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INCLUDING  
**NEWS FROM  
THE**



**africamultiple**  
CLUSTER OF EXCELLENCE

# NAB

NEWS FROM THE INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BAYREUTH

# 40 YEARS IWALEWAHAUS

**Institute of African  
Studies Bayreuth**

AfriZert / EIMAS / TGCL /  
African Legal Studies

**Africa Multiple Cluster  
of Excellence**

Current Affairs / Cluster Events /  
African Cluster Centres: Activities  
2021 / Research Projects

**Iwalewahaus**

40 years Iwalewahaus / Artist  
in Residence / Iwalewa Art  
Award 2021 / Exhibitions / In  
Memoriam Georgina Bayer

# Dear reader,

NAB 2021 is here! This edition provides exciting insights into the wide gamut of research activities in Bayreuth and its partner institutions in Africa and beyond for the year 2021. Even though the barrier measures induced by the COVID-19 pandemic impeded or at least limited physical encounters, that did not prevent our vibrant academic community from fostering its research networks, exchanges, and collaborations, most of which took place digitally. The highlight of this edition is the 40th anniversary of Iwalewaha, the hearth of African Studies in Bayreuth. In the past 40 years, the precincts of Iwalewaha have constituted a contact point between varsity and city life and continue to serve as a crucible of intellectual, artistic, and human contacts amongst world-renowned practitioners, critics, and professionals of African arts and African Studies. 40 is certainly a symbolic threshold, a time



for stock-taking as well as projects for and projections into the future. In this edition, you will be privy to insights on the life of Iwalewaha as shared by its leadership and its former and current associates. We also bring to you some new slots that spotlight stimulating book publications and personal academic trajectories and showcase the engaging research and civil society achievements of our Junior Fellows and mid-career researchers. And much more. We hope that you will enjoy this edition and stay tuned to the activities of the Institute of African Studies and its flagship, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence and their partner institutions.

## NAB Editorial Team

*Editor-in-Chief* Sabine Greiner,  
Stefan Ouma, Gilbert Shang Ndi,  
Doris Löhr



# Welcome!



Eva Spies



Thoko Kaime



Rüdiger Seesemann



Ute Fendler

What has moved us and what did we move in 2021? We look back at 2021 with mixed feelings because although we experienced a year full of activities and inspiring cooperation, we also – like all people on all continents – had to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic and its sad manifestations. We witnessed not only glaring inequality in the distribution of vaccines and racist hostilities in the context of the outbreak, but also, on a very personal level, we lost some dear colleagues.

In March 2021 our highly esteemed colleague Omar Egesah, Professor of Anthropology at Moi University in Eldoret (Kenya) died of COVID-19. A central figure at the African Cluster Center at Moi University from its inception, his passing leaves behind a huge gap. In May 2021 we lost Jamil M. Abun-Nasr (born 1932), Professor of Islamic Studies and one of the early pioneers of African Studies at the University of Bayreuth (UBT). Abun-Nasr was one of the founding members of the Institute of African Studies (IAS) in 1990 and served as Vice Director and Director between 1991 and 1993. We thank him for his services and keep his memory alive. In July 2021, Gerlind Scheckenbach, a long-time member of the African Studies community at the UBT, passed away. She joined UBT as Swahili lecturer in the 1990s, introducing countless students to the language and raising their interest in African Studies more broadly. We will always remember her as a most passionate African Studies scholar.

Amidst all the ruptures 2021 brought, the 40th anniversary of Iwalewaha marked an important milestone for African Studies at UBT, thereby showing that continuity does not exclude exciting transformations. As expected, Iwalewaha responded with creativity to the COVID-19 pandemic and set up quite a few innovative projects in 2021. You can read more about this and about the last forty years in this issue.

In 2021, two units of the IAS, Iwalewaha and the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, took their collaboration to new levels. With the first two Artist Fellows invited by the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies within the Cluster and the newly established Okwui Enwezor Distinguished Lecture, the transdisciplinary approach pursued

in both units bore rich fruits. In her exhibition *The Migration of Djinn*, visual artist and photographer Bihl Remli explored stories related to identity, religion, and belief, thus translating the Cluster's focus on relationality and reflexivity into an artistic language. Nigerian novelist Zainab A. Omaki, the second Artist Fellow, used the time of her fellowship to work on her new novel, demonstrating how fiction is able to address complex subjects such as class inequality in terms of a relational social challenge. The first Enwezor lecturer was the renowned art historian Chika Okeke-Agulu, who presented his talk on *The Postcolonial Museum* in the context of the second Cluster conference in July 2021. As the conference title *Africa\*n Relations: Modalities Reflected* shows, the annual theme of modalities of relating and relations took centre stage in this event, which had to be held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to our manifold research and cooperation activities, the IAS continued to successfully advance teaching in the field of African Studies. In 2021, the IAS was able to secure funding from the Bavarian Ministry of Education for the new additional online teaching programme *AfriZert*, offered to students from all Bavarian universities. The programme will start in autumn 2022. In the summer semester of 2021, UBT hosted the first cohort of students of the European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies (EIMAS) after they completed their first semester at the University of Porto. From Bayreuth, they moved on to the University of Bordeaux-Montaigne for their third semester.

Last but not least, in November 2021 the members of the IAS elected a new steering committee and a new team to chair the IAS for a two-year-term. This new team, together with the spokespersons of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, presents this edition of the NAB to you, in the hope that you will enjoy reading about our 2021 activities.

**Eva Spies and Thoko Kaime**  
Director and Vice Director,  
Institute of African Studies

**Rüdiger Seesemann and Ute Fendler**  
Spokespersons,  
Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence

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# FORTY YEARS IWALEWAHAUS



Text INKEN BÖBERT

**D**The largest institutional European collection of contemporary African art celebrates 40 years of encounters with art and artists.

On 27 November 1981, a post-colonial museum as a space for encounters with works and artists was ventured in Bayreuth: Iwalewahaus. It anticipated what was only later dubbed 'museum as contact zone' in other places around the world.

The Iwalewahaus collection comprises over 12,000 works of art. It is Europe's largest institutional collection of modern and contemporary art from Africa, but works from the African diasporas, Asia, and the Pacific are also represented. Exhibitions, lectures, films, conferences, parties, artists' talks, artists' residencies, and workshops take place on more than 2,000m<sup>2</sup> (office space as well as exhibition and archive space). It is thus a central place for active engagement with current issues in art, politics, and current affairs.

Iwalewahaus has become one of the

world's first museums to invite creative and interdisciplinary encounters with art and artists, aesthetics, science, and everyday culture from the Global South. The heart of the museum and the driving force behind its work were and are the collections: Founded by Ulli and Georgina Beier's private collection, it has grown over the decades into an internationally outstanding compendium in the field of African modernism. Today, loans from Bayreuth can be seen regularly in exhibitions of major museums worldwide.

At the invitation of the University of Bayreuth, Ulli Beier, a scholar of languages and culture, and Georgina Beier, visual artist, jointly shaped the profile of the early years. The artist-in-residence programme was a central part of this. They were also the ones who made the house a place of participation and engagement with art in theory and practice.

#### Iwalewahaus and inclusion

Iwalewahaus reopened on 31 May 2015 after one and a half years of renovation and reconstruction. Step by step, the former bank building is being transformed into a house and museum that is as barrier-free as possible. Far beyond

mere exhibition design, it is oriented towards the idea of inclusion. Inclusion, aesthetics, academic and curatorial work, concerts, and festivals all come together in one house and find expression in a design all their own.

#### Iwalewa Art Award

The Iwalewa Art Award of the University of Bayreuth is given to emerging artists from the African continent every two years. The Iwalewa Art Award also receives special attention because established African artists and curators propose the nominees for the award. In 2021, Tewa Barnosa was the fourth artist to receive the award. In the first call for nominations in 2015, the award went to Angolan artist Délio Jasse and in 2017 to Johannesburg-based Kitso Lynn Lelliott. In 2019, the award was presented to Stacey Gillian Abe. Through the prize, Iwalewahaus supports Africa's young art scene, while consolidating its own international reputation as a unique space for engaging with primarily African contemporary art in theory and practice. The Iwalewa Art Award, which is supported by the International Office of the University of Bayreuth and Iwalewahaus, is linked to an artist residency at Iwalewahaus. 

Archiv  
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Photos: Iwalewahaus

# Iwalewahaus: Multifaceted and Multi-Layered Meeting Point

Text INKEN BÖBERT

**In this interview, Ulf Vierke, director of Iwalewahaus, talks about the idea behind Ulli and Georgina Beier's creation as well as the collection that is housed by this institution and the relevance of Iwalewahaus for research and society.**

*In 1981, the couple Ulli and Georgina Beier founded Iwalewahaus - how is their idea still lived today?*

The idea of 'Iwalewahaus' is a multi-layered and multi-faceted one. The many facets manifest themselves in our work programme, which includes exhibitions, residencies by artists, curators, and academics, readings, concerts, festivals and the entire area of research and teaching. Iwalewahaus is a university department and museum at the same time, and it is all this as a contact zone. Museum as a contact zone is a concept that was much discussed ten, twenty years ago. With Iwalewahaus, Ulli and Georgina Beier created exactly such a museum as a contact zone twenty years earlier, at the beginning of the 1980s, where different cultures and art genres could meet and where something new could

emerge in the sense of a mash-up. The Kenyan artist Sam Hopkins curated such a mash-up as an exhibition and event for the reopening a few years ago. For me, mash-up has a lot to do with respect: The opposite of cultural appropriation, there is no mixing, swallowing, or

**The idea of 'Iwalewahaus' is a multi-layered and multi-faceted one.**

otherwise incorporating. Each element retains its independence as a rhizome and the ability to take root anew.

*Can you tell us a little bit about the concept of Iwalewahaus?*

With Iwalewahaus, Ulli and Georgina Beier have created a space for art that can be traced back to two lines of tradition: Firstly, as a classical art museum, with the idea of collecting art, preserving and researching it, and making it accessible. And then there is the second important line of tradition, in which we understand Iwalewahaus as a Mbari. The concept of the Mbari had its heyday in eastern Nigeria in the 19th century. In the late 1950s, the young artists of Nigerian modernism drew from this idea. Big names like Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Duro Ladipo, Fela Kuti, and the Beiers came together in the Mbari clubs of Ibadan and Osogbo. It was those Mbari clubs that inspired Ulli and Georgina Beier when they created Iwalewahaus in Bayreuth in 1981. Bayreuth is a fascinating place to reflect on art and to create art that crosses borders. We did this, for example, in our project *The Art of Wagnis*, in which artists like Richard Wagner, Christoph

Schlingensiefel, and Daniel Kojo Schrade provided coordinates for our research and practice. The latter showed how originally and today Parzival can be read again with his brother from Africa called Firefiz.

*Iwalewahaus comprises the "largest institutional collection of contemporary African art in Europe". How did this*

is and remains a major challenge, but it is also the basis for everything that accessibility entails. Our goal is to make the entire collection digitally accessible. At the same time, nothing can replace actually working with the artworks. Every year, a dozen or two artists and researchers come to Iwalewahaus to work directly with the collection.

## In 2022, we will show a large exhibition dedicated to the Nigerian artist Uche Okeke.

*collection come about, what is the idea behind it?*

Ulli and Georgina were outstanding patrons of the arts in modern Africa. Their views and actions confront us with many questions in the present. Many of these questions can be posed by the art collection of Iwalewahaus. For more than twenty years now, we have devoted a considerable part of our resources toward provenance research. We have to make the collection and the knowledge about it accessible, first and foremost through our digital collection, into which thousands of hours of work have gone and which comprises several thousand works. Financing this

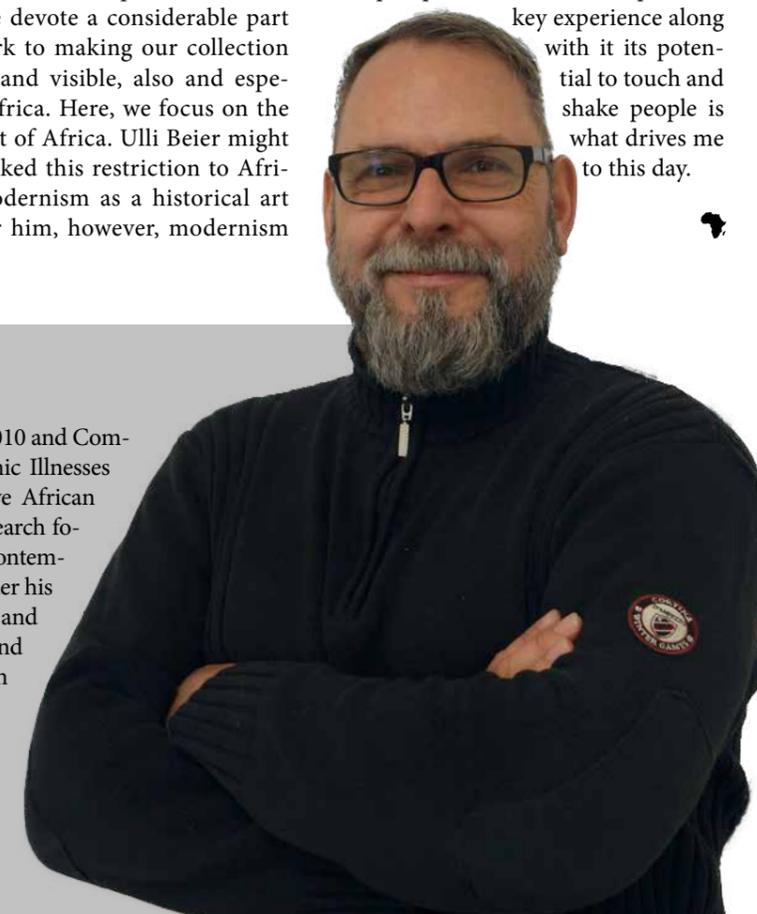
*Can you recall certain moments in the past 40 years that were particularly formative?*

The collection is unique and it enriches the exhibitions in the very big houses like the Tate Modern in London, the Museum of Modern Art in New York or the Zeitz Museum Of Contemporary Art Africa in Cape Town, South Africa. We devote a considerable part of our work to making our collection accessible and visible, also and especially in Africa. Here, we focus on the modern art of Africa. Ulli Beier might not have liked this restriction to Africa and modernism as a historical art epoch. For him, however, modernism

and new contemporary art were synonymous. Today, we focus our collection on a clearly identifiable period that encompasses the post-war decades of the late 1940s, the 1950s and the period of the independence movements, which ended with the end of apartheid. This is where we focus our collection and research. We turn to contemporary art in the form of artist residencies. Our own research interests and those of our guest artists and scholars coincide here. The collection is also at the centre here.

