

# DAWORD

**The Vienna African Writers (VAW)  
Quarterly Newsletter**



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University of Vienna

Department of African Studies

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# Poetry Slam Competition

*June 18th 2015*

This meeting was attended by 22 participants and it took place at the African Studies Institute of the University of Vienna. It started with a poetry slam competition. Tomi Adeaga moderated it. The competitors were Katrin Pointner, Ashura Kayupayupa and Moritz Hell. Pointner won the first cash prize of 50 €; Kayupayupa came second and won 30 €. The third prize of 20 € was won by Hell.

This was followed by a lively discussion that took place among the members of the audience. This discussion continued during the VAW end of the academic year get-together dinner that took place at a nearby restaurant.

*Tomi Adeaga  
kicks off the event.*

*Ashura Kayupayupa reads her poem, "Fumbo" with emotion.  
Judges evaluate the poets.*

*Moritz Hell reads his poem, "Untitled" before the audience.*

*Katrin Pointner presents her poem.*



*First-comer Katrin Pointner poses with Tomi Adeaga for a fun photo.*



*Moritz Hell (left), Ashura Kayupayupa (center) and Katrin Pointer (right) smile with prizes in hand.*





*Solomon Ogbodo introduces his poem, "Immortals".*



*Audience members listen attentively to a speaker's comment.*



*Diverse new-comers sit in the audience.*



*Judges present their comments to the poets and the audience.*



*Audience members consider the issues raised by a speaker.*



*Victor Eghe Okundaye speaks about his literary interests.*



*Adams Bodomo presents the June 2015 edition of Daworo.*



*VAW members chat and laugh while having dinner.*



# VAW Club Meeting

*October 22 2015*



*Tomi Adeaga's facilitates the meeting.*



*All participants offer bright smiles in a group photo.*

*New-comers at the meeting.*



The meeting that was attended by 11 participants was chaired by Tomi Adeaga. It was a rich and fruitful meeting because we welcomed new members into our midst and several decisions were taken. Davis Denijo suggested that the club should be registered at the magistrate club and Tomi Adeaga would work with him to make this happen.

The outcome will be presented to the members during the next meeting.

Sarah Udoh suggested that we send out a call for submissions for an anthology of short stories. Tomi Adeaga is also going to work with her on this. New members like Eric Mwathi read some of their poems and discussions were held on them.

# VAW Club Extraordinary Meeting

*November 11 2015*

VAW organized an extraordinary meeting with Professor Elisabeth Mudimbe-Boyi from Stanford University, USA on 11th November, 2015 at the African Studies Institute of the University of Vienna.

It was moderated by Tomi Adeaga. The talk, entitled: *Creative Imagination and the “Translation” of Orality: Genealogy of a Text* sought to expand the meaning of translation beyond a simple linguistic performance, in order to illustrate the mechanism of literary creation, and the genealogy of literary texts that have their source in oral African literature.

The talk started at 5 pm and was attended by 13 participants. It was followed by a lively discussion on the role of the former colonial languages in African literatures. The talk came to an end at 7 pm.



Dr. Elisabeth Mudimbe-Boyi

# Announcement

## **Introduction to Zimbabwean Folktales**

**Sibusisiwe Jonathan's project on writing  
folktales**

**Genre: Folktales**

**Culture: Zimbabwean**

**Themes: Varied**

**Ages: Tentatively about 6 - 18 years**

**Length of each story: About 1500 words  
(but may vary)**



*On June 18, 2015, Sibusisiwe Jonathan introduced her ideas  
to the audience for the first time with enthusiasm.*



I plan to complete writing folktales from Zimbabwe. I have already written a few of them.

My aim in doing this is to rekindle fading interest for folklore, especially folktales in the present generation and even the ones to come.

In the past few decades this form of art has been neglected, as it were, or has been viewed as irrelevant to modern life experience. It has not been considered as a serious form of literature. This could have been so because folktales were passed from generation to generation only through the word of mouth - as oral literature.

In the late 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Westerners have collected African folktales as they were told to them by the indigenous people (a number of examples come to mind). However, the primitivity and simplicity of the language used in these collections undermine the art of African traditional story telling and the wisdom behind folktales and fables. Probably, a lot was lost in translation. In their original form, folktales were rich in expression, idiomatic content and the way they were narrated. They appealed to one's imagination and all the senses if well told. Folktales also had well composed and memorable songs.

