

Teaching of African Languages and their Contribution to the Study of Africa

The Africa Institute | Sharjah, UAE | May 25 – 26, 2022

The Africa Institute, Sharjah, UAE, is an interdisciplinary academic research institute dedicated to the study, research, and documentation of Africa and the African diaspora. The Institute is currently in the process of establishing its programs including a robust and dynamic African Languages and Translation (ALT) Program.

As part of its preparation to launch the teaching of selected African languages, the Institute organized a hybrid workshop in Sharjah, UAE inviting colleagues from partner institutions in order to review the groundwork the Institute has so far achieved to launch the teaching of selected African languages and the documents prepared to support it. In addition, the workshop aimed to learn from the best experiences and challenges of partner institutions regarding the teaching of African languages and to strengthen partnership among the participants and their institutions for future collaborations in language teaching resource development and joint projects.

RECAP OF THE WORKSHOP PROGRAM and SPEAKER BIOS:

Wednesday, May 25, 2022

Moderator: Sataan Al-Hassan (Associate Director of The Africa Institute)

4:30¹ PM - 4:45 PM | Welcoming and Opening Remarks

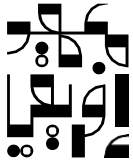
Salah M. Hassan (Director of The Africa Institute)

4:45 PM - 5:35 PM | The African Languages and Translation Program at The Africa Institute and its Preparations

Binyam Sisay Mendisu (Associate Professor of African Languages and Linguistics, The Africa Institute)

5:35 PM - 5:50 PM | Coffee Break

¹ Time given is in Gulf Standard Time (GST) or GMT+4



Moderator: Naminata Diabate (Associate Professor of Comparative Literature, Cornell University and Senior Fellow, The Africa Institute)

5:50 PM - 6:40 PM | The Pedagogy of African Languages in US Universities: the case of Yoruba

Kazeem Sanuth (Associate Director of The National African Language Resource Centre (NALRC), Indiana University Bloomington)

6:40 PM - 7:30 PM | Arabic Language Variation and its Consequences

Munther A. Younes (Reis Senior Lecturer of Arabic Language and Linguistics, Cornell University)

Thursday, May 26, 2022

Moderator: Surafel Wondimu Abebe (Assistant Professor of Performance Studies and Theory, The Africa Institute)

4:30 PM - 5:20 PM | Kiswahili Language teaching and its Status as the African Lingua Franca

Aldin Mutembei (Mwl. Julius Nyerere Professor in Kiswahili Studies. Institute of Kiswahili Studies at University of Dar es Salaam)

5:20 PM - 6:10 PM | The Teaching of Hausa as a Foreign Language

Aliyu Mustapha Lawal (Lecturer of Hausa and Arabic Languages at The Africa Institute)

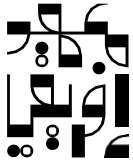
6:10 PM - 6:25 PM | Coffee Break

6:25 PM - 7:15 PM | Reflections on Teaching of Amharic as a Foreign Language at Universities

Ronny Meyer (Associate Professor, INALCO-International Institute for Oriental Language and Civilization) & Dr. Binyam Sisay Mendisu (Associate Professor of African Languages and Linguistics, The Africa Institute)

7:15 PM - 7:30 PM | Wrap-up and Way Forward

Binyam Sisay Mendisu



BIOGRAPHIES

Ronny Meyer

Ronny Meyer (PhD, maître de conférences at INALCO, Paris) studied African linguistics/philology at the universities of Leipzig (MA, 1997) and Mainz (PhD, 2003) with a focus on Ethiopian languages, particularly Amharic. Between 1997 and 2008, he worked as a research fellow at the SFB 295 “Cultural and linguistic contacts” (Mainz University) in a project on contact-induced language change in Ethiopia, in which he conducted extensive fieldwork on Amharic and Gurage languages. During this time, he was also teaching various beginner and advanced Amharic language courses at the universities of Mainz, Göttingen and Heidelberg.

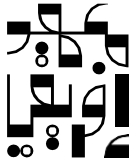
From 2008 to 2017, he was Associate Professor at Addis Ababa University, where he first taught applied linguistics at the Department of Ethiopian Languages and Literature, and then changed to the Department of Linguistics and Philology, where he mainly taught courses in linguistic research methods, descriptive linguistics and typology of Ethiopian languages, and supervised various MA theses and PhD dissertations. In September 2017 he moved to Paris, where he is teaching Amharic as a foreign language at the Institut National de Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO) and conducting research on Ethiosemitic languages at the research laboratory Langage, Langues et Cultures d’Afrique (LLACAN).

Aldin Mutembei

Prof. Dr. Aldin Kai. Mutembei (BA Ed.; MA Ling (Dar); MA (Lit); PhD (Leiden)) Aldin Mutembei holds a chair as the Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Professor in Kiswahili at the University of Dar es Salaam. He is a former Director of the Institute of Kiswahili Studies; and the current Tanzanian Director of Confucius Institute at the University of Dar es Salaam. He teaches Kiswahili/African Literature, Communication, Literary theories and Orature; and Kiswahili language to speakers of other languages. He is a literary writer with four Books. His published theory (in Kiswahili) on literary criticism has gained a wide recognition in Colleges and Universities. He is one of the founders of East African Swahili Teachers’ Association and a former Board member of the Global Association for the Promotion of Swahili Language. He has travelled widely to give keynote speeches to various Academic Institutions in Africa, Europe, Asia and America.

