

DAWORD

The Vienna African Writers (VAW)
Quarterly Newsletter



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University of Vienna
Department of African Studies
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End of the Year VAW Poetry Slam/Christmas Party

14 December, 2016

Venue: African Studies Institute

The VAW end of the year/Poetry Slam Party was attended by twenty-five participants. The event was chaired by Tomi Adeaga.

All of the participants introduced themselves and they were given the time to get to know each other.

Four participants had registered for the competition, Hamda Ahmad, Busi Johnathan, Eric Mwathi and Solomon Ogbodo.

The judges were Martina Kopf, Victor Okundaye and Frances Bodomo.

In line with the VAW guidelines, each of the participants performed three poems.

It was indeed a lively competition in which Hamda Ahmad came 1st,

Busi Johnathan came 2nd and

Solomon Ogbodo came 3rd.

They won 50 €, 30 € and 20 € respectively. Eric Mwathi was given a gift voucher.

Afterwards, various discussions took place.

The party subsequently moved to a restaurant where we all had dinner.





Tomi Adeaga stands for a photo with competitors Busi Johnathan (left, above), Hamda Ahmad (right, above), Eric Mwathi (left, below), Victor Okundaye (right, below).



Vienna African Writers (VAW) Club Monthly Meeting

January 19, 2017

Venue: African Studies Institute

The meeting that was attended by 10 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.

Tomi Adeaga did a presentation on an Ajami poem.

A discussion on the state of African languages in different parts of Africa ensued.

Busi Jonathan also talked about her current project. Mary Bodomu shared her reading list for the holidays. Afterwards, a lively discussion took place.

أبي الفاضل بن يوسف

العهد الثاني

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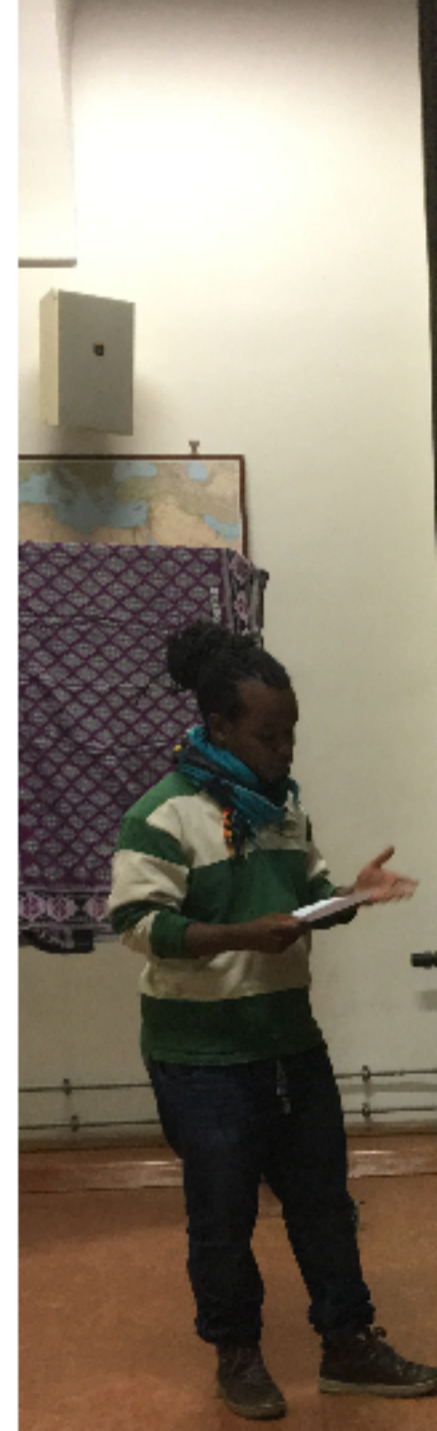
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The VAW Poetry Slam Competition

March 17, 2017

African Studies Institute

The VAW Poetry Slam Competition was attended by twenty-three participants. The event was chaired by Tomi Adeaga. All of the participants introduced themselves and they were given the time to get to know each other. Four participants had registered for the competition, Simon Shirzad Jonas, Mfilinge Nyalusi, Evans King, and Solomon Ogbodo. The judges were Hasiyatu Abubakari, Markus Köhle, and Mary Bodomo. In line with the VAW guidelines, each of the participants performed three poems. It was indeed a lively competition in which Simon Shirzad and Solomon Ogbodo came 1st, 2nd and Mfilinge Nyalusi came 2nd. They won 40 €, 40 € and 20 € respectively. Evans King was given a gift voucher. Afterwards, a lively discussion took place.