So my idea is to present them as such so as to appeal to today's literary life's experience. Scholars, educators and those who read for general enrichment and entertainment should feel folktales have something for them. This could be only achieved by giving time and artistic expertise that one would give when writing any other literary genre. Publishing not only hard copies, but also online to attract the internet audience will also work as a way of making folktales popular and to reach a wider audience.

The characters in the folktales were animals that talked and reasoned. Some stories featured human characters though. Mostly, the stories imparted a moral values, some were used to warn the folk from engaging in certain behaviour and children were disciplined using some of these stories. They were like parables that taught children to grow up and be sensible and responsible adults. Some stories were used to explain why things came to be the way they were. For example, there are folktales to explain why a rabbit has no tail or why a pig has got a round flat mouth.

One story may have different versions depending in which part of Africa it originated and how it was modified with time and by passing through different story-tellers. All the stories were told orally, hence, the varieties in one story.

My love for folktales was inspired by my grandmother, -----, who used to entertain the family, in the warm evenings, in front of a smoulder fire, in her hut. Always this happened after dinner. If, as children, we asked her to tell the stories during the day or before dinner, she would say, "No, no, that's taboo. Kuyazila lokho bazukulu bami. Otherwise you'll grow horns on your heads. Would you like that to happen to you?"

"No Gogo, we wouldn't!" Then the case would be closed.

Now I know that the real reason was that during the day people would be busy in the fields. Evenings were, therefore, good time for telling stories.

In my story telling, I shall try and stick to the Ndebele and Shona versions where possible. Thereafter, I shall translate them to English. I am discovering that telling the stories first in English and translating to vernacular may spoil their ethnological value.

I am open to suggestions as I continue with this project and I look forward to this baby!

- Sibusisiwe Jonathan



# Ashura Kayupayupa

## *Fumbo (A riddle)*

Mwaka usio na majira,  
Au masika isiyo na vyura,  
Ya ule uchaguzi bila kura,  
Wenye chuki bila hasira.

*A Year without seasons,  
Or spring without frogs,  
Of the election without a vote,  
Hateful without anger.*

Wakati usio na muda,  
Ni mjadala usio na mada,  
Penye dhiki bila shida,  
Ni kuhitimu bila shahada

*A time without time,  
A discussion without a topic,  
Difficulties without stress,  
Graduating without a degree*

Umeona dharau bila kiburi?  
Au mwanandani bila kaburi!  
Ama ugomvi usio na shari,  
Uone mawanda bila mandhari.

*Have you seen a contempt without pride?  
Or the corpse without grave!  
A quarrel without evil?  
Saw the dew without scenery?*

Mshahara bila kazi,  
Mkwezi asiyejua nazi,  
Nahodha bila jahazi,  
Tunaibiwa bila wezi.

*Wage without work,  
Coconut Creeper who doesn't know coconut?  
A dhow without the captain?  
They are stealing from us, and they are not thieves.*

Hili ni fumbo bila kufumba,  
Kuumbua bila kuumba,  
Ya mkulima bila shamba,  
Yale ya kale ila si mtumba,

*This is a mystery without twinkling,  
Disfigure without creating,  
The farmer without a farm,  
The ancient but not second-hand ,*

Kweli ni kinyume cha uongo,  
Hakuna kichwa bila shingo,  
Au mbele bila mgongo,  
Tafakarini wenye ubongo.

*Truth is the opposite of lying,  
No head without a neck,  
Or chest without spine,  
With brain, keep thinking*

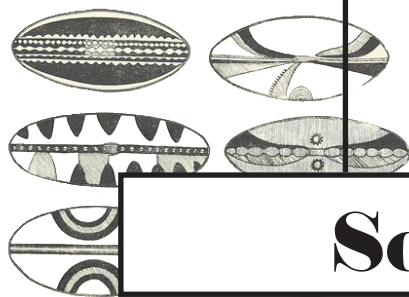
Haiwezi kuwa leo bila jana,  
Kutwa bila mchana,  
Au jambo lisilo maana,  
Huyo ni msusi bila kitana.