Aliyu Mustapha Lawal

Aliyu Mustapha Lawal received his MA degree in Arabic Literature and Criticism from Al Azhar University in 2021. He served as Hausa lecturer at Cairo University from 2014 to 2021. He is an author of several publications in Arabic poetry, Hausa language and translation. He is currently working as a lecturer of Hausa and Arabic languages in The Africa Institute.



Binyam Sisay Mendisu

Binyam Sisay Mendisu completed his PhD in Linguistics from the University of Oslo in 2008. Between 2008 and 2016, he taught full-time at Addis Ababa University (AAU) as an Assistant and later as Associate Professor. His research interest includes the grammatical studies of little known Omotic and Cushitic languages, mother-tongue education, teacher education, and language and political discourse. He served as a founding Dean of the Faculty of Humanities (2010-2012) at AAU.

Between 2016-2021, he worked as a program officer for UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA). As an education specialist at UNESCO-IICBA, his work focused on providing technical backstopping for teacher policy development in Uganda, the Seychelles, Burundi, Malawi and Mozambique, and leading projects and initiatives on mother tongue and early childhood education. He is also interested in science leadership and evidence-informed policy making. Currently, he sits on the Steering Committee of the African Science Leadership Program (ASLP), University of Pretoria, and he serves as a VP for capacity development in the governing board of the International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA).

Kazeem Sanuth

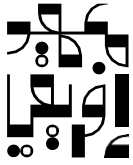
Kazeem Kéhindé Sanuth specializes in applied linguistics and second/foreign language education, with a particular focus on the pedagogy, research, and programming for African languages. His research explores the social, cultural, and linguistic implications of language study abroad in a multilingual West African setting.

Kazeem was a US Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant and a Cultural Ambassador from Nigeria. He holds a Ph.D. in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) with a minor in the pedagogy of Less Commonly Taught Languages from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He also has an M.A. in African Languages and Literature from the same university.

Dr. Sanuth is the Associate Director of the National African Language Resource Center (NALRC) and a faculty with the African Studies Program (ASP) at the Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies, Indiana University Bloomington. His undergraduate courses for ASP focus on Africa and the Global, such as African multilingualism and the global economy, and Africa's agency and its tacit influences on the overall world systems. He has been involved in language education and internationalization as a classroom instructor, coordinator, and administrator of African language education programs.

Munther A. Younes

Munther Younes is Reis Senior Lecturer in Arabic Language and Linguistics and director of the Arabic program in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Cornell University and the Academic Director of the newly established Akadimiyyat Arabiyyat al-Naas. He earned a B.A. in English and a diploma in education from the University



of Jordan (1974), and a Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of Texas at Austin (1982). In addition to directing the Arabic program, he teaches different levels of Arabic specialized courses in Arabic linguistics and the language of the Quran. Before joining the Cornell faculty in 1990, he taught Arabic at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California and prior to that, he taught English and linguistics in Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

Munther has published a number of articles in Arabic linguistics, teaching Arabic as a foreign language, and the language of the Qur'an. He has developed an Arabic program at Cornell that is radically different from Arabic programs elsewhere in its integration of spoken Arabic with Modern Standard Arabic in a way that reflects the use of the language by native speakers.

Salah M. Hassan

Salah M. Hassan is the Director of The Africa Institute, Sharjah, UAE. Hassan is the Distinguished Professor of Arts and Sciences in African Studies, and Director of the Institute for Comparative Modernities, and Professor of Art History and Visual Culture in the Africana Studies and Research Center, and the Department of History of Art and Visual Studies, Cornell University, Ithaca, US. Hassan is an art critic, curator, and founding editor of *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art*.

He authored, edited, and co-edited several books including *Ibrahim El Salahi: A Visionary Modernist* (Museum for African Art and Tate Modern, 2012, 2013), *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance: A Critical Reader* (Cornell University Press, 2009), *Diaspora, Memory, Place* (Prestel Publishing, 2008), *Unpacking Europe* (NAi Publishers, 2001) and *Authentic/ Ex-Centric* (Forum for African Arts, 2001). Hassan has curated several exhibitions including major ones at the Venice and Dakar Biennales, and most recently *The Khartoum School: The Making of the Modern Art Movement in Sudan (1945–Present)*, and *The Egyptian Surrealists: When Art Becomes Liberty (1938–1965)* sponsored by the Sharjah Art Foundation and which opened in Sharjah and Cairo (2016). Hassan was the Madeleine Haas Russell Visiting Professor in African and Afro-American Studies, Brandeis University, Boston, US (2016–2017). He is the recipient of several grants and awards including the J. Paul Getty Postdoctoral Fellowship in Art History and the Humanities, and the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation, and Sharjah Art Foundation.