

Bíakoye

NEWSLETTER



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A 2010 Reunion with the Irmandade Da Boa Morte Nana Korantema Ayebofo Returns to Her Sisters in Cachoeira, Brazil



Nana Korantema Ayebofo is shown above, standing in front of the museum, church and headquarters of the Irmandade Da Boa Morte (The Sisterhood of the Good Death) in Cachoeira, Brazil. Nana travelled to Brazil in November, 2010.

A highlight of the year 2010 was Nana Korantema Ayebofo's return visit to the Irmandade Da Boa Morte, or Sisterhood of the Good Death—enjoying a special reunion in Cachoeira, Brazil. She was welcomed back as a member of the Sisterhood, having been initiated in 1994.

Statement of Purpose

Biako Ye Newsletter is a quarterly news journal published by StarSpirit Press. It provides information for and about the African community, linking the Akan family throughout the Diaspora.

Biako Ye News Staff Members:

Nana Korantema Ayebofo,
Executive Editor

Dr. Barbara Wallace, Chief
Editor

Photographs by:

Barbara Wallace

David Bey, Graphics Consultant

Biako Ye is pronounced:

Bee yah ku yeh.

Analia, The Former Guardian of the Purse for the Sisterhood of the Good Death, Reminiscences With Nana



A treasured focal point of Nana's reunion with the Sisterhood of the Good Death was a visit to the home of Analia, shown above. Analia was the Guardian of the Purse for the order when Nana was initiated. Nana was embraced and welcomed back with love. Together, they shared memories of that special time and talked about past and upcoming spiritual festivals.



Pictured at right in Cachoeira Brazil, Nana visits the home of Analia, the sister who was the former Guardian of the Purse of the Irmandade Da Boa Morte when Nana was initiated into the order in 1994. Above, Analia is shown in a more formal pose, wearing the traditional clothing for members of the Irmandade Da Boa Morte.



Exploring the Roots of the Irmandade Da Boa Morte in Bahia and Visiting Their Museum/Church in Cachoeira



The November, 2010 visit to Bahia, Brazil provided an opportunity to explore the roots of the Irmandade Da Boa Morte (Sisterhood of the Good Death), starting with their historic roots in Bahia, Brazil. Above, Nana Korantema Ayebofo poses before the historic church where the Irmandade Da Boa Morte was founded. History includes how the church was burned in an effort to stop the work of the Sisterhood and destroy the order. In response to this attack, a portion of the Sisterhood went to Rio and the other representatives went to Cachoeira in the mountains. The woman who led the contingent to Rio founded the Samba—which became a major movement of dance that has been at the core of annual Brazilian festivals and influenced dance around the world. The contingent that went to the mountains in Cachoeira has similarly maintained ancient traditions and holds annual festivals. Above right, Nana is shown in the interior of the museum, church, and headquarters of the Irmandade Da Boa Morte in Cachoeira, Brazil, posing with the two sisters who greet visitors to their museum and church. The sister at right is the current Guardian of the Purse. The sisters joyfully welcomed Nana as one of their own, as shown in the photograph.



SAVE THE DATE!

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2011

NANA KORANTEMA AYEBOFO PRESENTS THE 2011 ANNUAL CULTURAL RENAISSANCE AFFAIR HONORING THE LEGACY OF ARTHUR HALL

Arthur Hall not only founded the Arthur Hall Afro American Dance Ensemble, but also played a key role in bringing authentic African culture, tradition, and dance to Philadelphia, PA and the United States. He provided leadership for the 1977 incorporation of the Asona Aberade Shrine, Inc; this followed his historic 1974 connection with the female head of the ancient Nene Akonedi Shrine of Larteh, Ghana--Nana Okomfohene Akua Oparebea. Come help us honor Arthur Hall and Celebrate His Legacy as the culmination of Black History Month! Come and dance! The event is free for children, while adults provide a love offering/donation to improve the lives of children through the WATER PROJECT (see more about this project under *From the Editor's Desk: 2010-2011 Update*).