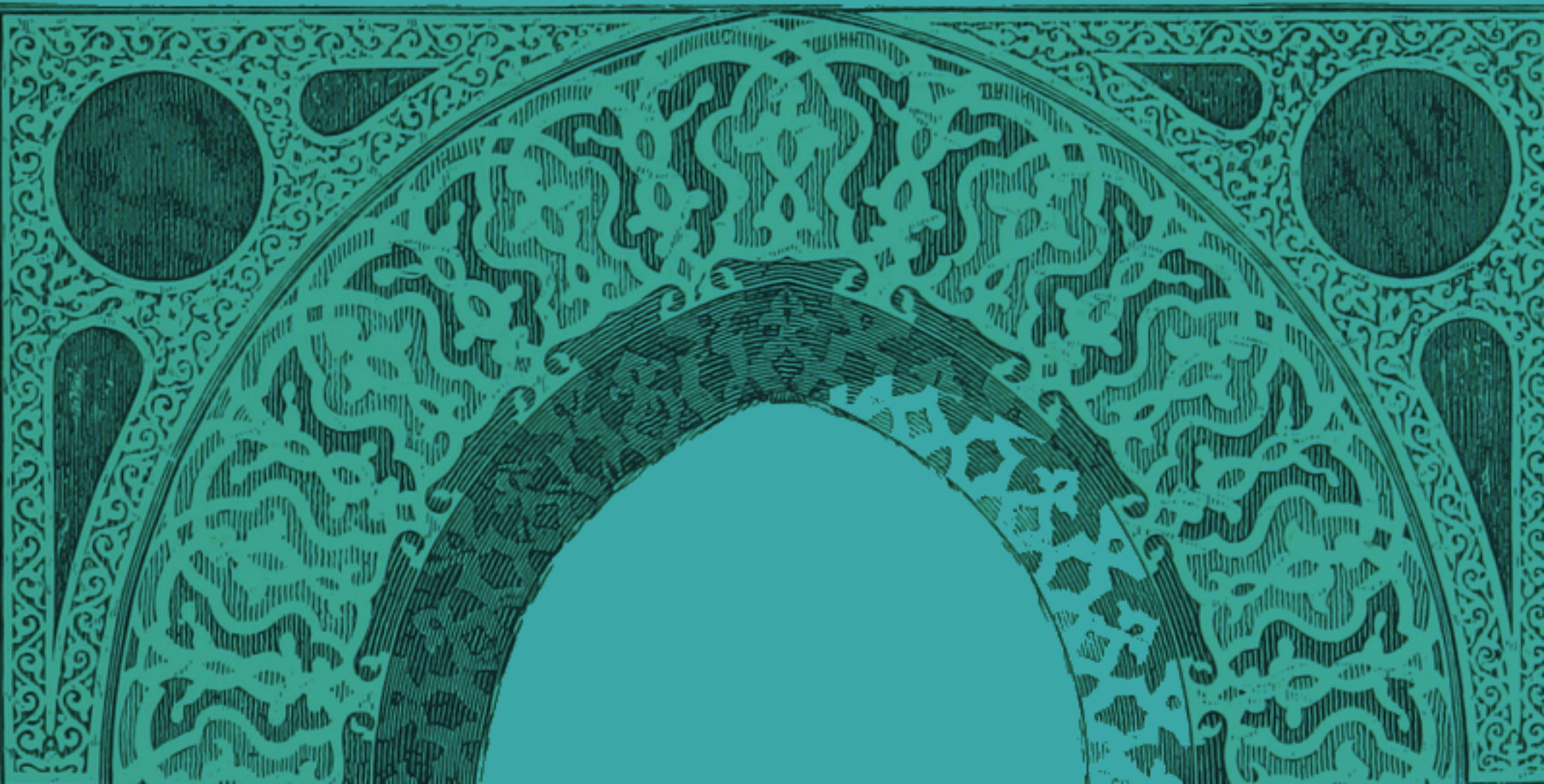


Vienna African Writers (VAW) Club Monthly Meeting

April 27, 2017

African Studies Institute

The meeting that was attended by 8 participants was chaired by Tomi Adeaga. It was a rich and fruitful meeting because we discussed ways of reaching out to new members. A poetry performance of Langston Hughes “The Negro Mother” was shown to the membership. A discussion on preparations for the next VAW meeting ensued. This was necessary because this year, May has been designated by Prof. Adams Bodomo as the Global Africa Month. Afterwards, a lively discussion took place.