*Was there a personal defining moment for you at Iwalewahaus?*

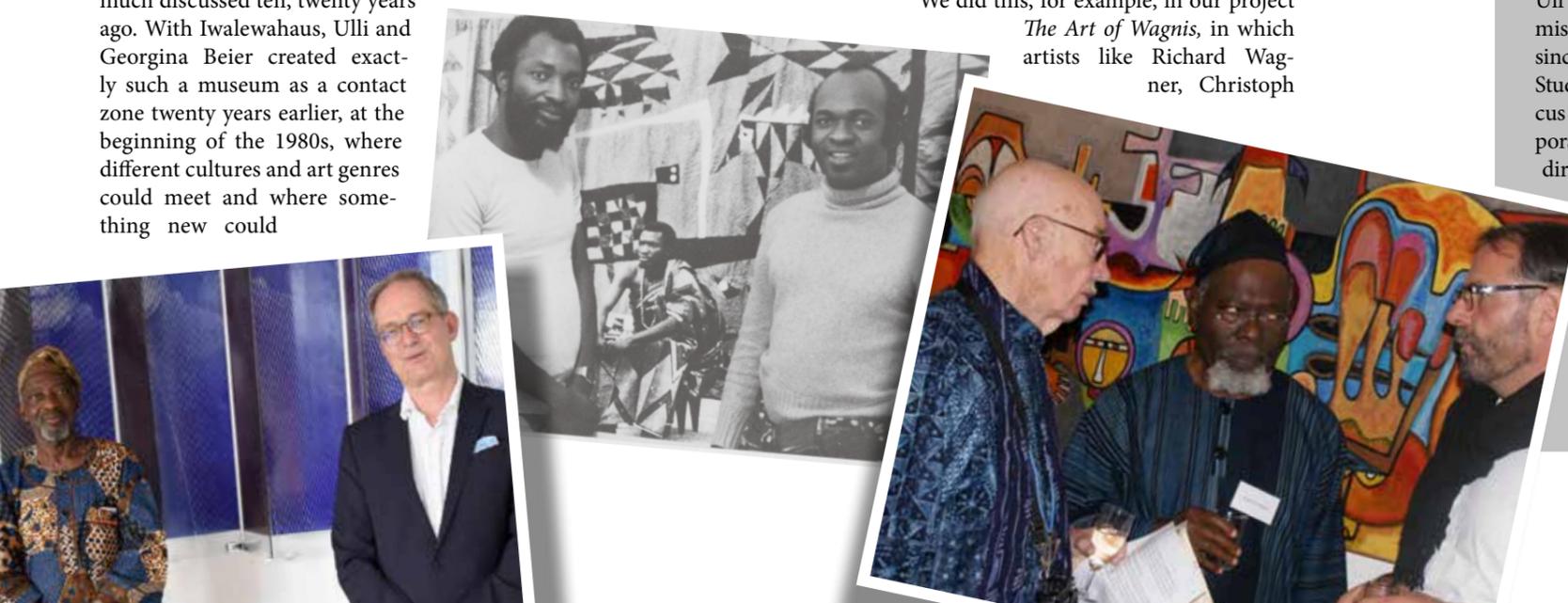
In 2022, we will show a large exhibition dedicated to the Nigerian artist Uche Okeke. For me personally, this has a meaning of its own: when I came to Iwalewahaus as a student in 1990, one of my first tasks was to help Norbert Aas, who was academic advisor at the house at the time, to pack works from the exhibition *Advertising for Biafra* for transport back to Nigeria. Among them were works by Uche Okeke. They made a deep impression on me. This personal key experience along with its potential to touch and shake people is what drives me to this day.



### Ulf Vierke

Ulf Vierke has been director of Iwalewahaus since 2010 and Commissioner for Students with Disabilities and Chronic Illnesses since 2014. He was director of the Digital Archive African Studies Bayreuth from 2007 to 2020. His major research focus as researcher and as curator is on modern and contemporary art from Africa as well as on the archive. Under his directorate Iwalewahaus has become a prototype and laboratory for exhibitions bridging art and academic research (FAVT). His interest in disability politics also feeds in, in as much as questions of sensual (aesthetic) experience and art become central. His regional focus is on East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania), the lusophone Africa (Angola, Mozambique), Namibia, Nigeria and Ivory Coast.

Photos: Iwalewahaus



# “IWA means CHARACTER – ÈWA means BEAUTY”

Former and current companions, artists and collectors congratulate Iwalewahaus on its 40th anniversary



**Tobias Wendt**

*Professor for African Arts and Visual Culture, Freie Universität Berlin and former Director of Iwalewahaus (2001–2010)*

Congratulations on Iwalewahaus 40th anniversary! The institutional microorganism of the Bayreuth Africa Centre, housed for many years in the historic building of the Old Mint, has benefited from its move to the new premises in Wölfelstraße. It has become a respectable institution with a significantly expanded exhibition space and international appeal. The collections have grown steadily, continuing to encompass objects of popular culture as well as works of art. Iwalewahaus has perfectly fit into the University's thoughtfully conceived and continuously refined research focus on African Studies and has enriched this focus through its cutting-edge exhibitions, accompanying events, and publications. I look forward to the upcoming new projects and wish the entire Iwalewahaus team much luck and continued success!



**Gerlinde und Heinz Greiffenberger**

*Collectors*

Our acquaintance with Ulli Beier naturally led us to Iwalewahaus – a great and impressive surprise at the time. Resulting from this: our own wonderful collection of modern African art, invaluable encounters and conversations with the artists involved, friendly relations developed, and an increased interest in their home countries. From very different points of view, the numerous exhibitions and events have always meant enrichment for us; gratefully we have often used “the window into another time.” Due to our age, we are now far away from Iwalewahaus, but close to it in our hearts and in appreciation of how this demanding task is being realised.

**Bernd Kleine-Gunk**

*Professor of Medicine / Collector*

Contemporary African art has been experiencing a boom for some years now.



So it is time to say an emphatic thank you to Iwalewahaus. In Bayreuth, modern African art was already being collected and appreciated when the museum world as a whole still believed that relevant art was only produced in North America or Europe. This deserves recognition – and our anticipation for the next 40 years.

**Benedikt Stegmayer**

*Director of Arts and Tourism at the City of Bayreuth*

Iwalewahaus is an unbelievably fascinating place in Bayreuth's city centre. It brings international flair to Bayreuth and represents freedom and humanitarianism. Our world could definitely do with more places such as Iwalewahaus.



**Ndid Dike** *Artist*

Iwalewahaus is a place where my personal sense of empowerment, experimentation, and processes as an artist was unhindered. Free to work outside restrictions of a western canon.

**Stefan Leible**

*President of the University of Bayreuth*

Iwalewahaus is our centre for African art and culture and an institution that brings cultures and people closer together in the heart of Bayreuth

– for example through the “City Talks (Bayreuther Stadtgespräche)”. Recently, surrounded by African art, I listened to the lecture of a Spanish scholar, who is currently teaching in Minnesota. A couple from Israel accompanied me. In

my eyes, this evening perfectly reflects the colourful character of Iwalewahaus.

**Heidrun Piwernetz**

*Chairwoman of the Board of Trustees of the Upper Franconia Foundation / President of the District Government of Upper Franconia*

Over 40 years of a space for the production and discussion of contemporary and modern art from Africa and the world. What was revolutionary in the 1980s is now a renowned cultural institution in Bayreuth. Iwalewahaus is a meeting place, museum, cultural centre, and scientific institute, and simply an Upper Franconian flagship.



**Jürgen Maurer** *Collector*

40 years of Iwalewahaus has meant a source of information for me since 1986, when I first visited Iwalewahaus and had a long conversation with Dr. Bender. Thanks to this early contact, my attention was increasingly drawn to contemporary African art and I was then able to pursue this interest with pleasure due to my 15 years of work (development cooperation and emergency aid) on the continent.

In addition to a collector's eye and the purchase of various works, I was always interested in supporting local artists – often for years – both financially and, if necessary, morally. As we all know, earning one's “daily bread” with art is no easy task!

My decision to give my collection to Iwalewahaus was based on the quality of the work and the comprehensive and appealing collection of Iwalewahaus over decades, and on the focus on Oshogbo, which coincides with the focus of my collection, and finally on the good communication with the management of Iwalewahaus from the beginning.



**Udo Schmidt-Steingraeber**

*Steingraeber & Sons Piano Manufacture*

The founding of Iwalewahaus affected Steingraeber immediately: Ulli and Georgina Beier included Steingraeber House in their “territory” from the very beginning, and so we have the early decades of Iwalewahaus to thank for wonderful concerts (Charlie Mariano, Abdullah Ibrahim, R. A. Ramamani in the Rococo Hall, Tunji Beier Trio with percussion on half pianos in the factory ...), theatre (Black Orpheus in the Court Theatre ...) and art exhibitions (Muraina Oyelami in the gallery, 4m high textile sculptures by Georgina in the garden and grounds ...). Our friendship lasted until the end of the founders' lives and has carried over to their successors to this day – the house in Münzgasse and later the move was a stroke of luck for the whole of Bayreuth ... and maybe even the blue meditation room will be rebuilt someday?



**Chief Muraina Oyelami**

Iwalewahaus is conceived as a meeting point for the promotion and dissemination of the arts and culture of the world at large. Mostly Africa. The founder, the late Ulli Beier, with whom I worked for over three decades as research assistant in Nigeria, established Iwalewahaus on Münzgasse 9 in Bayreuth in 1981. I was with him when it was established and was the first visiting professor for six months while taking a leave of absence from the University of Ife.



**Chief Nike Davies-Okundaye**  
**IWALEWAHAUS**

*IWA means ATTITUDE/CHARACTER. ÈWA means BEAUTY. Beauty in Africa, in the southwest part of Nigeria is called Èwa. Why Iwa means Attitude/Character.*



*When Attitude meets Beauty they become IWALEWA, that's The Attitude/Character is so Beautiful.*

*A person is of Good Soulja's a good Attitude and character that portrait a Beautiful person (soul).*

*Therefore Attitude, Character has beauty and reflects in our way of life, Culture, and things generally.*

*Finally let our Characters, Attitude reflect the Beauty of our Culture at large. Because our Culture is our Pride!*



**Mimi Wolford**

*Director, Mbari Institute, Washington DC, USA*

Iwalewahaus is a gem of an institution that should be cloned many times over. I had known about Iwalewahaus for years (because of our relationship with Ulli Beier while living in Nigeria) but had not had the privilege of visiting until 2018. I found Iwalewahaus to be a shining light for Contemporary African Art and a happening place in the centre of Bayreuth. During my ten-day stay, there were three well-attended public programmes for the community and an ongoing exhibition. One of the many attractions of this organisation is their collection of Contemporary African Art, which is beautifully stored and very accessible to researchers. How I wish there was an institution of this sort in the United States. Congratulations on your forty-year anniversary.

**Heike Schulz** *Collector*



Iwalewahaus was a completely surprising discovery for me when, in the years of its founding, I was trying as a newcomer to make myself at home in Bayreuth and was still somewhat foreign to the culture established here. The encounters with Ulli and Georgina Beier, the impressive concerts and art exhibitions, and not least our collaboration in the field of Outsider Art have had a lasting inspiration and influence on me. Access to the unfamiliar was and is conveyed here not only intellectually, but – with much appreciation and respect – in a way that can be experienced sensually.

The fact that this house and the ideas of its founders have stood the test of time and continued to develop is a great success!

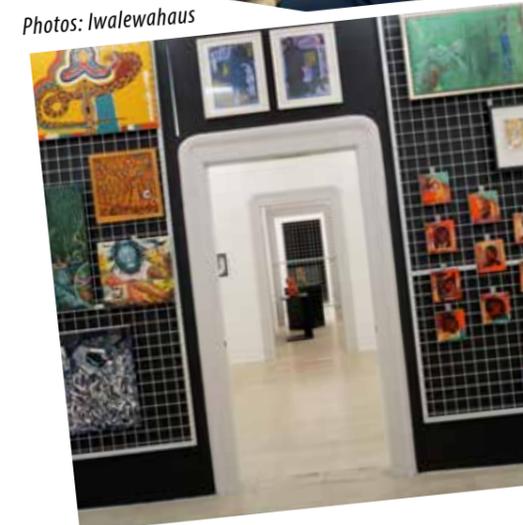
**Ekkehard Beck**

*Founding member Freundeskreis Iwalewahaus e.V. (Friends of Iwalewahaus e.V.)*

The founding of Iwalewahaus by Ulli Beier was a revolution in the view of African art: for the first time, the European gaze was consistently directed towards the contemporary art and culture of Africa and the diaspora. And this in Bayreuth! Georgina and Ulli Beier “lived” this open house – professionally and privately. Münzgasse became an extraterritorial area in Bayreuth for new art, new music, encounters, and experience. Hospitality included. Artists come in and out – from all regions of Africa and many like to come back to work, celebrate, and discuss here. Some say: Iwalewahaus is my second home. Keep it up for the next 40 years! 🌍



Photos: Iwalewahaus





The artist Albert Lubaki created this graphic work between 1926-1936 in the town of Élisabethville in the territory of the "Belgian Congo" (today Lubumbashi in the Democratic Republic of Congo). The Belgian regime, led by King Leopold II, occupied, oppressed and ruled the region in the most cruel and brutal way.