LOCATION: PECO Center City Headquarters,
Ground Floor, 2301 Market Street, Phila., PA

TIME: 2:00 - 6:00 pm

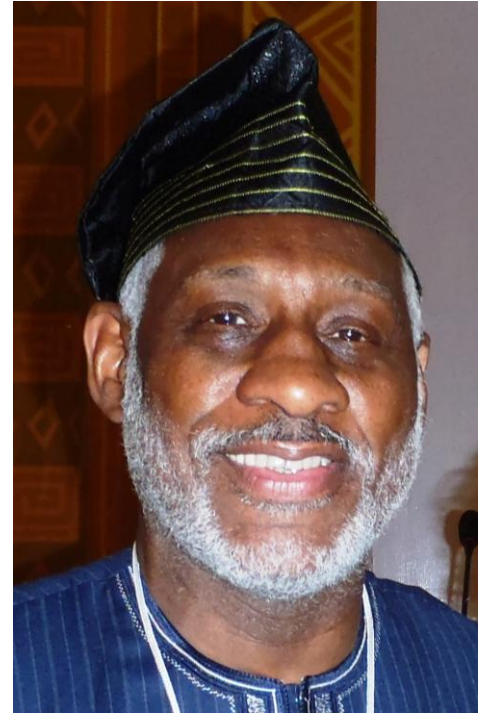
FOR MORE INFORMATION: CALL 215.235.7933

Accompanying Stanley Straughter to the *First International Forum on Education, Diversity and Identity* in Bahia, Brazil

The “First International Forum on Education, Diversity and Identity” was held in Bahia, Brazil, November 25-27, 2010. The Forum was an historic event sponsored by the Office of the Mayor of the City of Salvador, the Municipal Secretary of Education, Culture, Sports, and Leisure, Bahia, Brazil; and, The City of Philadelphia’s Mayor’s Commission on African and Caribbean Immigrant Affairs, Chairman, Stanley L. Straughter—while also sponsored in collaboration with The Office of City Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell. Chairman Stanley Straughter (shown at right) provided powerful leadership in spelling out the mission of the forum, as suggested by the following quotes:

- To “*develop an action agenda to alleviate and eliminate the worst forms of oppression that are visited upon women of African descent.*”
- To “*lay the foundation for a sustained global movement to educate, uplift, and enhance the quality of life for our sisters whether they live in the United States, Africa, the Caribbean, or Latin America.*”
- To seek to rectify the reality wherein, despite “*so much research [that] has indicated that education is the road to liberation and upward mobility for women, we still see policy makers and politicians doing very little to implement programs to free Black women and others from bondage.*”
- And, to, therefore, commit ourselves through this forum to specifically taking action and forging a global movement that results in greater implementation of education programs designed to free Black women and others from bondage— since “*the most revolutionary thing we can do is to educate Black women and other women of color.*”

Below, Stanley Straughter is pictured with some of the members of his Philadelphia delegation to the forum.



From the Editor's Desk: 2010-2011 Update



Greetings,

There is so much to share as my update in this special issue of the BiakoYe Newsletter—our Winter 2010-2011 Issue. As you can see from the prior articles covering travel to Brazil, South America, November 2010 was a highlight of a very busy year for StarSpirit International, Inc. It was an honor to join Stanley Straughter and the delegation from the City of Philadelphia to the “First International Forum on Education, Diversity and Identity” in Bahia, Brazil. It was also exciting to meet and support a new sister who conducted a powerful workshop at the forum: Dr. Joi Spragins—Assistant Commissioner to Stanley Straughter, for The City of Philadelphia’s Mayor’s Commission on African and Caribbean Immigrant Affairs. And, similarly, it was wonderful to support and hear Dr. Barbara Wallace (a.k.a. Nana Ohemaa Agyiriwa, II, the Abradehemaa)—who presented a paper at the forum for which I served as co-author.