Global Africa Month/VAW

May 22, 2017

African Studies Institute

As part of the Global Africa Month activities, Prof. Ato Quayson did a presentation called “Cosmopolitanism, Diaspora, and Ethnicity in Today's Accra.”

The presentation was attended by 16 participants.

This was followed by a lively discussion. After his presentation, there was a short break during which refreshments and finger-food were served. Afterwards, the VAW event was chaired by Prof. Adams Bodomo and everybody was invited to introduce themselves. Ato Quayson and Onookome Okome advised the VAW members on how to improve on their creative writing productions. Quayson also read one of the Barbadian poet and academic, Edward Kamau Brathwaite’s poems.

Afterwards, Busi Jonathan read from her poem called “The Immigrant” which was critiqued by the participants.



Photo © University of Toronto

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o in Vienna 2-4 May

*"We should embrace the quantity of African languages, but then come up with ways of enabling conversation among the languages and the literatures. One of it is clearly translation."
"Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o in his lecture on "Translation and the Language of African Literature," on May 2nd, 2017 at the Institute for African Studies.*

With Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, we were able to welcome one of the most renowned African authors and intellectuals in Vienna at the beginning of May. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine, has been invited by the Department of African Studies and the Global African Diaspora Research Platform. His visit has been a highlight for the Kenyan community in Vienna and an inspiration for the 400 people who attended his lecture "Translation and the language of African literature" on the 2nd of May at the Department of African Studies and his reading from his memoir *The Birth of a Dreamweaver* on the 4th of May at the Reading Hall of the main university library. Many VAW members also attended the events.

The power of translation and practical visions on writing in African languages were at the heart of Prof. Ngũgĩ's opening lecture of the workshop "Strategies for the Promotion of African language literatures". According to Ngũgĩ, translation is the key to strengthening the prestige of African languages as medium for culture and identity; as a successful example he named the translation project which he realized with the pan-African authors' collective, *Jalada* in 2016. Moses Kilolo, the editor in charge of the magazine, who also visited Vienna at the beginning of May, had asked him for a short story to publish it in said magazine.

The story, titled *Ituĩka rĩa Mũrũngarũ*, *Kana Kĩrĩa Gĩtũmaga Andũ Mathiĩ Marũngĩ*, written by Ngũgĩ in Gikuyu and translated by him into English under the title *The Upright Revolution or Why Humans Walk Upright*, has since then been translated into over 64 languages, 47 of them African, at the initiative of Jalada. Thus, within a short period of time, the story became one of the – if not the – most translated short stories. Until August you can see the exhibition dedicated to this translation project. By the way, as Ngũgĩ mentioned, it is custom in his family in South California to exchange stories instead of material gifts on birthdays and holidays.

On May 4th, Ngũgĩ read from *The Birth of a Dreamweaver* and revived his time as a young student at the Makerere University College in Kampala in the beginning of the 1960s. The reading was organized in cooperation with the Vienna University Library and the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC).

We experienced Professor Ngũgĩ not only as a great and inspiring speaker, intellectual and author but as a generous and attentive listener. Our conversations with him remain unforgettable.

Martina Kopf



Eric Mwathi: Ballad

The internet brings vulgar trolls,
To every living room.
They're here to stay all night and day,
And spread their world of gloom.

Kind neighbors leave and friends depart.
Old love might wilt away,
Unlike the charm in every troll,
Who's seldom bound to stray.

Their kind may hold a special spot,
On piles of history books,
Like preachers who may vow despair,
On tax collecting crooks.

Some used the quill to purge the sword,
Before they found the net.
Alas, you might be on their list,
Knowing few have been exempt.

Busi Jonathan: A Raging Winter Night

Beware of bedimmed July Night,
happy Savanna tree.
Your dimmed branches ne'er keep
their fresh green delight.
The shy winter light grooms them not
With her immature touch;
Nor does the morning dew spur them
to bloom at their prime.