Text ALEXANDRA KUHNKE, ANKE SCHÜRER-RIES, CYRUS SAMIMI and ULF VIERKE

**A** collaboration of the Cluster's Digital Solutions team with UBT's Iwalewaha and the ITS department has been instrumental in contributing to the online portal *Collections from Colonial Contexts* launched at the end of November by the German Digital Library (Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek).

The Institute of African Studies (IAS) and Iwalewaha, in collaboration with the Research Section Digital Solutions at the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence and the IT Service Department of the University of Bayreuth, contributed its first 17 submissions to the online portal *Collections from Colonial Contexts* in November 2021. The entries from Bayreuth show drawings from the art collection at Iwalewaha as well as corresponding contextual information such as listing exhibitions in which the

artwork featured and where the artworks are held today. These entries are now searchable via the portal and will be expanded further after closer scrutiny of the varied and versatile collections of the IAS and Iwalewaha. This commitment was part of a nationwide first step to comprehensively digitise and publish photos of objects that originated from former German colonies and other parts of the world. The term colonial contexts is not automatically synonymous with contexts of injustice. The

definition takes into account a variety of historical and local processes of appropriation and negotiation. The inventory of these objects through digital cataloguing and online publication creates a basis for visibility, transparency, avoidance of Eurocentric interpretations, and inclusion of the cultures within this context.

#### A portal of future transparency

Germany's readiness to reappraise its colonial history through the online portal *Collections from Colonial Contexts* uses data from various collections held by 25 participating institutions, making

to develop standards and to correct the Eurocentric perspectives applied currently. The third 'road' is intended to be a long-term adjustment and expansion of international criteria to incorporate local knowledge and depart from standards that defined these materials without participation of the cultures involved.

Collating data from 25 institutions, which use a variety of databases and cataloguing systems, has involved many hours of work for both the institutions and portal developers, a task that is ongoing. After the first major data intake

materials. Furthermore, user friendliness is emphasised, as is accessibility on a global scale, which is why a multilingual interface will be included in the process.

#### Paintings and photographs

The collections of Iwalewaha and the IAS are representative of objects and materials that were not seized during European colonialism but were created within the context of colonialism and beyond. Throughout the portal, 17 objects defined as graphic artworks created in Mozambique, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo in a colonial context are digitally accessible and visi-

# Collections from Colonial Contexts

the collections accessible and searchable for the first time. The project was initiated by the Ministry of Culture and Media, the Minister of State of the Federal Foreign Office for International Cultural Policy, the Ministers of Culture of the federal states of Germany, and municipal umbrella organisations, in close collaboration with the German Digital Library (DDB). The *Three Road Strategy* of the project attempts to ensure the transparent and comprehensive digital publication of information on objects from colonial contexts.

#### Three paths to facilitate global ownership

The *Three Road Strategy* devised in Germany reflects the necessity to facilitate global ownership of cultural assets that are held in many institutions. The strategy includes three equal points of simultaneous departure. Firstly, accessibility, which is ensured by the online portal that reflects already digitised and accessible collections on the Internet. Secondly, transparency, to be achieved through the digital cataloguing and publication of materials that have not yet been included in any digitisation efforts of the participating institutions. This cataloguing should occur according to jointly developed standards and controlled vocabularies in multiple languages. Thirdly, cooperation, entering into collaborative relationships with the countries of origin and their Diasporas

of approximately 8,000 entries succeeded late last year, the challenge now lies in aligning the information of each entry to a standardised field catalogue with appropriate controlled vocabularies, which typically include preferred and variant terms and have a defined scope or describe a specific domain. The annotation with correct vocabularies is of central importance to enable the collections to be searched and found. Many such controlled vocabularies do not adequately define the materials that are being shown or include local knowledge. This can restrict the searchability and access by users from the countries of origin, as the vocabularies mostly only include internationally standardised definitions of geographical, cultural, or spatial notions developed in the Global North without acknowledging local knowledge and definitions. For this reason, the DDB is working toward creating a pool of controlled vocabularies to expand necessary tagging options. And, in the course of the third road, they aim to join forces with collaborating partners from countries of origin to expand the knowledge of language, culture, and conceptual specificities that have not been included in the tagging tools.

The field catalogue has to accommodate a large variety of objects, photographs, manuscripts, and other materials, made accessible through standardised tagging, and cater for an ongoing intake of ma-

ble. The artwork bore the names of their creators. The context and time in which the drawings were created, as well as the fact that the names of the creators are known, supports the understanding of the objects as modern and colonial artworks. The artist Albert Lubaki created one of the 17 drawings from the art collection in today's Lubumbashi in the region of Katanga, part of colonial Belgian Congo between 1926 and 1936. The artwork was added to the collection at Iwalewaha in 1983 and holds a very similar object biography as the watercolour drawing created by artist Atoinet Lubaki, which shows no date nor title: the process of creation seem directly influenced by George Thiry, a Belgian colonial official. Thiry recognised the wall paintings on the Lubakis' house as art and "encouraged them to compose watercolour scenes on paper," as Sarah Van Beurden from Ohio State University, Columbus, recorded. She describes how these artworks came to Europe: "Together with Gaston-Denis Périer, a colleague in the Ministry of the Colonies in Belgium, Thiry exhibited the work of the Lubakis in Brussels and other European capitals in the 1920s." This small insight into an object biography defines one aspect of colonial context that influenced not only the creation process of artworks but defines the objects' provenance in a significant way. Many aspects of these biographies are still not visible, heard, told, nor recognised. 🌍

# Advances in Digital Solutions

Text CYRUS SAMIMI, ANKE SCHÜRER-RIES, MIRCO SCHÖNFELD, SULAYMAN K. SOWE and PETRA STEINER

**A**fter almost three years of existence, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence's Digital Solutions team is taking stock of their current projects and future endeavours.

Over the past two and a half years, digital developments in the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence have strongly characterised the path taken by the Cluster's Digital Solutions (DS) team in Bayreuth and their partners in the African Cluster Centres (ACCs). Theoretical considerations, technical implementation, and practical strategies with regard to the management, as well as intake of research data, have been developed and currently represent the core of the Digital Research Environment (DRE).

## Fluid ontologies

Fluid ontologies are the Cluster's approach to bring together various perspectives, traditions, and epistemologies

when it comes to managing its research data. The Professorship for Data Modelling and Interdisciplinary Knowledge Generation develop the algorithmic foundations with which fluid ontologies will be realised.

From the viewpoint of information science, ontologies are rigid constructs used to divide the world into objects, categories, and the relationships between them. They constitute an order and manifest knowledge by prescribing a well-defined, closed vocabulary. In a repository of research data, such as the one being established for the Cluster, this vocabulary is used to formulate information about datasets. For example, datasets can be assigned dates if the data contain some kind of event, because the ontology defines appropriate terminology. Such an ontological description as metadata can help to put datasets into a temporal order without having to look at the data in detail.

If several datasets for the same date are found in the repository, suddenly a network of datasets has been created via this ontological metadata. These datasets

have one thing in common: they all seem to have something to do with that particular date. As the repository of datasets grows, a large network of ontological relationships gradually emerges from multi-faceted descriptions of the datasets.

This network of fixed links is to be enriched by fluid links. This is done by considering the context of the datasets as well as the context of those who work with the datasets. Both together can give us information about the individual meaning which is assigned to datasets and to which other datasets could also fit. There do not necessarily have to be ontological relationships to these other datasets. Rather, there will be a fluid link that exists in this individual context.

Algorithmically, the Digital Solutions team has made an important step towards this model of fluid ontologies. They have developed algorithms and accompanying programming libraries that can handle the combination of structural network information (the ontological links) and contextual attributes (the individual contexts of the datasets and the researchers) in a useful manner.

Digital Solutions is currently dedicated to integrating these algorithms into the WissKI platform to make the model of fluid ontologies usable. To this end, they are extending the functionality of WissKI with plug-ins.

The next important step is to negotiate how exactly the contexts of datasets and researchers should be described so that fluid links can add value during research. To this end, all Cluster members are invited to participate in the deliberations and discussions. A number of events are in planning through which exchange will be facilitated.

## ACC collaboration

The DS team is co-developing the DRE with the African Cluster Centres (ACCs) for the entire Cluster. The DRE aims to enable digital collaborations, most importantly collaborative data management with the ACCs and other international partner universities and institutions.

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in August 2020, IT experts, Cluster deans, researchers, Principal Investigators, and data curators met online to assess the Cluster's DRE readiness. The meeting provided a forum to discuss the technical challenges at various ACCs, to brainstorm how research data could be

stored and shared amongst Cluster members, and how knowledge and expertise can be shared to advance the development of the DRE platform. Shortly after the meeting, working groups were set up to help realise various aspects of the DRE.

The DS team also acts as a bridge between the ACCs and the UBT's IT department to help provide temporal IT solutions for the ACCs to install and test their data management systems. The team carries out consultation meetings and shares ideas regarding a common research data management infrastructure using WissKI, easyDB, and DSpace, amongst other tools.

The focus of the collaboration with the ACCs in the coming months will be the following:

- Installation and testing of research data management infrastructure,
- Harmonisation of data and metadata,
- Interoperability of datasets, shared vocabularies, and ontologies.

The DS Team is also hosting joint events with the ACCs and raising awareness about the DRE. Furthermore, in 2021, the Vice Dean of Digital Solutions, Cyrus Samimi, and Data Curator Sulayman K. Sowe carried out

a fact-finding mission at the ACC at Rhodes University in Makhanda, South Africa. The aim of the mission was to develop an in-depth understanding of the International Library of African Music (ILAM) digital archive and the raw device mapping (RDM) system by holding face to face discussions with the people involved, experience first-hand how the Rhodes University South East Academic Libraries System (SEALS) platform works, and carry out bilateral talks with experts interested in the development of the DRE and digital scholarship. Furthermore, the team offers tutorials and webinars for researchers and colleagues to familiarise themselves with new technological options, communication tools, and best practice in research data management.

## Webinars, tutorials, and conferences

The last two years have brought an increasing demand for online meeting tools. Digital Solutions responded by testing platforms for internet conferences and tools for streaming. Digital Solutions also organised six workshops named *Organising Online Events*. Synergies developed and former learners became important contributors and instructors for their colleagues when it came to transferring skills for online events. Coordinating interpreters, for example in International Sign Language, or managing Q & A sessions became routine. Digital Solutions and the portfolios of the Africa Multiple Cluster cooperated in organising the Cluster Conference with parallel sessions.

Digital Solutions also provides courses for all aspects of research data management along the life cycle model of data management. These courses are tailored for different groups and needs, from short knowledge packages during meetings to two-day workshops. Furthermore, some project groups and scholars integrated modules on research data management in consultations.

Through regular Tea(ms) Breaks sessions, the Digital Solutions team offered insights to busy colleagues into new technological developments and communication methods or fast introductions, for instance, in data storage and security.



Makhanda ILAM engineer digitizing African music collections.



Lagos IT Department configuring their Digital Research Environment



Eldoret ACC engineer configuring DSpace on the Moi University Server network.



Ouagadougou ACC engineer installing and configuring DSpace at Joseph KI-ZERBO University.



# Developing a New Certificate Programme

Text CLAUDIA GEBAUER and EVA SPIES

**In 2021, the Institute of African Studies (IAS) applied for and received funding from the Bavarian State Ministry for Science and the Arts to develop a new certificate programme (afriZert) for students in higher education in Bavaria who want to broaden their understanding of the diversity and professional excellence to be encountered across Africa.**



**Claudia Gebauer** became the afriZert Coordinator in February 2022. She holds a Dr. rer. nat. from Bayreuth University where she was a member of the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies from 2012 to 2016. Gebauer previously worked as scientific project manager for the DFG-funded Collaborative Research Centre Future Rural Africa (SFB-TRR 228) and held various positions as both research associate and post-doc researcher at the Universities of Bayreuth and Bonn.

Photo: private

To develop a needs-oriented study programme with focus on contemporary Africa for a specified audience, an expert online survey was designed and carried out in close collaboration between the IAS, the Bavarian Office for Africa, and the Scientific Coordination Office Bavaria-Africa (WKS Bavaria-Africa) of the Bavarian Research Alliance (BayFOR). The anonymous survey was conducted between 31 August and 30 September 2021. The questionnaires were completed by individuals from varying institutions from different African countries as well as a range of actors from Germany with longstanding collaborations with partners on the African continent. A total of 101 qualified responses in German, French, and English were received.

The responses showed that a more profound understanding of the multitude of African countries regarding their histories, cultures, and languages, as well as political and economic systems and current social dynamics and their global entanglements is much needed. Respondents also emphasized that this knowledge should be complemented by soft skills in business and intercultural communication.

Most importantly, however, the broad consensus among respondents was that an understanding of the African continent with its many facets can only be achieved through partnerships, cooperation, and personal exchanges – and these have been the pillars of African Studies at the University of Bayreuth for many years. Collaborative knowledge production and learning through exchange is central, especially regarding practice-based knowledge in applied fields as promoted through initiatives such as the Bavarian Research Institute of African Studies (BRIAS).

The results of the survey fed into the development of the afriZert study programme, which is open to students from all Bavarian universities and universities

of applied sciences irrespective of their primary degree programme. The first cohort of students is expected to participate in afriZert as early as the winter term 2022/23.

By complementing their studies with afriZert, students will appreciate Africa as a field of discourse, gain knowledge of diverse and globally entangled African life worlds, and understand the dynamic lubakisocio-economic and political spaces on the continent.