My Contribution to the November 2010 Forum: Four Guiding Principles

Together. Dr. Wallace and I contributed to the forum a well-received paper entitled, “The Goals of Transforming Education and Supporting Identity Development: A Role for African Religion, Cultural Practices and Traditions.” Our paper contributed to the forum my four guiding principles, as follows:

Guiding Principle # 1: Value African Traditions – We urge acceptance of the value of African religion, cultural practices and traditions and the incorporation of these elements in order to positively transform education and support identity development.

Guiding Principle # 2: Adopt African Ways of Educating and Communicating Ideas and Traditions – We recommend the adoption of African ways of educating and communicating ideas and traditions—such as the use of 1) communal group settings; and, 2) songs (i.e., play songs, work songs, lullabies, call and response songs, rhythmic chants, or repeating affirmations made into songs).

Guiding Principle # 3: Also Integrate the Use of Effective Contemporary Approaches of Value that Produce Positive Outcomes – We recommend integrating the use of effective contemporary approaches that produce positive outcomes—i.e. evidence-based approaches, what is proven to be effective, or “what works” as an intervention or educational approach that is worthy of replication, dissemination, and scaling up.

Guiding Principle # 4: Always Ensure Equal Access to Opportunities for All – We recommend that all education models be designed so as to provide opportunities for everyone to participate, regardless of economic status or ancestry (i.e. race, ethnicity, religion, culture)—ensuring that all enjoy equal access to opportunities, while avoiding all forms of oppression (e.g., discrimination).

I think we contributed something of value that can inform the design of educational programs around the globe—whether charter and public school education in Philadelphia, HIV/AIDS training programs (such as the one StarSpirit implemented in Larteh-Kubease, Ghana in 2006 and promotes around the globe with Dr. Wallace), or primary/secondary/higher education in Brazil and other countries. We concluded our paper with the following:

Finally, let us consider something Tigare (2010) recently said:

We are living in an age where we will see an end to all forms of oppression. We are living in a time where every wish will be granted, especially if it benefits

many; then it will manifest quickly. We live in the age where we will see the unthinkable manifest. So, think of something good (Tigare, 2010).

The “something good” that Dr. Wallace envisions is dialogue of the kind we shared in this forum contributing to “the celebration of liberation and freedom from oppression.”

Meanwhile, the “something good” that Nana Korantemaa envisions is a global community returning to their original African roots, or Sankofa--going back to get that which has value, and finding liberation and a transcendent purpose.

My Other Personal Goals for Travelling to Brazil

Beyond the delivery of these messages through our paper presentation, I had other personal goals for my travel to Brazil. I always find great purpose in travelling to Brazil. This was my fourth trip to Brazil. Formerly, I was honored with an award at another empowering conference in Brazil in 1994. That was also when I first made contact with the Irmandade Da Boa Morte—meeting their public relations representative and Guardian of the Purse, Analia; I was invited by her to Cachoeira. I was excited to return to Brazil after all of these years in order to see how that theme was now being expressed in Brazil, as well as how it related to women’s identity and their involvement in education and governmental affairs at the November 2010 conference forum. However, I knew I had to see what was going on in Bahia, and, in particular, travel to Cachoeira to see my sisters of the Irmandade Da Boa Morte.

Homecoming!: Reunion with the Sisterhood in Cachoeira



For my homecoming to Cachoeira, I organized a small tour that included Elizabeth Neal of Stone Mountain, Georgia (pictured far left). Over the past few years, Elizabeth has been gracious in organizing and hosting spiritual development workshops in Atlanta where I have been able to share African Healing Wisdom, visitations by the Abosom with the sharing of powerful messages, and private divinations/spiritual readings. The tour also included my new sister, Dr. Joi Spragins (second from left), as well as Dr. Barbara Wallace (far right); (in the center are pictured Analia and myself) Taking a delegation of women to visit the Sisterhood was important to me. I wanted other women to be empowered through making contact with the Sisterhood. In addition, I wanted the Sisterhood to see that I was also forging meaningful relationships with other women who share solidarity with the cause of preserving the Sisterhood.