Beware of bedimmed July Night,
happy-free-lucky roof tops.
You too carefree sandy banks.
Tonight dark Beira strides valleys and mountains
and herds her fiery wolves;
Her song of fury she blows.
Beware! You shall not be in her way lest you don't survive
to witness Phoebus' chariot over the morning dew.

Yonder a figure hulks, in such a night
covered in a dirty rug, he waits; he shivers.
Listens to ghostly night howls, far and near;
Writhes as Boreas' teeth tear him deeper
Limbs numbed to iron, dawn drawing nigh.
None can separate the hardness from the station metal
Soon sense and mind are dimmed; spirit takes flight
And becomes entwined with the winds of July Night.

tatiana nascimento: asaana, ou: sobreviver o fel

mientras los ojos de criança destilavam ódio
aprendido no ventre,
aprendizes do vento encruzilhavam
monocromias penta
tônicas, entoando uma velha
canção escrava:
"hoje
não tem boca pra se beijar
não tem alma pra se lavar
nem tem vida pra se viver
mas tem dinheiro pra se contar
de terno e gravata, seu pai agradar
levar sua filha pro mundo perder
é o céu da boca do inferno esperando você"
ancestral (o tempo) os
continente escur
os corações
inquebrantáveis a pele
herdada
(um presente)
sabem que:
ralé não dança valsa vienense,
no si puede bailar
la partitura
b l a n c a
quem ia correr o risco de esquecer
o próprio destino, Odú – olhos
transbordantes de Irê –
esquecer

Orunmilá vindo até aqui pra ensinar
o tambor?
(tecnologia ancestral de re
compor)
esquecer o pacto: é se

perder.
pero a eso mira, mira la niña / su odio contra nosotros /
su miedo de la gente scharwzen / su
rabia de ensuciarse / la ciudad tan limpia es vieja y imperial /
la linea del autobus tiene una
topografia colonial / la arquitectura espectral de las calles mira
mira a todo eso, cariño, y luego olvidate,
no te ubicas en la

dolor:

a boca da criança escorria
veneno aprendido no
sêmen
tão temprano!

y eu contra minhas tēmporas sentindo mas
desaprendendo o ódio por ela mas
staring back
o ônibus cheio, você vestia
Funfun, o dia Dudu,
sua mão
me amaciava os caminhos, Odú:
amor,
(no te preocupes.)
amor o que se tinha pra beber contraquele
nó na garganta: "asaana?"
"asaana!"
"contregum
contresses ritmo": sádico –
500 anos de garantia, pode provar:
asaana é mergulhar
(y cuidate,
cariño)

[to amoako boafó, vienna, june 2016]

Teju N Adisa-Farrar: Before Everything

A palm nut created the legacy
Sixteen branches with sixteen stories
But before everything...
There was a handful of dirt...
And a chicken...

They say chicken scratch doesn't mean anything
We only hear about chains in slavery

But before everything...
There was a handful of dirt...
And a chicken...

Long, long ago
A chain came
Stretched from the heavens to what is now
the earth
No sane man would believe this tale
But tall tales have long lives and tall truths are not new

In the beginning
The sky god connected to the ancient waters
In the beginning
Olorun had sons and not daughters
Although they birthed a nation there was no birth
Although they birthed a nation there was no first
or last
There was only dirt...
and a chicken

In the beginning
Yoruba Kings
Were the offspring
Of the Creator's most tangible dreams
In the beginning
All that was veiled was crowned was power
Interacting was the spirit was the people was the now

In the beginning
A five-toed chicken walked on water
In the beginning
A handful of dirt was power
In the beginning
The palm nut was the foundation
In the beginning
Yoruba was the only nation

But in the end
Myths live on in mythology
In the end
The Bantu, the Shilluks, the Zulu
Have their own creation story

In the end there was no first, no last, no one, no capita
In the end and now
There is only one
There is only
Afrika

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.

Editing: Edits made by Daworo will be published only with the author’s permission.

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Mailing List: For event reminders and calls for submissions, please sign up to our mailing list by contacting: Ms. Caroline Pajancic
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<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Vienna-African-Writers-Club-The-VAWClub/804750209580687>

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