

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: Esther Katheu Mbithi, Ph.D.
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IN BRIEF

Writer, editor, translator, Dr. Mbithi is the official University Editor and a Senior Lecturer in Literature on the main campus. She reads literature in five languages (English, French, German, Kiswahili and Kikamba) and is currently learning Chinese. She also has an interest in journalistic creative writing. Two of her short pieces have been aired on the *BBC Network Africa radio programme*, and she has contributed regularly to the Carleton University Magazine and the Vineyard magazine (St. Paul's University Chapel); captured on her blog www.creativewritingEKM.com.

UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE

July 2014-July 2018: Chairperson, Literature Department. Served the limit of two terms.
Key achievement: Doctoral programme through coursework, examination and thesis developed and approved by senate.

2013-2014: Served as Deputy Director, Centre for Refugee Studies and Empowerment (CRSE).

Jan 2010-Jan 2012: Examinations Co-ordinator, Literature Department.

RESEARCH FUNDING

January 2022: Workshop on 'Uncommon Trends' at University of Vienna, sponsored by the Government of Austria. Paper presented: "What is 'she' like? A reading of research articles that focus on female characters in the fictional works of female authors."

2017 - 2021: Joint researcher in KU-VC's Research Grant: "Transitioning from academia to industry: job application letters and curriculum vitae as the weak link."

May 2018: Workshop on 'Encountering Development in Postcolonial Literature' at University of Vienna, sponsored by the Government of Austria. Paper presented:

“ ‘When many people together do one small thing...’: a reading of *Unbowed: One Woman’s Story*. ”

July 2016: SHSS return airfare to attend 17th ACLALS (Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies) triennial conference at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. Paper presented “Inclusions and Exclusions: a reading of *Unbowed: One Woman’s Story*. ”

September 2014: DAAD sponsored Workshop in Berlin, Germany. Theme: Movements. Paper presented “What did you Not say? Narrative strategies in Yvonne Owuor’s *Dust*. ”

June 2013: DAAD sponsored Workshop at Kenyatta University as part of the on-going North-South academic exchange between the Free University of Berlin, the University of Cape Town and Kenyatta University. Theme: Transnationalism.

August 2011: DAAD sponsored Workshop on Teaching Decolonisation and Postcoloniality held at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Seminar paper presented: “Post Colonial Spaces – Brave New World.”

FORMAL EDUCATION

2007: University of Nairobi: Ph.D. (Literature).

Area of specialisation: Stylistics and Literary techniques.

Thesis: *The Aboriginal Woman’s Voice in Canadian Literature: Beatrice Culleton and Jeannette Armstrong* (Published 2010 ISBN 978-3-8383-6784-2).

1993: Carleton University (Ottawa, Canada): Master of Arts (M.A.), English.

Project: “The Politics and Aesthetics of Contemporary Kenyan Literature: Ngugi wa Thiong’o and *Petals of Blood*. ”

1992: Willis Business College (Ottawa, Canada): Diploma in Business Administration and Property Management. An extensive course which covered the key areas of Marketing, Human Resource Management, Computerised Accounting and Financial Management.

1990: University of Nairobi: Bachelor of Arts (Literature and French).

1989: Goethe Institut Nairobi: Kleines Deutsches Sprachdiplom (KDS), a diploma in German Language administered on behalf of the University of Munich.

1985: Limuru Girls’ School: Kenya Advanced Certificate of Education (KACE).

1983: Limuru Girls’ School: Kenya Certificate of Education (KCE).

1979: Buru Buru Primary School Certificate of Primary Education (CPE).