Indeed, going to the Irmandade Da Boa Morte was a powerful homecoming for me, a reconnection to a Sisterhood that I hold dear. It was a chance to renew my spirit of solidarity with my sisters. I miss them, and Analia, in particular (see the story and pictures on page 2). This is because the Sisterhood represents a spiritual connection to the maternal energy of solidarity and organization that I have been privileged to identify with and recognize in the world. The maternal energy that keeps families and cultures and traditions alive has been held up by the Sisterhood across centuries. I experience the home base of the Sisterhood in Cachoeira as a place that is so much like my “other” home in Larteh-Kubease, Ghana; i.e., a place where women accept and uphold fundamental shared principles, involving their role as nurturers and being at the nucleus or core of the family. So, whether with my sisters in the Irmandade Da Boa Morte in Cachoeira, Brazil, or with my sisters who are Akomfo within the spiritual order of the Nene Akonedi Shrine in Larteh-Kubease, Ghana—when we are together we reinforce and regenerate the principles we cherish: these principles involve our role as nurtures, our position at the core of the family, and our responsibility in holding the maternal energy to keep our families, cultures, and traditions alive.

Also at the core of African traditions to be found in many places around the world is the essential value in living within and sharing community. When I am with my sisters, I also experience the reality that the power of community is soothing; it is like being held in your grandmother's arms or sitting in your grandmother's lap. The other healing energy emanating at such times of reunion with my sisters involves how the whole concept of community includes not only being nurtured and cared for, but also not judged. There is also no feeling of competition. Instead, there are the additional principles holding sway of egalitarianism, sameness, and oneness. Everyone is equal and just as important to the whole as everyone else. I bask in the joy of feeling the results of all of these principles (mentioned above) holding sway in Cachoeira when I am with Analia and my sisters of the Irmandade Da Boa Morte. And, I only feel that particular quality of joy when I am with the Sisterhood—either in Bahia, or with the Sisterhood of Akomfo in Larteh-Kubease, Ghana.

Spiritual Awareness, Spiritual Oneness, and Spiritual Community

Meeting Analia for the first time in 1994, seeing her again in 1995, staying in touch with her, and then surprising her with my return visit in November 2010 was truly transcendent. What I shared with Analia was the spiritual awareness and oneness that being a part of a spiritual organization or spiritual community provides. Let me share an example of how this spiritual awareness and oneness manifests. ***Analia said that she was looking over pictures of the last time I was there in Cachoeira with the Irmandade Da Boa Morte that very morning before I arrived; and, that intuitively she knew that someone was coming to visit her that day. So, when I arrived she exclaimed that she knew that the Ancestral spirits that are with her were good and great spirits; and, that she was blessed because of her oneness with them.*** It is that kind of consciousness and connection that all of us have to the spirit and to our Ancestors who are always with us—guiding us and allowing us to see the many blessings we have and receive. It is like looking in the mirror when I am with the sisters. I see myself over and over and over again. And, in that spiritual awareness and oneness, we share many things that are the same—even though we live in different parts of the world and the societies that we live in are very different.

The Year 2010: StarSpirit Accomplishments in Brief

It has been a busy year at StarSpirit, including the period before and after my travel to Brazil. The main of my work through StarSpirit International, Inc. in the year 2010 involved laying the groundwork for the successful launching of a WATER PROJECT (see more below). Also, we enjoyed great success in 2010 in sponsoring, once again, some 36 StarSpirit Scholars. Let me offer my heartfelt expression of gratitude to all of our sponsors who made that success a reality for our 6th year in a row! And, remember to spread the word about the opportunity to serve as a sponsor. Remember our motto: “Instead of giving a gift to someone who already has everything, send an African child to school.” And, give the gift that keeps on giving! Send your check for \$180.00 to sponsor a child for the 2011-2012 school year to StarSpirit by the September 5, 2011 deadline—again making your check out to StarSpirit International, Inc and mailing it to our address on page 1. Indicate the name of the person you are “gifting” by supporting a child's schooling (i.e., in their name if applicable).