*It cannot be today without yesterday,  
A day without a daylight,  
Or something that is irrelevant,  
Such a weaver without a comb.*

Usiku bila kiza,  
Kufikiri pasipo kuwaza,  
Biashara bila kuuza,  
Ni kuvunda bila kuoza.

*A night without darkness,  
Thinking without thoughts,  
Businesses without selling,  
That is rancid without decay.*





# Solomon Ogbodo

## *Immortals*

Odumobina of mortal, flesh and blood  
Has gone to dare the immortals to duel.  
in every mortal household  
there was fear and tremble

Ajala the legendary flutiest  
was to accompany him  
Nwite his beloved wife wept bitterly  
It was indeed a dreadful day.

Odumobina the fearless, crossed Opina with  
Ajala  
He turned, looked toward the setting sun, and  
The cloud greeted him with a thunderclap  
Ajala blow his flute ceaselessly behind him

With each tune odumobina was strengthened  
when they have the seventh mountain crossed  
The immortals called out, Odumobina!!!  
come! Come! And your death call answer

Then with even greater strides  
They marched towards Otana Mountain and  
as they are near to Ovaina valley, his spirit  
wavered  
Ajala urged him on with his flute.

Suddenly everywhere was dark ,  
Odumbina has entered the land of Immortals  
the land of the living dead  
and at this sight his heart missed a beat.

He plunged into the dark,  
Ajala made to follow him and fell down.  
With Ajala's fall his flute broke into pieces  
then there was silence

Odumobina heared strange sounds,  
and was assured the Immortals were close  
He drew his machete , and  
the voice of Otuokpere the wise filled his mind

“ To see what is invisible, you must focus on that  
which is visible”\*\*  
with this Odumobina dropped his machete and  
fought the immortals to a standstill  
with his bare hands

Ajala born of magic and with broken spine from  
the fall  
Invoked a bright flame,  
with it Odumobina defeated the Immortals  
And dispel fear.

With Ajala on his shoulder he returned  
And was greeted with the rolls of the great Ikoro  
The people cheered,  
but Odumobina was in shock

Ajala was lying lifeless in his hands  
He called out to Otuokpere the wise and great  
Dibia  
But there was no response.

he left Ajala lying a ground  
And rushed to the abode of Otuokpere  
and found him nearly dead  
as his spirit was fleeing  
Otuokpere managed a whisper

“I am of the Immortals, you killed me when you  
defeated the Immortals”.  
Otuokpere died  
And wisdom was taken away from the world.

# Moritz Hell

*[Untitled]*

Dripping

Dropping

Crackling

It's *bucketing* down

On the red, arduous soil.





# How To Submit Your Work!

## *Daworo Guidelines*

**Daworo** is a quarterly newsletter distributed in print at the Grand Poetry Slam event organized by the Vienna African Writers Club.

**Deadlines:** We take submissions up to 10 days after each literary event. Please take note of our event schedules by liking our Facebook page or by signing up to the mailing list.

**Submissions:** Submissions should be emailed to:

Hasiyatu Abubakari

hasiyatu.abubakari@univie.ac.at

University of Vienna Department of African Studies

**Format:** Please label your email in the subject line as “Daworo Submission” with your name and type of item.

[e.g. Daworo Submission – Item Type – First Name, Last Name]

**Physical Submission:** If you attend an event and have an announcement, it will be noted down along with your contact information. If you submit a hard copy of your writing, you will also need to submit an electronic copy before the deadline.

**Number of Submissions:** You may submit as many items as you wish.

**Types of Work Accepted:** Poetry, Prose, VAW-member announcements, event announcements, literary contributions (e.g. book reviews, book launches and book readings), and photographs of our events.

**Types of Work Not Accepted:** Commercial Advertisement, announcements unrelated to African literary arts, organizational announcements not in partnership with VAW.

**Content Standards:** All submissions must be your original work and should relate to African literary arts. African writing is conceptualized as any form of writing that addresses and expresses African themes and conditions in African languages or in any other languages. Work by Africans and non-Africans alike are welcome. We also appreciate photographs in HD.

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