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING / SKILLS UPGRADING

- 2011: Training on pedagogy for foreign teachers of Chinese language, literature and culture. In Beijing, China, courtesy of the Confucius Institute of Kenyatta University.
- 2008: Diplôme Approfondie de Langue Française (DALF C1). Specialized training offered to graduate teachers of French in Kenya through the Alliance Française de Nairobi.
- 2003: Infotech Training Centre: Web Design Specialist Certificate.
- 2002: CIMPA (Connected Internet Meeting Planners' Association) conference to update members' skills and facilitate networking.
- 2001: Corbin Ball Seminar: "How to Survive and Thrive on the Internet."
- 2000: Kenya Utalii College: Environmental Management. Offered to Senior Managers in the hospitality Industry.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

- Oct 2009-the present: Department of Literature, Linguistics and Foreign Languages
Kenyatta University (Main Campus)
University Editor and Senior Lecturer
- 2003 Jan-Sept 2009: Teacher (English, Literature and French) at secondary school and College levels, initially on part-time basis and eventually accepting the challenge of a full-time position as **Headmistress, Laiser Hill Academy**.
- 1993 May-2002 Dec: Tour Operator, travel and tourism industry. Much time spent in key Marketing roles and functions. Prepared documents in English, French and German. Represented the organisation at the EIBTM in Geneva, Switzerland.
- 1986 Jan-1993 Mar: Worked in entry level positions in various service industries including working as a **teacher of English** at Karura Mission School, and assisting in the mediathèque of the Alliance Française.

WRITING / EDITING / REVIEWING EXPERIENCE

- December 2021: "When many people together do one little thing ...": a reading of Wangari Maathai's *unbowed: one woman's story*. Research article in peer-reviewed journal, Graphos Vol. 23 No. 3. 90-104.
<https://periodicos.ufpb.br/index.php/graphos/issue/view/2738>

- September 2021: Co-author of “Why and to where does Ajany run? Culture and Femininity in Yvonne Owuor’s *Dust*”. Research article in peer-reviewed journal, *Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/23277408.2021.1939936> .
- June 2021: Co-author of “Literary Study of Invectives in Selected Works of H K Bidi Setsoafia”. Research article in peer-reviewed journal, *Journal of Marketing and Communication* 4 (1), 45-66.
- April 2021: Co-author of “The Beauty of Insult among the Ewe people”. Research article in peer-reviewed journal, *Hybrid Journal of Literary and Cultural Studies* 3 (1).
- March 2021: Co-author of “Transmutation and Temporality: Shifting Figures of African Women in Jennifer Makumbi’s Historical novel *Kintu*”. Research article in peer-reviewed journal, *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*.
- May 2020: Review of journal article “Translation as Dismembering and Re-membering: Non-Acholi speaking Lawinos and the Expansion of Contested Spaces in Okot P’Bitek’s *Song of Lawino*” for *Postcolonial Text*.
- April 2020: Invitation to join Advisory Board of the Ghana Journal of Languages, Linguistics and Literature.
- January 2020: Review of conference paper “Contribution of Mother Language and Appropriate Educational Reforms to the Realization of Vision 2030” at the request of the IMLD 2019 Conference Committee.
- August 2019: Review of a Book Chapter “Mau Mau Shifts in Portrayals of Kenya’s Anti-colonial Liberation War for Centre for Narratological Studies, University of Southern Denmark.
- June 2019: “A Most Beautiful Bride”. Short Story published on the Your2read site:
<https://www.yours2read.com/stories/a-most-beautiful-bride1>
- April 2018: Co-author “Female Characters Contesting Maasai Traditional Cultural Practices and Materialism in H. R. Ole Kulet’s *Blossoms of The Savannah and Daughter of Maa*”. *European Journal of English Language and Literature Studies* Vol.6, No.3, pp.7-17, April 2018. www.eajournals.org
- May 2017: Review of Book *Cultural Archives of Atrocity: Essays on the Protest Tradition in Kenyan Culture and Society* for Taylor and Francis.
- February 2017: “The Significance, for readers in the twenty-first century, of the character of Safie in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*.” A peer-reviewed article published in *Littera Aperta* Vol. 3. <http://www.uco.es/litteraaperta/index.php/litteraaperta/issue/view/3>