See, above, just 4 of 36 current scholars (2 at left sponsored by Balias Webb, Jr. and 2 at right by Sarah Sexton) being supported in going to school for the 2010-2011 academic year as StarSpirit Scholars. All sponsors receive Thank You Cards displaying a large photograph for each child they sponsor.



As it turns out, our **WATER PROJECT** also involves improving the lives of all of our StarSpirit Scholars, their mothers, and entire families—especially, since children and women bear the greatest burden in carrying buckets of water up the side of the mountain several times each morning, in order to gather the water supply for bathing and cooking for each day. We intend to not only improve existing water reservoirs and wells, but

also to provide, overall, safe hygienic water via new access points in the town, as well as near schools.



The photographs also show one of the existing open wells used for water collection; and, how school children carry buckets with them to school for water collection. Many of the children walk by the StarSpirit **LIGHTHOUSE** in Ghana—our Larteh base of operation, carrying their buckets, along with book bags and books.

Also, as part of the **WATER PROJECT**, many planning meetings were held with the Larteh Kubeasehene (Chief/King), Nana Kwatei Agyemfra Okatakyire II, along with his Chiefs, Elders, and community leaders (pictured below). These meetings included a field trip to sites central to the **WATER PROJECT**—as also captured in the photograph. These meetings began in October 2009 and continued in the year 2010—covering vital issues such as environmental protection, and respecting customs and traditions. This underscores how this project was a main focus of our work in 2010. Thus, holding this project ever so near and dear to my heart, I look forward to raising funds and accepting your donations.



The 2011 "TIGARE SPEAKS TOUR: LESSONS FOR HUMANITY FOR THE GREAT AWAKENING" -- While Raising Funds for the WATER PROJECT

Indeed, 2011 promises to bring many good things, including opportunities to raise money for the **WATER PROJECT**. In this regard, Tigare recently shared that it is **THE GREAT AWAKENING**, a time of abundance (see more below). Whether more gatherings in Georgia hosted by Elizabeth Neal, or gatherings held elsewhere around the country with new spiritual partners, in 2011 I will be launching this tour. The first sessions will be held in Philadelphia in March 2011 (Call 215.235.7933 for the schedule and location). These gatherings will allow Tigare to offer lessons to support **THE GREAT AWAKENING**, bring forth ancient

healing wisdom, answer any questions posed by audience members about their personal development, and help to foster *THE GREAT AWAKENING*. I am so excited about this upcoming 2011 tour!

The intent is two-fold: first, to support the process of humanity entering into *THE GREAT AWAKENING* by offering enlightening lessons; and, secondly, to raise money for the *WATER PROJECT* in Larteh, Ghana; a pledge for a \$5,000 donation in 2011 has already been made. However, so much more is needed! Checks should be made out to StarSpirit International, Inc. and mailed to our address on page 1.

Also, I look forward to seeing you at our February 26, 2011 Annual Cultural Renaissance Affair at the PECO Center City Headquarters (2:00 - 6:00 pm) at 2301 Market Street, Ground Floor. The event is free for children, while adults provide a love offering/donation to the *WATER PROJECT*. Come and Dance!

Finally and most importantly, remember that....

Like the petals of a Rose, my love for you keeps unfolding,
Nana Akomfohene Korantema Ayebofo
Chief Creative Officer, StarSpirit International, Inc.

