefa Kuru (assefa.kuru@elisanet.fi) or to me for more information as soon as possible.
- (4) **OSA Newest Members:** The following individuals have joined OSA lately: Obbo Fikru Nugussie, Darajjee Galataa, Addaam Goobanaa and Elemo Odaa. Please join me in welcoming them home.

We will like to post on OSA website your memorable 2006 OSA Conference snapshots. Please e-mail me your pictures with a word caption that you want to go with it ASAP.

Together, we can do more!!

Nagaan,

Gobana Huluka

OSA President