The overall goal is that students learn to recognise and acknowledge African actors as active builders and shapers of the globalised world. To broaden and deepen this understanding, it is central to question existing stereotypes and encounter “Africa” differently – on a cognitive-intellectual as well as an experience-based level. To facilitate this approach and enable students to deal practically with a variety of topics in competent and reflexive ways, the recently founded Stiftung Internationaler Jugendaustausch Bayern (“Foundation for International Youth Exchange Bavaria”) will support the programme and its students by providing funding for extended stays abroad, either to study at an African university or to explore work placements and internships.

Thus, afriZert is conceptualised as learning experience. The certificate of completion will be obtained by mastering the following five modules:

1. Encountering Africa(ns) differently,
2. Africa in and with the world,
3. Language and communication,
4. Practical work or study experience abroad,
5. Final module of practical insights.



For more information feel free to visit: [www.afrizert.uni-bayreuth.de](http://www.afrizert.uni-bayreuth.de)

From left: Former UBT president and laudator Helmut Ruppert, BIGSAS member Clarissa Vierke, award winner Oladapo Opeyemi Ajayi, former Dean of BIGSAS Martina Drescher and RC President Annegret Schnick



## Honoured for Great Intercultural Commitment: Klaus-Dieter Wolff Award for Oladapo Ajayi

Interview GILBERT SHANG NDI

**In October 2021, BIGSAS Junior Fellow Oladapo Ajayi was presented with the Klaus-Dieter Wolff Award by the Rotary Club of Bayreuth-Eremitage. The award acknowledges the accomplishments of individuals who combine academic work with impactful social and cultural commitments. Gilbert Shang Ndi sat down with the laureate to gauge his reactions to the award and to throw more light on his socio-cultural endeavours in his home community in Nigeria.**

*You are the 2021 laureate of the Klaus-Dieter Wolff Award. How does it feel and what does this award mean to you?*

Thank you, the event of the 2021 Klaus-Dieter Wolff Award by the Rotary Club Eremitage-Bayreuth was and is still a remarkable moment for me on several levels. The award is quite symbolic for me, as a Nigerian, as an African, and as an international student at the University and the city of Bayreuth. No matter how we want to couch it, you are grateful that we are not in the news for the wrong reason. It is one of such moments. It is also one of those moments of gratitude to everyone who has been part of the journey, the idea, the collective vision

for a more progressive African society.

*You received the award in 2021 but the initiative has been around for some time and has gathered momentum over the years. Walk us down the very beginning. What gave it the very first click?*

It is true that we started a community project called the Project-TACT (Train a Child Today) in 2012. The idea was to reach out to school children from underprivileged backgrounds. We provided them with basic support like textbooks and other stationaries, some form of mentorship programme, school uniforms, school bags, school sandals, and examination fees (where necessary). So, for six years from 2012 to 2017, we grew the beneficiaries from six to 19. By 2017/2018, the first batch of beneficiaries were completing or about to complete their secondary school phase. The question of their performance and results became quite important at that phase because we are sure that the family background and living conditions have a big impact on their performance and potentials.

The main lesson we brought forward from the first phase of the Project-TACT is that our social problem is so interconnected, a systemic one. We officially reg-

istered as a non-governmental organization (NGO) known as the African Rural Interventions Initiative (Africa-RII) in the year 2018. With Africa-RII, I became the Co-founder where I drive the operation and the education components of the NGO. In 2019, we introduced Project-TACT 2.0 with a free four-week summer school for public secondary school pupils in my community in Ilora town.

The summer school provides us with the opportunity to substantiate the idea of having multiple strands of impact. When you think of the number of students we had in attendance, about 60 students.

The year 2020 was marked by the pandemic and school activities were disrupted all over the world. By February 2021, there was an official commissioning of the project, and we had achieved a library which in our objective is a component of the Resource Centre. Currently, the library is functioning with two graduate volunteers as staff members and an average of 35 to 40 users in a month.

*Was it a difficult decision to put your family house at the service of the community project? Does that have any con-*

*nections to the vision of your late parents and perhaps their positions on matters of education and communal commitment?*

Sincerely, I must appreciate my family members, particularly my siblings, for allowing Africa-RII take over the property and convert it to a public property. It is also true, it was easy for us, the family, in that we consider the decision as commemorative of our late parents' legacy and memory.

*How challenging has the issue of funding been and how did you go about it?*

The first six years phase was largely personal commitment with the support of friends and family. The GoFundMe initiative in 2019 was our first attempt to publicly source for funds and we are

grateful for the support that was received. The 2,000 Euro that come with the Klaus-Dieter Wolff Award has also been of help. We acquired two desktop computers, and made payment for a pre-paid electricity meter for the property so that we could have a cheaper power cost in the long run. The overall expenses are approximately 80 Euro a month. We really welcome support, partnerships, recommendations, suggestions that will not only help the realisation of our projects' potentials but also help to sustain the projects.

*Shortly after receiving the award, you organised the Ibadan Knowledge Hub. What was peculiar about that workshop and how does the outcome help you in defining the agenda of your initiative in the coming years?*

The Ibadan Knowledge Hub project is an offshoot of a German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) alumni conference titled: *Fall(ing) Apart? Inclusion as an Intervention into the Nigerian Experience*. I had received a grant to organise a DAAD alumni conference in the city of Ibadan. Alongside a dedicated team of alumni, friends, and young professionals, we designed an interdisciplinary project for undergraduates in the Nigerian public universities. It is a mentorship project and an attempt to re-imagine the curriculum. It was a way of helping the next generation to conceptualise interdisciplinary approaches, not just theoretically but as it can be applied in providing sustainable solutions towards the collective growth of our immediate environment and Africa at large.



Photo: Sabrina Maurus

Rural School in Ethiopia

Interview KERSTIN TANZBERGER

**In this interview, Sabrina Maurus, a former Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) PhD student and current research associate at the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, looks back on extremely successful months.**

*First of all, congratulations on the numerous prizes you received for your dissertation! Can you briefly tell us what exactly you dealt with in the context of your dissertation?*

My dissertation focuses on the dilemmas of compulsory schooling on the southwestern frontier of the Ethiopian state.

As part of international development plans, compulsory schooling has reached agro-pastoralist districts in South Omo Zone. Schools often mark the space where people in rural Africa have most contact with the state. Here, the relationship between the state and the people is formed mainly through the education of the younger generation.

During my 19 months of ethnographic fieldwork between 2012 and 2015, I was able to witness how the implementation of compulsory schooling in 2014/15 and especially girls' schooling turned into a violent conflict in Hamar district. Although schools have existed in Hamar district since the late 1960s, children from agro-pastoralist households are with few exceptions first-generation students. In my research, I accompanied students in their daily life in schools, hostels and homesteads to see how schooling shapes young people's lives differently from the majority of children who are not going to school in Hamar district. Through schooling, young agro-pastoralists develop a distinct lifestyle, which turns them into "temara" (students) and sets them apart from their agro-pastoral kin. This raises concerns about the social positioning and belonging of Hamar students, if they are still 'Hamar children' or have become the 'government's children.' Students become intermediaries between the developmental state and their kin, who are an ethnic minority in Ethiopia. In this position at the interface between competing claims over children and power, students face multiple dilemmas. In my dissertation, I analyse these dilemmas in five fields: in regard to school's impact on subsistence-oriented household economies, the practice of schooling in remote schools and student hostels, distinctions between rural and urban lifestyles, conflicts over initiation and marriage practices, as well as multiple claims to power that are fought over children and their education.

My dissertation analyses processes of state making on a frontier, where schooling turns into a literal battlefield. This shows that schooling does not only have an impact on the individual, but also on society. I therefore argue to integrate the study of education and childhood into the study of politics and vice versa.

*To what extent can your research findings be used to reduce the tensions and conflicts caused by the enforcement of compulsory schooling?*

My research shows how the political conditions implement compulsory schooling in a top down approach, where citizens and young people have little room to participate in its design. Schooling is contested in Hamar district, because on the one

side, government officials and school-educated Hamar see compulsory schooling as a door opener into modernity through which every child has to go. On the other side, many pastoralists experience the way compulsory schooling is implemented as a threat to their existence and a continuation of a historic process of conquest.

Most parents in Hamar district agree to send some of their children to school and educate the other children at home. This diversified and selective approach to education contradicts global development programmes, which require every child to go to school. Besides adults' ideas of education, young people also take their own decisions to run away from homesteads to go to school in town or to drop out of school.

It would help to differentiate between education and schooling, since education is often reduced to schooling. The multiple ways of learning, which are sometimes called 'informal' or 'indigenous' and which take place outside Western-style schools, e.g., in households, on fields, in cattle camps, etc., are often not regarded as education in development programmes and public discourse and are often denigrated in comparison to children's schooling. However, they also contribute valuable knowledge to children's learning in a certain environment. To allow that these ways of learning are compatible with schooling and that schooling does not work towards replacing them would reduce the tensions.

Schooling has to be seen in the context of larger development and infrastructure projects, where access to school and health justifies the sedentarisation of pastoralists and where school statistics are linked to development status without taking its local effects into account. This top-down approach creates conflicts since the promises and experiences of schooling and development are paradoxical.

*After completing your doctorate at BIGSAS, you stayed in Bayreuth and are currently working as a researcher at the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence. Can you briefly explain what your research is currently dealing with?*

I am now working in the project *Making a Living: Learning Trajectories towards the Ability to Earn a Livelihood* in the Research



Sabrina Maurus

Section "Learning." This is an interdisciplinary project between educational science and social anthropology that works in cooperation with the Laboratoire d'Etudes et de Recherche sur les Dynamiques Sociales et le Développement Local (LASDEL) in Parakou, Benin. I have just returned from six months of fieldwork in northern Benin, where I intend to follow the learning trajectories of young people over several years. Using a relational research approach, I explore how young men and women learn to make a living in a rural context, where the population grows, where land is no longer available like before, and where employment possibilities shrink in a neoliberal state system. Here, I also look at the multiple ways of young people's education to analyse processes of transformation which are globally (dis)connected.

Sabrina Maurus' dissertation *Battles over State Making on a Frontier. Dilemmas of Schooling, Young People and Agro-Pastoralism in Hamar, southwest Ethiopia* received several awards:

- Dissertation prize of the German Anthropological Association (2021) (first prize)
- Prize for excellence in applied development research of the KfW Development Bank (2021) (second prize)
- Young scholars' prize of the Association for African Studies in Germany (2020/21) and
- Prize of the City of Bayreuth for outstanding dissertations (2020).



## News from the Tanzanian-German Centre for Eastern African Legal Studies (TGCL)

Text PHILIPP BOGENSPERGER

**A**fter the year 2020, which meant major changes and obstacles for the Tanzanian-German Centre for Eastern African Legal Studies (TGCL), processes that had been started could, fortunately, be deepened and expanded in the year of 2021. Even the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic could be settled very smoothly as they did not pose any obstacles to the progress of the academic year and the research of the TGCL students. Also in 2021, the TGCL was delighted to have made great progress in the area of achieving sustainability post-2023.

The year 2021 commenced with the

second edition of the Chilean-German-Tanzanian (CGT) Legal Talk co-hosted by the TGCL and the Heidelberg Center for Latin America (HCLA) on 13 January 2021. The topic was *Water Resources – Legal Protection and Conflicts*, and it sparked a very positive start to a successful continuation of the CGT Legal Talk event series. This episode was followed by the third edition, dealing with Climate Litigation, which was held on 9 June 2021. On 3 December 2021, the fourth CGT Legal Talk about *Contested Values and Contradicting Rights: Legal Pluralism and Human Rights Law* rounded out the popular cooperation for the year 2021. The TGCL remains proud of this digital series, which continuously brings together various experts as well as over 40 students

and researchers from East Africa, Latin America, and Germany.

Besides that, the year of 2021 was marked above all by sustainability efforts, for which the TGCL management board and team, as well as the entire TGCL family, stood together, all united by the same vision of achieving sustainability for TGCL post the final German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) funding period. The TGCL are proud to have achieved several milestones towards sustainability, which are set to be the cornerstones for positive development towards this goal. For instance, on 10 June 2021, the TGCL organised a TGCL Sustainability Workshop via Zoom, articulating the sustainability strategies and assigning clear responsi-

bilities to the various stakeholders. The front offices and representatives of both the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) School of Law as well as the University of Bayreuth joined this workshop. The attendance of over 30 people from at least four institutions shows unambiguously that the continuation of the TGCL programme is of great interest to many and that the different institutions are willing to stand united behind this goal.

With the mitigation of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the TGCL was finally able to welcome guests back to the TGCL facilities at UDSM Mikochei campus. In fall 2021, TGCL Manager Isabelle Zundel was able to make her first official visit in her new position. Zundel and Project Leader Thoko Kaime spent the days from 12 to 16 September 2021 meeting TGCL staff and students and strengthening exchange and cooperation. In addition, the TGCL family was especially proud to host a delegation from the German Embassy and visiting German government officials at the TGCL facilities Dar es Salaam on 16 September 2021. The entourage of guests was headed by Robert Dolger, then Regional Director for Sub-Saharan Africa and the Sahel in the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, now Ambassador to Morocco, and also Deputy Ambassador of Germany to Tanzania Kathrin Steinbrenner and

Ulla Thran-Lardi, the Cultural Officer in the German Embassy in Tanzania. The meeting and the fruitful discussions were led by then TGCL Coordinator Trainee Petro Protas, who later took over the position from the previous TGCL Coordinator Benedict T. Mapunda at the end of the year. Mapunda served in this

Looking back, the year 2021 has strengthened the cooperation and communication even more between the TGCL, the University of Dar es Salaam, and the University of Bayreuth. Through the continuous collaboration between all institutions, TGCL students and TGCL alumni had the opportuni-



(from left): Robert Dolger, Kathrin Steinbrenner and Ulla Thran-Lardi with Petro Protas at an official visit to the TGCL in September 2021. Photo: TGCL

position with utmost levels of commitment, dedication, integrity, and honour since April 2014, and the TGCL family thanks him wholeheartedly and wishes him a peaceful and reflective retirement.

ty to thrive as opportunities arise for TGCL to remain the valuable and respected Centre for Legal Studies in East Africa that it has been for so many years now.