- May 2016: “Unsettling dust, fifty years on.” A peer-reviewed article published in the *SAUT Multi-Disciplinary Journal*.
- March 2016: Authored ODeL module *ALT 319: Canadian Literature*. Published by Kenyatta University for Open, Distance and Electronic Learning (ODeL) students.
- October 2015: “Brave New World – a reading of *The Verdict of Death* and *The Unbroken Spirit*.” A peer-reviewed article published in the *Pyrex Journal of English and Literature*. <http://pyrexjournals.org/pjel/pdf/2015/october/mbithi.pdf>
[http://academia.edu/65873610/Brave New World a reading of The Unbroken Spirit and The Verdict of Death](http://academia.edu/65873610/Brave_New_World_a_reading_of_The_Unbroken_Spirit_and_The_Verdict_of_Death)
- July 2015: Authored ODeL module *ALT 206: Creative Writing*. Published by Kenyatta University for Open, Distance and Electronic Learning (ODeL) students.
- August 2014: “Multilingualism, language policy and creative writing in Kenya.” A peer-reviewed article published by Springer in *Multilingual Education 2014, 4:19*
<http://www.multilingual-education.com/content/4/1/19>
- August 2012: Edited a World Health Organisation (WHO) report: *An assessment of the capacity of research and diagnostic laboratories in Nairobi*.
- July 2011: Authored ODeL module *ALT 403: Modern European Literature*. Published by Kenyatta University for Open, Distance and Electronic Learning (ODeL) students.
- March 2011: Authored ODeL module *ALT 200: East African Prose Fiction*. Published by Kenyatta University for Open, Distance and Electronic Learning (ODeL) students.
- November 2010: Edited ODeL module *ALT 303: History and Theory of Literature*. Published by Kenyatta University for Open, Distance and Electronic Learning (ODeL) students.
- September 2010: Authored *The Aboriginal Woman’s Voice in Canadian Literature*, revised Ph. D. Thesis published by Lambert Academic Publishing. ISBN: 978-3-8383-6784-2.
- May 2010: “Teaching Franco-phone Literature in Translation,” a chapter in book edited by Prof. Chesaina entitled *Teaching African Literature in the 21st Century*.
- November 2009: Edited *Laiserite*, the school magazine of Laiser Hill Academy.

2005-2009: Member, Editorial Advisory Committee, Carleton University Magazine, contributing an article for each issue.

May 2005: “My Magic Moment,” a short piece aired on the BBC Network Africa radio programme.

March 2004: “My Street,” a short piece aired on the BBC Network Africa radio programme.

WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS AND CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

February 2022: International Mother Language Day Celebrations at Kenyatta University. Reading, in Kikamba, of a creative piece based on historical fact: “*Kĩĩma Kĩnyaa.*”

January 2022: Participated in a virtual Workshop ‘Uncommon Trends’ organised by the University of Vienna and funded by the Austrian government. Paper presented: “What is ‘*she*’ like?”

May 2021: Organised, with co-researchers, a workshop at KUCC to disseminate findings of VC’s research grant project: “Transitioning from Academia to Industry: Job Application Letters and Curriculum Vitae.”

February 2020: International Mother Language Conference at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. Paper presented: “The Creative Genius in Mother Language.”

August 2019: 4th EALCS (Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies) conference at the University of Bahir Dar, Ethiopia. Paper presented: “Why and to where does Ajanya run? Culture and femininity in Yvonne Owuor’s *Dust.*”

July 2019: 18th ACLALS (Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies) triennial conference at University, New Zealand. Paper presented: “Encountering development in postcolonial fiction: a reading of *Blossoms of the Savannah.*”

February 2019: International Mother Language Conference at Kitui Campus, Kenyatta University. Paper presented: “Something Strange Here; Where Mother Language Meets Literature.”

May 2018: Workshop on “Encountering Development in Postcolonial Literature” at University of Vienna, sponsored by the Government of Austria. Paper presented: “‘When many people together do one small thing...’: a reading of *Unbowed: One Woman’s Story.*”

August 2017: 3rd EALCS (Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies) conference at the University of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. Paper presented: “ ‘The obituary of Simiyu Barasa written by himself’: a critical reading.”