Tigare Speaks: THE GREAT AWAKENING



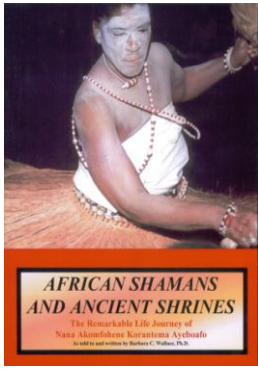
It is THE GREAT AWAKENING, the time of abundance. It is important to know that what is being communicated about this time (i.e. 2012) is a manipulation for monetary gain and egotistical control. There are so many Angelic Forces in the environment that whatever one wants to manifest, one can! It is a very propitious time. We have arrived! Express gratitude every morning to be blessed to witness what is going on in this sphere of life. Avoid those who complain and want things their way. Move away from them! Commune with people who accept their responsibility for their development and consciousness. Forgive yourself for not being on point (in the past). Get on point. Stay on point. Carry no baggage. Be about what you want to manifest. A lot of souls wanted to be here for this time, so be grateful!

There is an ancient cycle, a pattern of planetary alignments which have a direct effect on everything else in the universe. What is happening is a momentous period, meaning that it is out of the ordinary, historic. There are many changes that this pattern is causing to your molecular structure. Whoever you thought you are, you are changing from that. You are not the same. And, because of the celestial pattern, the vibratory rate of every cell in your body has increased; it is happening at a high frequency, causing the change. You will be wise to give up having control over everything. Everything in your universe is out of control. Listen carefully to what I am saying. Everything has changed. You are not the same. Therefore, you are wiser to create a new self by creating the ultimate perfection of what you want to be. Do not be petty. And, with regard to your strengths as well as your weaknesses--you must rise up to them. That is the only way that you can change. The thing you do not like about someone else is the very thing you do not like about yourself. I say this so you can use it. Make the change of yourself. If you want to be wonderful, you can be wonderful. As the celestial patterns change, there will be more opportunity to manifest whatever you can conceive. If you can only think about how much you can sleep, then you will be sleeping. You will miss the opportunity.

Know that your guides and guardian angels are with you right now and they do not leave you. That is why you must be very careful with what you are thinking. Because, as you are thinking it, they are noting it and causing that world you are envisioning to manifest. If you are thinking, "Woe is me!", they are making it happen. I do not deceive you.

Command your space to become your paradise so it will match this planet's vibration. This is a wonderful planet and extraordinary universe. Remember, a lot of souls wanted to be here for this time, so be grateful!

-Nana Boafo Tigare, January 2011



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**LEARN MORE ABOUT NANA'S INITIATION
INTO THE IRMANDADE DA BOA MORTE
READ THE BOOK!**

**African Shamans and Ancient Shrines:
The Remarkable Life Journey of
Nana Akomfohene Korantema Ayebofo**

As told to and written by Barbara C. Wallace, Ph.D. (Copyright © 2008)

Excerpt from Chapter 13 - The Reunion From pp. 191-192:

"When I went to Brazil they asked me to help carry the statue in the ancient ceremony of the Irmandade da Boa Morte."

Nana had also been invited into the inner sanctum for this spiritual order in Brazil.

"In the sacred headquarters of the Irmandade da Boa Morte there is a special room for the Goddess and paraphernalia of the order. And, only the Sisters go into that area. However, one morning, as part of the ceremony, when they went in, one of the Sisters came and took me by the hand and took me inside. I participated in a part of the ceremony that was only for them."

To explain this honor, Nana described how earlier on during her visit, the following happened:

"At the mass during the week-long festival of the Irmandade da Boa Morte held in August of every year in Bahia, Brazil, I witnessed each sister making a sacred prayer at the foot of the image (i.e. statue laid out, like in a casket) of the Goddess. So, I requested permission to also make a prayer. I was granted permission. I was later told that while I was kneeling and making my prayer the sisters saw their sacred sign appear over my head. This told them that I was one of them and should be formally initiated into the sisterhood."

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