## The Chair of African Legal Studies

Text KARL-CHRISTIAN LINDENSTRUTH

**T**hoko Kaime, the new Chair of African Legal Studies, and his team lived through a number of landmark events in 2021.

### Study Trip to Brussels

At the end of September 2021, members and friends of the Chair of African Legal Studies undertook a study tour to forge closer ties with various European institutions and entities, which was realised through a series of presentations and discussions.

In the course of the three-day study tour, the team of the Chair had the opportu-

nity to meet representatives of institutions of the European Parliament, the EU Commission, the European Liaison Office of the German research organisations, the Africa-Europe Foundation, and independent journalists, sharing experiences as well as discussing European-African cooperation, particularly the need for an EU strategy for Africa. At the end of the study trip, the team gratefully departed with a plethora of new impressions and contacts. The Chair thanks everyone that helped organise this trip and the state of Hessen for the generous hospitality.

### African Law Week

Funded by the Africa Multiple Cluster

of Excellence, African Law Week dedicated itself this year to *The Continuous Search for Coherence in Africa's Plural Legal Systems*. The organisers, Bernd Kannowski of the University of Bayreuth, Hassan Ndzovu, Moi University, Kenya, and Kaime aimed to support and captivate early-career scholars with new insights and practical tools for their professions. The events embraced two guest lectures, a colloquium, a conference, as well as Kaime's inaugural lecture.

The two guest lectures took place at Iwalewaha in Bayreuth, which offered their premises for the events of the African Law Week. The organisers were thankful that the event could take place

in person locally, and also be made available to the public through on-line transmission. The art exhibition at Iwalewaha could unfortunately only be admired by the guests on site. A tour not only provided ambience to the conference but was also thought-provoking, particularly on the role and place of women in art.

Serawit Bekele Debele, University of Bayreuth, and Semeneh Ayalew Asfaw, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, made the start with their guest lecture *Ujamaa Socialism: Towards Cohering Tradition and Modernity*. Then, Ndzovu and Cecilia Ngaiza, University of Bayreuth, commenced with an interesting guest lecture on *Religion, Law and Customary Legal Practices in Africa*. The discussion focused on balancing out different interfering legal systems without losing one's identity.

The next day's colloquium started with a special training session for PhD students facilitated by Lea Mwambene from University of the Western Cape, South Africa. The lecture was accompanied by Eddy Wifa, University of Aberdeen, Scotland, and Luke Mason, University of Westminster, England, who articulated that young writers need to shape the conversation in their field of interest, initiate new ones and highlighted that defining the research problem precisely also sharpens the rest of one's writing. Later in the week, the colloquium proceeded with questions on how to write about and do research on Africa. Anthony Diala, University of the Western Cape, together with Ndzovu, stimulated

Thoko Kaime and Rüdiger Seesemann at the Inaugural Lecture. Photo: Chair of African Legal Studies



a discussion on epistemological, ethical, political, but also practical lessons. The common denominator, examined from different angles, was legal pluralism in Africa.

At the end, the organisers Kannowski, Kaime, and Diala had the chance to express and discuss their views by facilitating the final conference with the overall topics of human rights, environmental law, legal pluralism, and state-building.

#### Inaugural Lecture Thoko Kaime

In the wake of African Law Week, Kaime had the chance to deliver his inaugural

lecture and in doing so consolidated the founding of the Germany-wide Chair for African Legal Studies. The lecture itself focused on *Legitimacy, Public International Law and Intractable Problems*. After warm opening words from Jörg Schlüchtermann and Rüdiger Seesemann, both of the University of Bayreuth, Kaime commenced by sketching his career in public international law both to explain the focus of his scholarship so far and to share some perspectives for the future. While taking the guests along on his academic journey from Bangwe to Bayreuth, he displayed different intractable problems in international law and connected these to theories of public international law. Kaime closed his lecture with the clear statement that the law is not enough to resolve these problems and invited everyone to join his efforts for inter- and multidisciplinary research.

A subsequent get-together offered the chance to dive deeper into the discussion on the impulses on public international law given during the lecture.

The African Law Week, which is also the largest in the young history of the Chair of African Legal Studies at the University of Bayreuth, represents a major milestone and a successful conclusion to a successful year. 🌍

Participants of the African Law Week at the Iwalewaha. Photo: Chair of African Legal Studies



An example of racist naming in today's Bayreuth. Photo: Stefan Ouma

## Reconfiguring Starts at the Doorstep: For a Public African Studies

Text STEFAN OUMA

**A**s a member of both the Institute of African Studies (IAS) and the University's Anti-Racism committee, Stefan Ouma calls for a "public" African Studies that tackles doorstep issues such as anti-Black racism.

Over the past years, there has been an increasing call for public scholarship in various social science and humanities disciplines (see e.g., Burawoy 2005; Ward 2006; Borofsky and Lauri 2019). How have those in African Studies responded to that call? Of course, there is no singular answer to this. Scholars have taken various positions, depending on their positionality (which albeit often remains implicit or even unacknowledged). Take for instance political scientist Basedau (2020), who calls for objective scholarship as a pathway toward rethinking African Studies. Others question the relevance of theories on "Black Lives Matter" generated outside of Africa for the field of African Studies (Clapham 2020). Such calls remain not only siloed into a particular (geographical) conception of scholarship that shuns any insights from indigenous, feminist, decolonial/postcolonial, and critical race scholarship – intellectual fields that maintain that we should not only interpret the world as philosophers but actually change it. At their worst, such calls maintain the status quo of persistent anti-Black practices in both African Studies (Owomoyela 1994) and society at large (Auma et al. 2020).

The 'wake-up call question' should be: How can we really reconfigure African

Studies (as for instance the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence strives for) if immediate doorstep issues such as the fact that Black lives often do not matter in white majority countries are not being tackled via a more public form of scholarship that looks both inside and beyond the walls of its institutional base? Let's take the context of Germany. Boasting several universities (such as Bayreuth, Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt, Freiburg, Leipzig, and Mainz) with strong profiles in African Studies, the doorstep issue of how Africans and the African Diaspora experience racist-classist-sexist discrimination on a daily basis in Germany and elsewhere has never been a major concern, if at all. Recent data from the Afrozensus (<https://afrozensus.de/reports/2020/>) on widespread anti-Black racism in Germany reaffirms in painstaking detail the need to look inwards, and to use institutional resources, expertise, and power as part of a "public African Studies." Bayreuth as a university cannot buckle down on this, the more so since there seems to have been a rather harmonious coexistence between racist-colonial practices and symbols in the city of Bayreuth (see e.g., the visual and narrative performance of the "Mohren Apotheke") and the "Afroophilia" at our own university. New dynamics have ensued with recent hirings and changing demographics amongst professors and other researchers. Indeed, since 2019 the question as to whether African Studies can effectively tackle inequalities inside and beyond the academy has started to become addressed more vocally, not always with everybody's approval. Not all that is solid melts into the air easily.

One of these new developments has been

the 2020 founding of a committee on anti-racism under the roof of the Vice President's Office for Internationalisation, Equal Opportunity, and Diversity. Comprising several members of the African Studies community (including this author), this committee is poised to tackle the issue of racism both inside the University and within the city (see more here: <https://www.diversity.uni-bayreuth.de/en/anti-discrimination/>). While the committee still needs to further walk down the path of institutionalisation, it has since engaged in a number of activities, such as setting up an email list server (with about 120 members), programming a central information platform via e-learning, and holding workshops for Black and People of Colour and white-positioned colleagues. These events will be repeated in the summer term 2022 and hopefully expanded in the near future. Side activities have also included engagements with city stakeholders in order to overcome racist traditions, such as those displayed during carnival season. A lot of work still lies ahead. Unlearning/relearning, inequality-conscious allyship that helps place this work on more shoulders, as well as a truly transformative ethos, are key pillars for this process. Reconfiguration starts at home. 🌍

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The GDO crew with the WissKI expert Myriel Fichtner. Photo: Sabine Greiner

## The Launch of the ICDL Bibliographical Database

Interview Sabine Greiner

**In November 2021 the Intersectionality and Critical Diversity Literacy (ICDL) Bibliographical Database was officially presented by the Cluster of Excellence's Gender and Diversity Office (GDO). Containing more than 1,500 entries today, it is continuously updated. In this interview, the Cluster's GDO Director Christine Vogt-William talks about the process and relevance of the newly launched database.**

*Dr. Vogt-William, what was your motivation behind creating an ICDL bibliographical database?*

When I first began work at the Cluster and started conversations about the Cluster's conceptual tools, which include approaches culled from the three fields of intersectionality, critical diversity, and decolonial scholarship, two reactions were paramount. Firstly, many researchers admitted to not being familiar with these knowledge fields; indeed the general reaction from many Cluster members was that it would be difficult to identify aspects within research projects which could be served by ICDL concepts. Some had reservations about whether these theoretical approaches would have relevance for their research methodologies and questions. Very often researchers have expressed doubt whether the concepts addressed by the GDO were rooted in recognised scholarship – which I can assure you, it is. Of course, after three and a half years and many conversations in diverse contexts

of Cluster activity, it is more than apparent that these three fields are important to the Cluster's agenda of Reconfiguring African Studies.

Secondly, researchers from diverse status groups expressed doubt in being able to find sufficient literature from these fields for their own research. The general impression was that such research resources would not be easily available in 'regular' libraries and archives (both online and on site), or that much intersectional, critical diversity, and decolonial literature, as well as Afro-feminist literature, would not be available in 'serious' journals with high impact factors. What has become obvious is that literature from these fields is available both in 'high impact' journals such as *Critical African Studies*, *Signs*, *Africa Spectrum*, etc. – which are traditionally conceived of as being located and maintained in Global North spaces – as well as in journals which do not enjoy much visibility that are located on the continent itself – about 555 of these are however available on the AJOL website (*African Journals Online*), which is accessible through the UBT library website. Other sources are accessible through sites like Google Scholar, Wiley Online, ProQuest and others.

Hence, since we do have a Digital Research Environment (DRE) that is meant to facilitate and store the data collected in the course of research geared towards reconfiguring African Studies, I determined then that it would be necessary to put together an ICDL

bibliographical database to cater for the Cluster's research needs to cover ICDL concepts and theoretical approaches. This was, in my view as a scholar and a researcher, a necessary step towards finding an extensive range of scholarship by African feminist and gender studies scholars in all Cluster-relevant disciplines, as well as critical diversity scholars' and decolonial scholars' works – with especial focus on African Studies' disciplines. And as we can see – there is a rich archive that can be accessed by all Cluster members. The scholarship found in these fields has been identified by the Cluster's GDO to be salient to enhancing the current research with a view to contributing to the Cluster's agenda.

*Can you give us a glimpse of the path of development that lies behind you – from conception to the finished application?*

The project took off initially through some productive and exciting conversations between myself and the African Studies librarian Vera Butz – who unfortunately has since left UBT. She got me acquainted with the ZOTERO programme, which enabled us at the GDO to begin collecting relevant bibliographical references from online resources furnished through the UBT library as well as other public digital platforms. My first assistant Glory Otung accompanied me to the ZOTERO workshops run by Ms. Butz, a former data curator Anja Dreiser, and one of the current DRE technical team members, Myriel Fichtner. Here, we received working knowl-

edge of the ZOTERO data management programme, which has stood us in good stead as a precursor to the WissKI database. We thus began putting together the raw ICDL database in November 2019.

In April 2020, Joyce Sango took over this task as my new administrative assistant, when Ms. Otung left the GDO employ to begin her PhD in African Linguistics. Ms. Sango and I worked consistently on the ICDL database with friendly advice from Ms. Butz and Ms. Fichtner. We were able to do this with Ms. Fichtner's dedicated and timely assistance in transposing the ZOTERO data sets into the WissKI database, which is what the Cluster's DRE uses for its data management and sharing tailored for the Cluster and its ACCs on the continent. This work was undertaken with consistent dialogue with Ms. Fichtner, who supported us with her expertise in the language of WissKI, website design, Cluster member registration, as well as consistent information updates as regards copyright laws and online open access options. When Joyce Sango left the GDO at end of October 2021 in order to finish her PhD, she and I launched the ICDL database on 4 November 2021 at a Knowledge Lab session, together with Ms. Fichtner.

Currently, Marie Tsogo, who took over from Ms. Sango last October as administrative assistant, is in charge of maintaining and updating the ICDL database, with the consistent help of Ms. Fichtner. Ms. Tsogo is also adding a French section to the database, to complement the predominantly English resources available. The GDO student assistant Lisa Nagel has been doing back-up recordings of the ICDL events as well as the editing of the video material for storage on the ICDL database video links page, together with Ms. Tsogo.

*Can you please explain the features of the database?*

The key features of the database are: Extensive bibliographical references for Afro-feminist and Black feminist scholarship, intersectional and critical diversity scholarship, decolonial scholarship – these scholarly fields furnish the con-

ceptual tools for the Gender and Diversity aspects of Africa Multiple knowledge production in line with the Cluster's agenda. Notably these fields are salient across all social sciences and humanities disciplines relevant to the transdisciplinary field of African Studies.

At the moment, the working languages are English and French. The entries are marked with so-called ICDL markers, which are displayed on the navigation bar to the right of the main search field where researchers find relevant entries for their work. The ICDL markers are the so-called 'tags' which provide the

**“It is to be hoped that Cluster members will avail themselves of this measure for their research, to consider critical diversity, decolonial, and intersectional aspects of their work.”**

meta-data of each bibliographical entry – and these are helpful in refining searches.