July 2016: 17th ACLALS (Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies) triennial conference at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. Paper presented “Inclusions and Exclusions: a reading of *Unbowed: One Woman’s Story*.”

December 2015: 2nd African Urban Youth Language (AUYL) Conference at Kenyatta University. Paper presented “How Students of Literature in Kenyan universities Communicate in Writing.”

April 2015: Conference at Strathmore University. Theme: English for Effective Communication.

December 2014: Conference at Pwani University. Paper presented “Language Policy and the teaching of African Literature in Kenya.” Also session chair.

September 2014: Workshop in Berlin, Germany. Theme: Movements. Paper presented “What did you Not say? Narrative strategies in Yvonne Owuor’s *Dust*.”

August 2014: From Asmara 2000 to Nairobi 2014. An international conference hosted by the Kenyatta University Centre for African Studies: Session rapporteur.

September 2013: East Africa @ 50 International Conference hosted by University of Nairobi, Kenya. Paper presented “Writing the Nation: post genocide Rwandan Literature.”

June 2013: Organised and hosted a workshop at Kenyatta University as part of the on-going North-South academic exchange between the Free University of Berlin, the University of Cape Town and Kenyatta University. Theme: Transnationalism.

November 2011: International Conference on the Teaching of French (Language, Literature and Culture) in the Multilingual Context of East Africa, held at Kenyatta University, Nairobi.

August 2011: Workshop on Teaching Decolonisation and Postcoloniality held at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Seminar paper presented: “Post Colonial Spaces – Brave New World.”

July 2010: Multilingualism and Education Conference held at Kenyatta University. Paper presented: “Language Policy and Creative Writing in Kenya.”

May 2009: Seminar paper presented at University of Nairobi: “The Significance of the character of Safie in *Frankenstein* for readers in the twenty-first century.”

SUPERVISION OF POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS

Master of Arts (Literature)

1. Paul Khaemba Wanyonyi, C50/CE/13222/2005, 'Representation of Cultural Tension and Conflict among the Maasai in Ole Kulet's works: A Postcolonial reading of *Blossoms of the Savannah* and *Daughter of Maa*.' **Graduated in June 2012.**
2. Maurice Simbili Mwichuli, C50/CE/ 13886/ 2009, 'Aspects of Alienation in *The Price of Living* (1983), *Water Under the Bridge* (1991) and *Eve of the Storm* (2010) by Yusuf K. Dawood.' **Graduated in July 2014.**
3. Julia Njeri Karumba, C50/CE/26824/2011, 'Historical Consciousness and Character Formation in Yvonne Owuor's *Dust*.' **Graduated in August 2017.**
4. Grace Gathoni Karimi, C50/CE 15172/2008, 'Syntactic Choices in Jared Angira's Poetry: A Study of Selected Poems.' **Graduated in August 2017.**
5. Alfred Oyaro Omwenga, C50/CE/26829/2011, 'Strategic Silences in Abdulrazak Gurnah's *Pradise* and *Desertion*.' **Graduated in August 2018.**
6. Felicitas Nkechi Otuonye, C50F/26694/2013, 'Cynthia Hunter's Female Protagonists: A critical analysis of three selected Texts.' **Graduated in Dec 2019**
7. Kitheka Wycliffe Mutia, C50/25092/2014, 'Conscience and collective responsibility in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* and *News of a Kidnapping*.'
8. Bett Nthenge, C50/CE/25694/2018, 'Female Agency and its Thematic Implications in the Fiction of Yvonne Adhiambo Owuor.'
9. Stephen Onchwati, C50/CE/25659/2014, 'The Absurdity of Love: An analysis of *In the Name of our Fathers* by Abdirazak Y. Osman and *A Sunday in the Pool in Kigali* by Gil Courtemanche'.

