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## **TRINIDAD 2006: SEPTEMBER 14, 2005 NEWSLETTER**

Dear colleagues:

I trust that everyone has settled down to the new academic session; for those who observe a different calendar, I equally hope that the year is proceeding smoothly. I would like to bring the following points to your attention in connection with preparations for our forthcoming conference in Trinidad, on July 20-23, 2006.

### Presentation of Papers

If you plan to present a paper at the conference, please remember to submit the title and abstract of your paper to me by November 30, 2005. The general theme of our 2006 conference remains "Oral Literature and Identity Formation in Africa and the Diaspora." The Call for Papers for the conference has long been posted on the ISOLA website, <http://isola.binghamton.edu>. Those planning to participate in the conference are urged to revisit the Call so as to determine which of the subthemes they are targeting for their presentation and therefore how best to frame their paper's title and abstract.

### Payments:

Members are also urged to pay their annual membership fees. The Call for Papers gives the tariffs for both annual membership and registration (pre-registration and on-site registration) for the conference. Kindly bear in mind that, as stated in the Call for Papers, only those who have paid their annual membership fees will have the titles of their papers listed in the conference program.

### Travel and Accommodation

I have received information (attached to this message) about airline links and hotel accommodation for the conference from our Local Organizing Committee (LOC) at the University of the West Indies in St Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago. There are two separate documents. One contains lists of both airlines (with some website addresses) and hotels; the hotel rates are quoted in Trinidad & Tobago dollars, which I am informed are roughly 6.5 to the U.S. dollar. The other document contains a list of hotels and other kinds of tourist information; the hotel prices there are quoted in U.S. dollars. The two hotel lists are largely similar in content, but there a couple of hotels listed in the one that do not appear in the other; please check the lists closely. As with Banjul 2004, our LOC will seek discounted rates from the rather expensive Emerald Plaza (which is located on the UWI campus and with which the university frequently does business) if there are significant numbers of conference participants committing to stay there.

### Excursion and Other Events

Participants are urged to check the relevant airline websites for round-trip flight rates from their countries. The following events are being scheduled by the LOC, and I quote from the committee's chair's letter to me:

- (1) Visit to a pan yard where participants can listen to pannists and ask questions about the pan, a musical instrument that is native to Trinidad and Tobago;
- (2) Visit to an Orisa shrine. We are trying to arrange an orisa event to introduce participants to what is undoubtedly one of the most vibrant Yoruba cultural expressions in the New World;
- (3) Visit to the national museum in Trinidad;

(4) Visit to St James, the city that never sleeps;

(5) A day trip to Tobago, scheduled for Saturday July 22, 2006. The committee mandated me to contact Mr. Eddie Hernandez, the curator of the Tobago Museum who also happened to have worked closely with J.D. Elder, to handle the events in Tobago. He has also suggested that the day trip should be to Charlotville, the home town of J.D. Elder, and promised to contact the cultural officer of the Tobago House of Assembly (who also happens to come from Charlotville), with a view to having them mount a special cultural event in honour of J.D. Elder and for the benefit of the conference participants on Saturday July 22, 2006. The details are still to be worked out.

Those who wish to participate in the trip to Tobago are urged to take it into account when arranging their round-trip flight to Port-of-Spain, Trinidad (Piarco International Airport). The Tobago leg will amount to the equivalent of roughly 50-60 U.S. dollars (to be confirmed).

#### Keynote Speakers

Three of our renowned scholars have consented to give our keynote lectures at the conference: Professors Maureen Warner-Lewis of the University of the West Indies, Mona-Kingston, Jamaica--an outstanding authority on African cultural survivals in the Caribbean; Kwasi Wiredu of the University of South Florida, Tampa, FL--a stellar authority on the foundations of African thought; and John Roberts of the Ohio State University, Columbus, OH--formerly President of the American Folklore Society and author of a priceless study of the African foundations of African American heroic traditions. Since this Trinidad conference is intended as a tribute to the work of the late J.D. Elder, it is only fitting that our best minds in the field of traditional lore bear the torch of the celebration.

#### Banjul 2004 Papers

Only a few of the papers submitted for evaluation remains to be reviewed. The reader has promised to submit her reports within the next week or so. As soon as all the reports are in, I will be writing to authors to let them know whether or not their papers have been accepted for inclusion in the projected special issue of Research in African Literatures. I am sorry about the delay, which has been due largely to the intervention of the summer vacation and the subsequent resumption of classes this Fall.

I will be communicating further on our plans for the Trinidad conference as they progress. Best wishes to all.

Isidore Okpewho  
President of ISOLA