The search terms can be inserted in the search field at the top of the work interface – corresponding entries are clearly displayed immediately beneath these. The WissKI interface has been designed to be user-friendly to expedite searches.

Further features include a section with video links of Cluster GDO ICDL lectures and events, which took place in the Cluster's Knowledge Lab during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic in digital formats, and as of this summer semester 2022 in hybrid (on site and online) formats as well as a section with useful links to relevant websites which provide research resources in the fields of intersectionality, critical diversity literacy, Afro-feminist, Black feminist, and decolonial studies e.g., African Feminist Forum, African American Policy Forum, WITS Centre for Critical Diversity Studies, Black Central Europe, Feminist Freedom Warriors, Centre for Intersectional Justice Berlin, and much more.

*The database has been officially in use since November 2021 – how has it been received? Who is its target user and what information does it contain?*

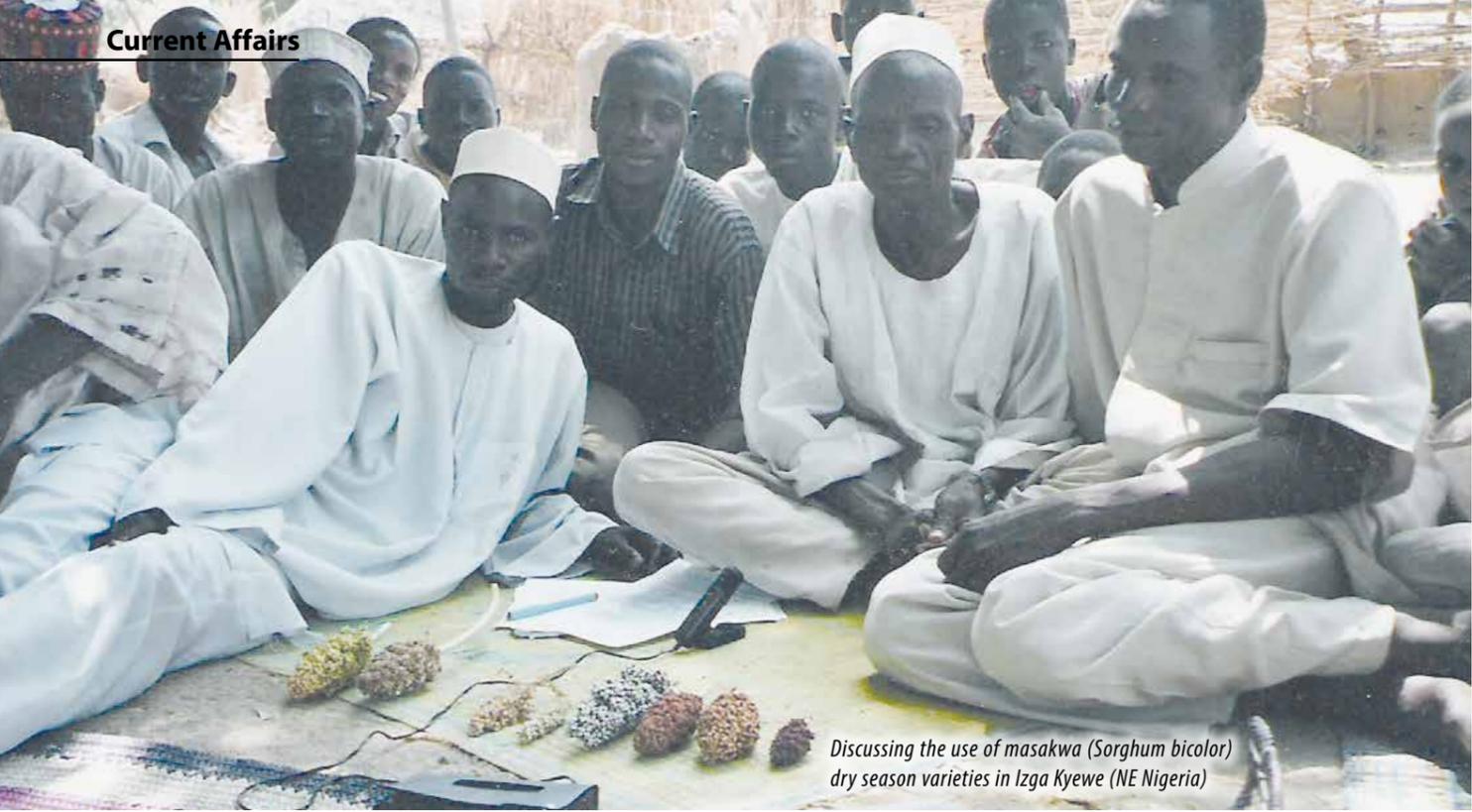
Thus far, according to recent DRE monitoring of website activity, just 32 Cluster members have registered to acquire their login details and have used the ICDL database. The target users are all Cluster members; the ICDL bibliographical database is a closed Cluster community virtual research space and is not open to the general public. It can be accessed via the GDO website. Cluster members can approach the DRE team via email to acquire their own ICDL bibliographical database login details. Since its launch, the GDO has been promoting the use of the ICDL database as a Cluster research resource and it is to be hoped that Cluster members will avail themselves of this measure for their research, to consider critical diversity, decolonial, and intersectional aspects of their work.

*How difficult was it to tag the various entries with metadata and key words so they would be easily found by the user?*

The short answer is: the ICDL markers – the 'tags' – have been and are comparatively simple to allocate to each bibliographical entry, since these are culled from the abstracts (and introductions) of articles and journal special issues, as well as synopses (and introductions) of monographs and edited collections from the fields of intersectionality, critical diversity literacy, Afro-feminist, Black Feminist, and decolonial studies.

*The Cluster is a project with a definite ending – who will inherit the data and maintain the database after the Cluster's termination?*

Considering that the ICDL database was just launched last November, we at the GDO are currently preoccupied with the acquisition of an active user public for the database, with a view to integrating into their research cultures African scholarship in the above-mentioned fields produced by African continental and Diasporic scholars. The afterlife of the ICDL database will be decided on in consultation with the DRE data curator Dr. Anke Schürer-Ries, who is responsible for data archives – this is a forthcoming step in the management and upkeep of the ICDL database. 🌍



Discussing the use of masakwa (*Sorghum bicolor*) dry season varieties in Izga Kyewe (NE Nigeria)

## UBT Signs Memorandum of Understanding with African Institute in Indigenous Knowledge Systems (AIKS)

Text and photos: DORIS LÖHR

**O**n 6 October 2021, the President of the University of Bayreuth, Stefan Leible, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the African Institute in Indigenous Knowledge Systems (AIKS).

The AIKS is a multi-country consortium of 19 members from various higher education institutions on the African continent, and was constituted during the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. The University of Bayreuth was asked to join the consortium as the first partner that is not based on the African continent due to the University's remarkable contributions in the field of African Studies. The Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence acts as the executive cooperation partner with the representatives of the African institutions.

### What is the AIKS?

The AIKS is officially recognised as a strategic partner of the United Nations

Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The institute promotes indigenous knowledge systems research and scholarship on a continental level, hosted by South Africa's University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). The institute exists as partnership of higher education and autonomous research institutions, with a common interest in the advancement of African indigenous knowledge systems.

It is a virtual institute based on a hub and nodes model, with UKZN serving as a hub through the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) National Research Foundation (NRF) Centre in Indigenous Knowledge Systems (CIKS). Nodes are located in anglophone, francophone, and lusophone countries, in addition to South Africa and Rwanda. They include research institutes and universities in Tanzania, Cote d'Ivoire, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Senegal, Zambia, Kenya, and Mozambique.

Participating research centres (as of 2021) include the Institute of Traditional

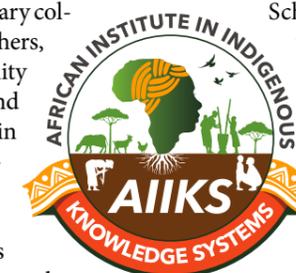
Medicine and the National Institute for Medical Research in Tanzania, the Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques (CSRS) in Côte d'Ivoire, the Agence Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique Appliquée (ANRSA) in Senegal, the Pharm-Biotechnology and Traditional Medicine Centre (PHARMBIOTRAC) in Uganda, the African Leadership and Management Academy (ALMA) in Zimbabwe, the Multidisciplinary Research Centre (MRC) in Namibia, and the Dag Hammarskjöld Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies (DHIPS) in Zambia.

Participating universities include Kisii University in Kenya, Copperbelt University in Zambia, the University of Zambia, the University of Namibia, the National University of Science and Technology in Zimbabwe, Makerere University and Mbarara University of Science and Technology in Uganda, Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny in Cote d'Ivoire, the University of Rwanda, Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique, Muhimbili University of

Health and Allied Sciences in Tanzania, the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, and UKZN.

As its mandate, the CIKS, established in 2014, "promotes, protects and preserves indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) as a new area of enquiry in the knowledge domain through research, postgraduate training, knowledge brokerage, networking, service rendering and community engagement."

Its vision and mission: "To be a world rallying hub for the preservation, promotion and protection of IKS through multi- and trans-disciplinary collaboration among researchers, institutions, community knowledge holders and practitioners from within and outside South Africa." (<https://ciks.org.za/>). Focus areas are traditional medicine, indigenous food security, environmental management and climate change, and IKS in curriculum development.



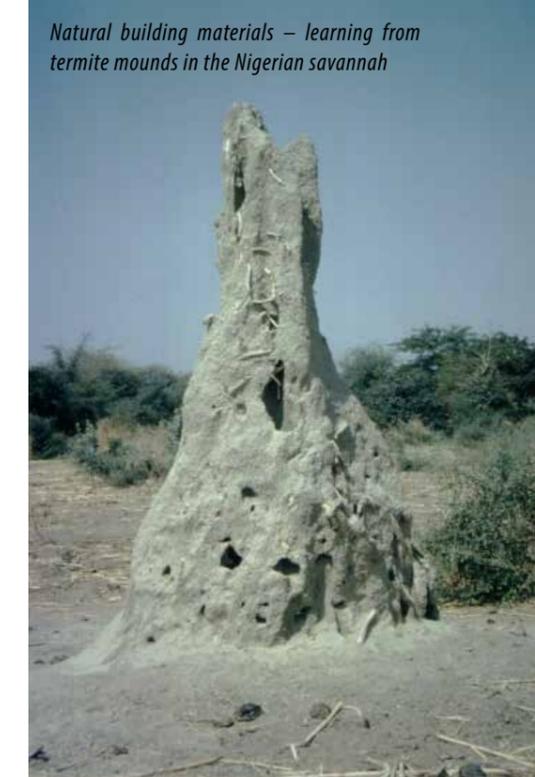
### Memorandum of Understanding

The preparation and signing of the MoU in October 2021 was an important milestone and the result of plenty previous discussions between Hassan O. Kaya from UKZN, now director of AIKS, and Christine Scherer, the long-standing academic coordinator of BIGSAS and coordinator of the portfolio Early Career and Equal Opportunity of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence.

During an inaugural virtual meeting between some members of the Cluster's Management Board and delegates from the AIKS in March 2021, potential areas of collaboration, the nature and mechanisms of the partnership, and the MoU were discussed. The participants at this kick-off meeting (among them professors Ute Fendler, Nelson Ijumba, Kaya, Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Mirco Schönfeld, Rüdiger Seesemann as well as Mayashree Chinsamy, Doris Löhr, Ronald Tombe, and Christine Vogt-William) agreed on a cooperative and capable way forward.

Scherer, teaming with Löhr, the academic coordinator of the portfolio Internationalisation and Public engagement of the Africa Multiple Cluster, were both requested to act as spokespersons in this cooperation and to establish ideas in the sphere of indigenous knowledge dissemination. Löhr participates as appointed Member of the Executive Management Committee in the monthly meetings.

The joint focus between the Cluster and the AIKS lies first and foremost on the promotion of early career scholars and concrete support, including inter-continental postdoctoral training. The AIKS has started to establish national, regional, and continental postgraduate training and support programmes; students are drawn from AIKS nodes and partners.



Natural building materials – learning from termite mounds in the Nigerian savannah

A further focus of cooperation is the encouragement of African languages in education, curriculum, and community work, the advancement of African indigenous knowledge, and the promotion of IKS' contribution globally.

Among other focus areas, the AIKS aims to "promote the history of African indigenous science, technology and innovation, embedded in African indigenous languages and home-grown philosophies for Africa in line with the African Union Agenda 2063."

AIKS is building a critical mass of human capital, which is multi- and trans-disciplinary and conversant with AIKS worldviews, ways of knowing, value systems, and research methodologies, to drive research, innovation, and knowledge creation in strategic areas of Africa's sustainable development.

An official signing ceremony of the MoU is planned for post-COVID-19 times. The AIKS and AMC will cooperatively produce workshops and joint events in the spirit of the shared visions and goals.

Documenting Malgwa hunters' songs with the flute (gulve) in Auwalari (NE Nigeria)



The artwork for the Conference's poster was created by artist Samuel Djive from Maputo, Mozambique.

## Cluster Conference Africa\*n Relations: Modalities Reflected

Text SABINE GREINER

**T**he second international Cluster conference took place from 14 to 17 July 2021. Focusing on the topic of “Modalities”, it provided a platform for a wide range of perspectives and debates on the subject. The conference featured four keynotes, four roundtables, and nine panels that were attended by more than 750 registered participants.