Doctor of Philosophy (Literature)

1. Evans Odali Mugarizi, C82/7666/2000, 'The Worldings of Ruganda's Plays.' **Graduated in August 2018**
2. Jeremiah Mutuku Muneeni, C82/31615/2015, 'Gender Ideology and Feminist Aesthetics in contemporary writing of African Women: A New Historicist approach.' **Graduated in July 2021**
3. Leah Anyango Okombo, C82/29427/2014, 'Ideology, language and generational gap in Kenyan women's literature: a comparative study.'
4. Emmanuel Dogbey, C82F/37217/2017, 'A Literary Study of Invectives in Selected Works of Bidi Setsoafia, H. K.'

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

2013 to the present: Member, Modern Language Association (MLA). Serving as a Field Bibliographer since 2017.

2005 to the present: Member, Kenya Association of Teachers of French (KATF).

2005 to the present: Member, International Federation of University Women (IFUW).

OTHER MEMBERSHIPS

2017 to the present: Member, United Kenya Club, Nairobi.

2016 to the present: Machakos Golf Club, Machakos.

SERVICE TO KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

Nov 2021 to the present: Founding Patron of the KU Toastmasters Gavel Club.

Dec 2020 to the present: Co-ordinator, Curriculum Committee and Postgraduate Studies Board, Literature Section, Department of Literature, Linguistics and Foreign Languages.

Jun 2019 to the present: University Editor.

Sept 2018 to the present: Member, Curriculum Committee, School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Apr 2016 to the present: KU-KMA Coordinating Committee Member, School of Security, Diplomacy and Peace Studies.

Jul 2014 – Dec 2018: Founding Patron of the KU Writers Guild Club.

Jan 2012 to the present: Member, Academic Seminars Committee, School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Sept 2011 - Mar 2013: Member, Curriculum Committee, School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Jan 2011 - Dec 2014: Co-ordinator, DAAD sponsored programme of academic exchange between Free University Berlin (FUB), the University of Cape Town (UCT) and Kenyatta University (KU).

Sept 2010 to the present: Staff Mentor, Kenyatta University mentoring programme.

Jun 2010 to the present: Member, Curriculum Committee, Literature Section.

Jun 2010: Chaired Seminar for Master's graduands at School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Jan 2010 to the present: Assisting to edit the Kenyatta University newsletter and other official university documents for literary presentation.

SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

Jan 2022 to the present: Treasurer, Lady Golfers Machakos Golf Club.

Apr 2019 to the present: Key speaker/Mentor on Waumini Radio. Area of Specialisation: Study Habits; Academics and Career Preparation.

Apr 2019 to the present: Member, Board of Management, Mumbuni Boys School, Machakos.

Jan 2019 to the present: Treasurer, Kasimu Women Group, Machakos.

Feb 2017 - 2021: Parent representative, Mumbuni Boys' parents and teachers association (PTA).

2010 - 2016: Treasurer, Catholic Women Association, St. Paul's University Chaplaincy and Parish, Nairobi.

2006 to the present: Key speaker in workshops for secondary school students. Area of Specialisation: Study Habits; Academics and Career Preparation.

2005 - 2010: Member, Advisory Board, Carleton University Magazine.

1999 - 2016: Secretary, Fanaka Women Group, Tala.

Oct 1998: Organised and participated in the Hare Krishna "Food for Life" charity cycling expedition (300 participants).

1984-1985: Deputy House Captain (while in Form V and Form VI).

1982-1983: Senior School Prefect (while in Form III and Form IV).

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

Reading, writing, driving, swimming, hiking and playing golf.

REFEREES

Prof. Oluoch Obura
Professor of Literature
Kenyatta University
P. O. Box 43844 – 00100 GPO
Nairobi, Kenya

Email address: obura.oluoch@ku.ac.ke

Dr. Martina Kopf
Senior Lecturer in African Literature
Senior Researcher Elise Richter Program of the Austrian Science Funds
Department of African Studies
University of Vienna
Spitalgasse 2, Court 5
A-1090 Vienna, Austria

Email address: martina.kopf@univie.ac.at

Dr. Joseph Muleka
Senior Lecturer, Literature Department
University of Nairobi
P. O. Box 30197 – 00100 GPO
Nairobi, Kenya

Email address: muleka@uonbi.ac.ke