Focusing on the topic *Africa\*n Relations: Modalities Reflected*, the highly anticipated second international conference of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence took place from 14 to 17 July 2021. The Cluster of Excellence put together a multifaceted programme that spanned four days and comprised four keynotes, four roundtables, and nine panels. The online format as well as the chosen topics hit the spot with the scholarly community: “Over 750 scholars from all over the world joined us online for our international July conference. This is an overwhelming turnout that confirms the relevance of topics, panelists, and keynote speakers,” said the spokesperson of the Cluster of Excellence, Rüdiger Seesemann.

“The 2021 conference was the first in a series of conferences revolving around the Cluster’s annual themes,” explains Clarissa Vierke, who guided the Cluster’s engagement with modalities of relations, the 2020/21 annual theme. “The conference provided a forum to advance theoretical debates, fine-tune the respective concepts, mobilise related methodologies, and promote intellectual exchange within the Cluster,” Vierke added. Over the course of four days, scholars from the University of Bayreuth and the African Cluster Centres at Moi University (Kenya), Rhodes University (South Africa), Joseph Ki-Zerbo University (Burkina Faso), and the University of Lagos (Nigeria), as well as scholars connected to the Cluster’s network and beyond, presented their work and debated ideas and concepts.

### Announcing the new BIGSAS honorary doctorate: Fatou Sow

The highlights of this year’s conference, however, were the keynote lectures held by top-notch speakers. For the opening in the evening of 14 July, the Cluster invited the distinguished Senegalese sociologist Fatou Sow to speak about *Relating Women in African Studies: A Critical View*. After Sow’s keynote, the Dean of the Bayreuth International Graduate

School of African Studies (BIGSAS), Martina Drescher, announced that the distinguished pioneer of African feminist studies had been selected as the recipient of the BIGSAS honorary doctorate, making Sow the second person to be awarded this title to date. The award ceremony was announced for May 2022.

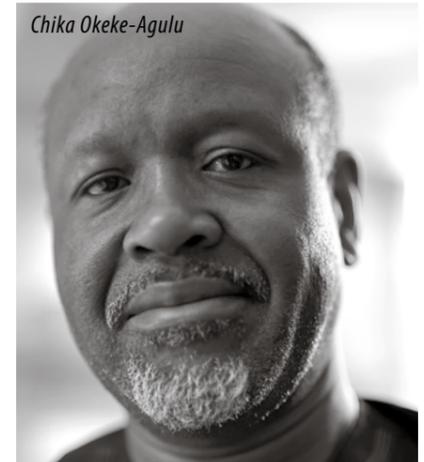
### Okwui Enwezor Distinguished Lecture

In the evening of 15 July, the Cluster of Excellence used the opportunity of its second international conference to introduce a new annual lecture series: the *Okwui Enwezor Distinguished Lecture* (see box on the right). The new lecture format honours the late art curator Okwui Enwezor, and was jointly launched by Iwalewahaus and the Cluster of Excellence. From this point on, each year, a prominent artist, curator, or scholar will be invited to offer ground-breaking contributions to the rethinking of African arts in a global perspective. The inaugural Okwui Enwezor lecturer was the renowned art historian Chika Okeke-Agulu from Princeton University, who presented a keynote entitled *The Postcolonial Museum*. In the ensuing lively debate, he pointed out that the concept of the postcolonial museum is not primar-

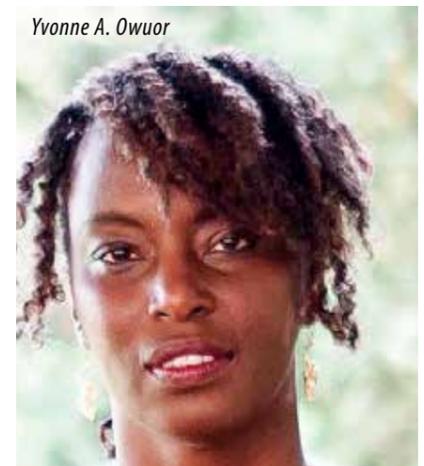
ily about the objects under display, but rather about the ways in which museums perform their tasks, the stories they tell, the narratives they use, the perspectives they take, and the spaces they constitute.

### Decolonising the University

The third conference day featured a number of exciting events. In the morning, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, a leading decolonial thinker from Portugal, explored the question of *Decolonising the University* from the perspective of the epistemologies of the Global South. During his illuminat-



Chika Okeke-Agulu



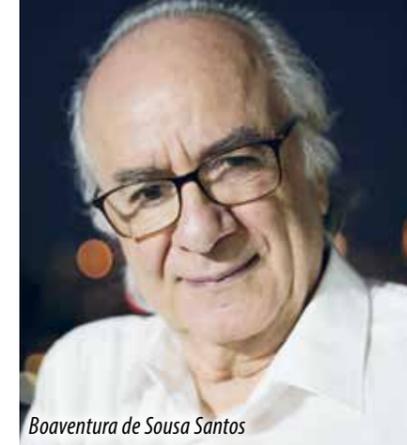
Yvonne A. Owuor

ing lecture, de Sousa Santos, who works as a consultant for universities eager to start a decolonisation process at their institutions, shared his thoughts on the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic will have on universities in the future.

Other plenary events that day included an artist lecture by the Kenyan writer Yvonne Adhiambo Owuor entitled *Imagination, Thresholds, and Ennui: Summons to Alt. Decoloniality*. In her presentation, she offered critical reflections on academic en-



Fatou Sow



Boaventura de Sousa Santos

gagements with Africa as well as insights about what it means to be human in the postpandemic world. Her lecture was followed by a Conversation with Artists later that evening, featuring Diego Araújo from Brazil, Lobadys Pérez from Colombia, and Matchume Zango from Mozambique. They shed light on the connection between artistic and academic knowledge production.

In addition to the keynotes, panels and roundtables engaged with modalities from various perspectives. Participants representing a wide range of academic disciplines explored the ways and processes of relating they encountered in their study of African and African-Diasporic lifeworlds. Taking a dynamic perspective on multiplicity, the panels and roundtables fore-

grounded the transformations that various modes of relating undergo over time, and the ways in which these modes of relating vary across different contexts. Moreover, and in keeping with the Cluster’s focus on reflexivity and the aim of reconfiguring African Studies, some of the conference events interrogated power relationships and opened up intersectional perspectives on differences and hierarchies.

The conference ended in the afternoon of July 17 with a roundtable discussion featuring Grace Musila (University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg) and Souleymane Bachir Diagne (Columbia University, New York City); both are members of the Cluster’s Advisory Board who shared their reflections on the conference theme.

## New Lecture Series in Honour of Late Okwui Enwezor

For almost three decades, Okwui Enwezor was one of the most influential figures in the field of contemporary art and culture with globally recognised achievements as a curator, critic, publisher, writer, poet, historian, activist, and public speaker. Enwezor gained public recognition as the artistic director of a number of global exhibitions, for which he won many prizes. His curatorial practice and academic work challenged, transformed, and significantly shaped the global contemporary art landscape and continues to do so after his passing in 2019.

In February 2019, a few weeks before his premature demise, BIGSAS had decided to confer an honorary doctorate on Enwezor. The envisioned date of the conferral, 24 May 2019, turned out to be the day of his funeral in his Nigerian hometown in Anambra State in southeastern Nigeria. To celebrate his achievements and work towards free thought and action, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence has teamed with Iwalewahaus at the University of Bayreuth to establish a new lecture series. *The Okwui Enwezor Distinguished Lecture* will be held annually to honour the late Nigerian art curator.

Okwui Enwezor Photo: © Chika O. Okeke-Agulu



Text: SABINE GREINER

**O**n 14 January 2021, Cluster Deputy Spokesperson Ute Fendler held the annual New Year Lecture of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence. Her lecture focused on the topic of *Polyrhythmic Gestures in African Arts* and featured examples of polyrhythm in African poetry, dance, and calligraphy.

at the time, the event had to be exclusively in an online format. The welcoming remarks were given by Muyiwa Falaiye, Director of the African Cluster Centre at the University of Lagos, Nigeria before Gilbert Ndi Shang, a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Bayreuth, introduced Fendler.

During her lecture, Fendler engaged with the key term of relationality. Drawing from her background as Chair of

complex ways of being in the world. The lecture put them in dialogue with other concepts as suggested by L.S. Senghor on rhythm in the new readings by Souleymane Bachir Diagne and also by Babacar M. Diop. During her presentation, Fendler showed some examples from verbal, visual, and performative art works displaying the entanglements between theory and practice: She presented poem/songs by the artist Jean-Luc Raharimanana from Madagascar, music/films by the Senegalese

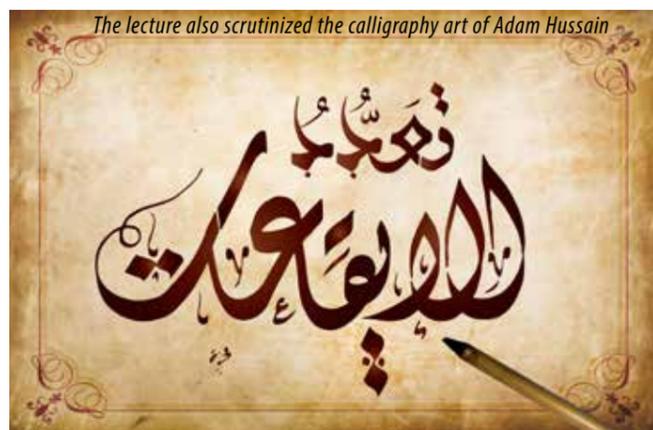
## Annual New Year Lecture: Polyrhythmic Gestures in African Arts

The Cluster's New Year Lecture was established in 2019 to mark the start of all academic events organised by the Cluster of Excellence at the beginning of each calendar year. After a successful inaugural event in 2019, when the Cluster's Dean Rüdiger Seesemann delivered the New Year Lecture on the topic of Reconfiguring African Studies, he passed the baton to the Cluster's Deputy Spokesperson. In 2021, the lecture was given by the Cluster's Vice-Dean of Internationalisation and Public Engagement Ute Fendler who set the pace for the Cluster's annual theme "Relationalities" by delivering her lecture entitled *Polyrhythmic Gestures – Relational Perspectives on/from Verbal, Audio/visual and Performative Arts across the African Continent* on 14 January 2021. Due to the pandemic being in full swing

Romance and Comparative Literature at UBT, Fendler combined concepts from Édouard Glissant's poetics of relation, Gilles Deleuze's polyrhythm, as well as Antonio Benítez-Rojo's concept of "chaos" and Kamau Brathwaite's "tidalectics" to discuss relationality and polyrhythm and their connection with each other. As Fendler pointed out during her keynote, all of these concepts suggest ways of approaching multiple and

Moussa Sène Absa, and a dance calligraphy performance by Adam Hussain.

The lecture had initially been planned as a dialogic lecture with artists; however,



The lecture also scrutinized the calligraphy art of Adam Hussain



The artist Raharimana was featured in Ute Fendler's lecture – albeit only digitally. Photo: Sabine Greiner

because of the pandemic, the whole event had to be pre-recorded and edited. Fendler said, "I would like to thank Mohamed Makhoukh who accepted to give an interview on his work and his thoughts on the key concepts 'polyrhythm' and 'relationality'. I would also like to thank Driss El Maarouf who did the interview in Fes and Farouk El Maarouf who did the post-production and the subtitles. Furthermore, I would like to thank Raharimanana for sharing the link to the concert that can be seen on Vimeo and of which I showed a part, as he could not come to Bayreuth."



The entire New Year Lecture can be watched on YouTube.

Photo: Adobe Stock

## The Knowledge Lab 2021



Text: ROBERT DEBUSMANN

**I**n 2021, the Knowledge Lab of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence has once more underlined its vital role as an important instrument for the exchange and generation of ideas within the organisation.

As the central forum of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, the Knowledge Lab is the main stage, where overarching theoretical and methodological discussions are conducted. Cluster members and guests, groups as well as individuals, present their ideas, discuss their research methods, and systematically reflect on their academic and political environment.

The primary theme of the year until the end of the summer semester was *modalities*. The theory discussion focused on

"modes of relation" in a variety of ways: in guest lectures, readings, and discussion panels. Alongside *temporalities, spatialities, and medialities*, *modalities* serve as a heuristic angle to approach the core concepts of *relationality* and *reflexivity* from a multiple perspective.

African voices in particular had their say. The much acclaimed opening lecture was given by Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Chair of Epistemologies of the Global South at the University of Bayreuth, entitled *The Decolonial Turn(s) in African Studies: The Challenges of Rewriting Africa*, and in it he placed the annual theme within the Cluster's principal goal of reconfiguring African Studies. As the semester progressed, the four African Cluster Centre (ACC) partner institutions also contributed their own events to the discussion on the annual

University historian Peter O. Ndege on *Research, Theories, and Audience in Knowledge Production in African Studies*. The enthusiastic participants could not have known that Ndege would pass away only a short time later, and that they would remember this event all the more vividly.

From October 2021, the Medialities Group took over the planning of the annual programme, i.e., the events for the plenary colloquium and the programme for the annual cluster conference. Text readings and guest lectures provided an introduction to the theme that would primarily determine the following year and be crowned by the annual conference in July 2022.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Knowledge Lab 2021 was still organised exclusively in an online format. In the meantime, the participants had become accustomed to this form of exchange, whose events were intensively planned and prepared by the organisers. Moderators and discussants ensured a well-coordinated process. Is there any event today that does not include a Zoom meeting?

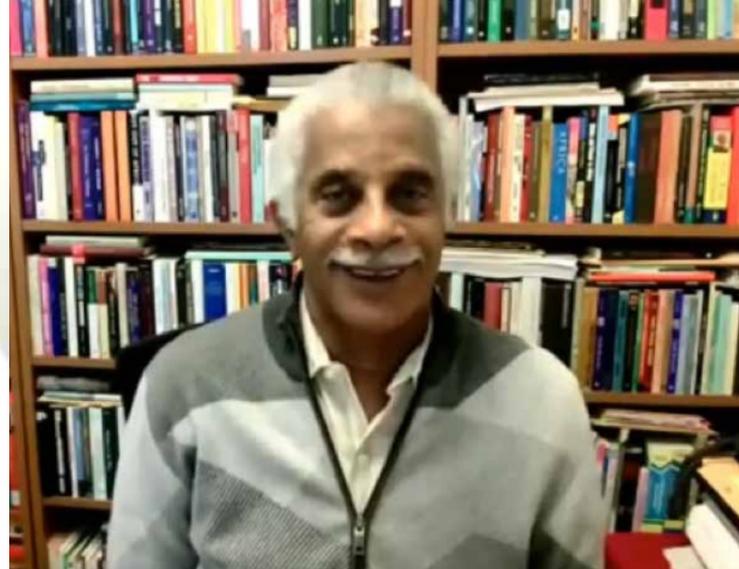
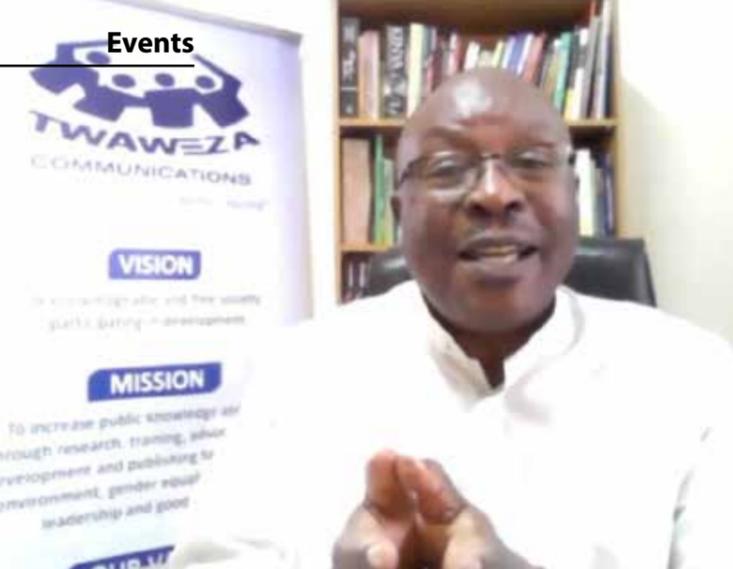


The events of the 2021 Knowledge Lab were exclusively conducted online.

theme, focusing on practical issues of research such as transdisciplinary work or the appreciation of linguistic diversity. A particular highlight was the contribution by Moi

Website of the Knowledge Lab with the Annual Themes and Annual Theme Groups:





Kimani Njogu (left) and Alamin Mazrui (right) during their joint keynote

## Critical Swahili Studies Workshop at the 33rd Swahili Colloquium

Text SERENA TALENTO

**O**n the occasion of the 33rd Swahili Colloquium, a workshop entitled *Critical Swahili Studies* was held from 14 to 16 May 2022. The workshop was organised by Clarissa Vierke, Serena Talento, and Duncan Tarrant (all from the University of Bayreuth) together with Mark Kandagor (Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya)

In tune with the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence's agenda of reconfiguring African Studies, the overarching aim of the workshop was to engage in critical reflection on the field of Swahili Studies. During the workshop the very notion of Swahili Studies, its historical trajectories, present coordinates, as well as future perspectives in different institutions were explored. The speakers gathered from four continents and interrogated both the complementary and conflictual relationship of different versions of Swahili Studies and current critical debates about area studies to assess the future.

The overall topic was developed especially in the keynote by Alamin Mazrui (Ohio State University, Columbus) and Kimani Njogu (Kenyatta University, Nairobi) *Swahili in the Era of Globalization:*

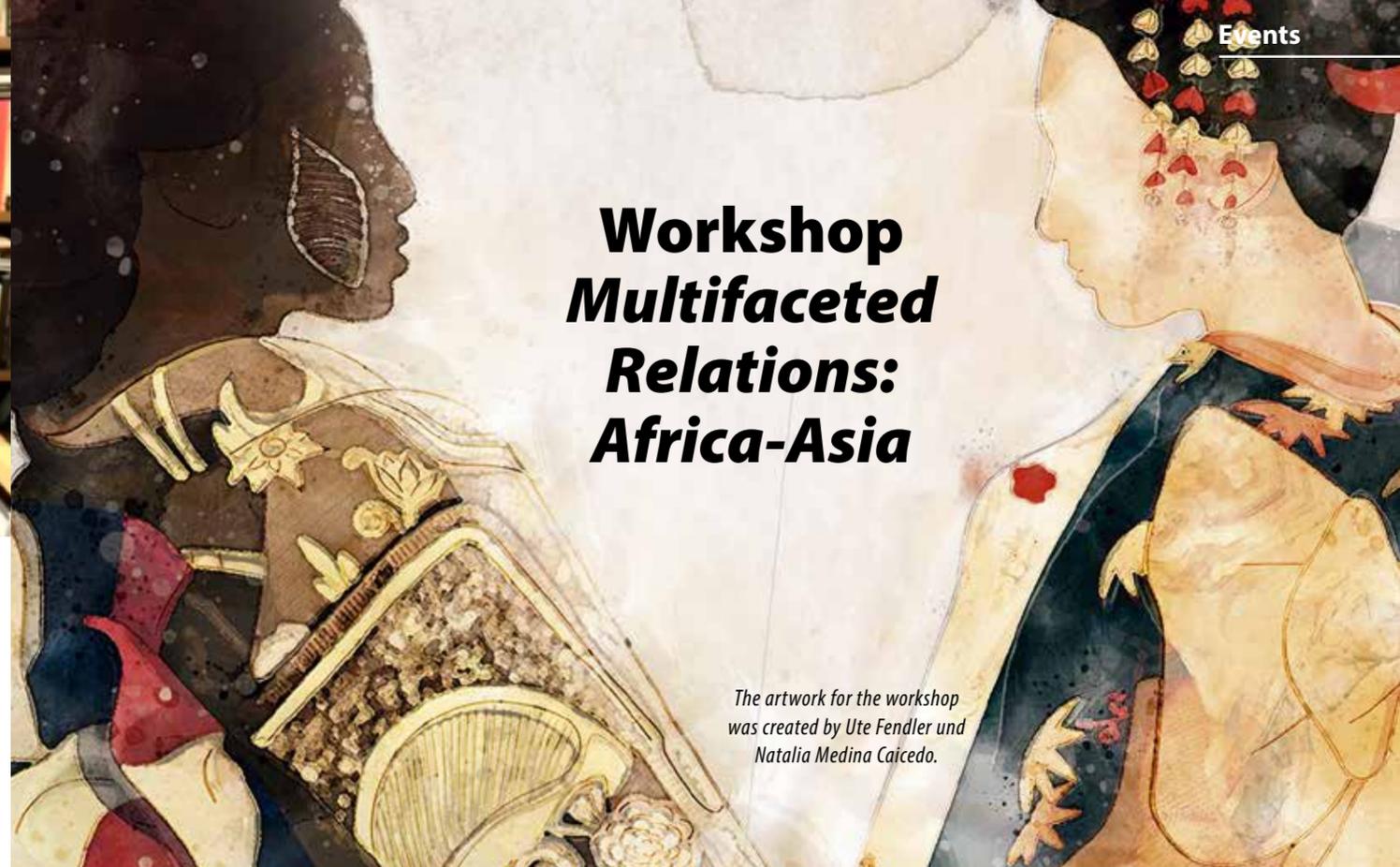
*Between Africa and the USA*, where the scholars interrogated the fate and direction of Swahili Studies in the USA while embracing a broader perspective and thus touching also on the state of Swahili Studies in some other parts of the world.

Under the workshop's theme, contributors critically reflected on a broad range of topics such as: central criteria and crucial pillars for Swahili Studies as a critical interdisciplinary engagement in dialogue with local intellectuals (Kai Kresse, Free University, Berlin; Abdilatif Abdalla); the potential of teaching and learning Swahili using Afrophone languages (Aldin Mutembei, University of Dar Es Salaam; Hassan Kaya, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban); investigations of students' attitudes towards Swahili Studies in the Ghanaian context (Josephine Dzahene-Quarshie, University of Ghana, Accra); historical insights on the teaching and uses of Swahili in Egypt and China (Alaa Rashwan Salah, Al-Azhar University, Cairo; Zhao Lei, Foreign Studies University, Beijing); the constructed nature of Swahiliness in contemporary music (Tom Michael Mboya, Moi University, Eldoret); the advantages of a cognitive linguistics approach to research on and the teaching of Swahili (Iwona Kraska-Szlenk, University of Warsaw); symbolic trajectories

of metaphors from musical traditions in the United States, Tanzania and Mexico (Aaron Louis Rosenberg, The College of Mexico, Mexico City).

A number of other events featured on the colloquium schedule. On its first evening, the 15 May, the colloquium hosted a tribute to the memory of Euphrase Kezilahabi, one of the most important East African writers, intellectuals, and philosophers, who passed away in early 2020. The tribute, organised by Roberto Gaudio and Clarissa Vierke, welcomed on its virtual stage young East African poets and the renowned Tanzanian singer-song writer Vitali Maembe, who performed poems and music inspired by Kezilahabi's poetry. The colloquium and workshop came to full circle with the roundtable *Kiswahili in Kenya: Its Future in the Postcolonial Era* in cooperation with the African Cluster Centre Moi University in Eldoret: Mark Kandagor (University of Moi, Eldoret), Clara Momanyi (Kenyatta University, Nairobi), Miriam Mwita (University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, Eldoret), Irise Mwangi (University of Nairobi) zeroed on into the current state and status of Kiswahili in Kenya, its development, use, and policy since 1964, with a main focus on education, parliament, publishing industry, and media. 🌍

## Workshop Multifaceted Relations: Africa-Asia



The artwork for the workshop was created by Ute Fendler und Natalia Medina Caicedo.

Text UTE FENDLER

**F**rom 2 to 3 July 2021, *Multifaceted Relations: Africa-Asia*, a workshop at the University of Bayreuth, brought together researchers and artists to explore the multi-layered relations between Africa and Asia.

Members of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence as well as colleagues and artists based at partner institutions joined the workshop, with the objective to start discussions between the researchers who work on intercontinental relations between Africa and Asia.

The first two panels of the first day were dedicated to relations between East Africa and India. The first three presenters (Peter Simatei, Christine Vogt-William, Clarissa Vierke) gave analyses of literary writings that dealt with various aspects of the relation between India and East Africa. This was followed by some reflections on music (Andrew J. Eisenberg) and art practices (Pedro Pombo), so that the panel gave insights into the complex network of relations. The presentation by Iris Clemens on notions of 'waithood' stirred new questions coming from education that could also be fruitful in literary studies and in art.

The next two panels were dedicated to relations between African countries and South Korea. While Y. Chang analysed cultural programmes as a basis for interaction between African countries and South Korea, Kristina Dzedzic Wright presented a collaborative art project in Dar es Salaam. Ute Fendler concentrated on the representation of African and Afro-descendant representations in popular media. The artist Onejoon Che presented his new project on African immigrants in South Korea and their self-presentation in photography. These complex views of representation and perception were completed by viewing Che's documentary on Monica Macias, the daughter of Guinean president raised in North Korea, *My Utopia* (2018).

The final panel brought together research on Chinese / African relations. Mingqing Yuan presented novels dealing with the concept of 'waithood' of Chinese immigrants to Africa, connecting her talk with Clemens' presentation. Art historian Ruth Simbao's reflections on biographies of lives between China and South Africa were a response also to the novels on China and Africa, as well as to the life stories of migration in the overall context between African and Asian countries. The last presentation by Jana Hönke and Yifan Mia Yang focused on the notion

of liminality and how this allows apprehending the relations between China and African countries.

The documentary *A Letter to My Cousin in China* by the South African photographer Henion Han was part of the programme. The film was followed by a discussion with the filmmaker Robyn Aronstam, Simbao, and Ulf Vierke (Director of Iwalewahaus).

While the papers complemented each other very well in each panel, highlighting various aspects in the relation between the respective Asian and African countries, there were also some topics and notions that linked the various sections like migration, personal lives, representation of the other, waithood, and liminality.

The musical reading, *Witness-Islands and (en)Tangled Memories* by Jean-Luc Raharimanana, had to be postponed to December 2021 (see page ...) due to changing COVID-19 regulations.

Overall, the workshop initiated fruitful exchanges linking the various disciplinary approaches (anthropology, literature, arts, music), and generated ideas for further collaborations. 🌍

Urban gardening on a flood plain in Dar Es Salaam

## Weingartener Afrikagesprache 2020/2021: Environmental Change in Africa – Developmental Dynamics and Challenges

Text CYRUS SAMIMI and FRED KRÜGER

**The annual Weingarten Africa Talks, co-organised by the Academy of the Diocese Rottenburg-Stuttgart and the Institute of African Studies (IAS) faced organisational challenges due to the pandemic.**

Each year a workshop on a currently relevant topic is organised by colleagues from the University of Bayreuth. The main target audience of the workshop is the interested public, but the event is also geared towards students. The workshop is held in German and normally starts late on a Friday afternoon and ends Sunday after lunch. The topic for 2020 was *Environmental Change in Africa – Dynamics of Developments and Challenges*. It was organised by Cyrus Samimi (University of Bayreuth) and Fred Krüger (University of Erlangen-Nürnberg). However, it became quickly obvious that a workshop with around 40 participants at the Academy would not be possible because of the pandemic. Therefore, the topic was postponed to 2021. To avoid gaps in the calendar of the Academy, Samimi and Krüger gave a keynote on 4 December 2020 in the evening, at the time the workshop would have normally started. The talk and the discussion were a success, with more than 50 participants. This supported the decision to offer the topic in 2021, hoping to come together in Weingarten.

Only a few weeks before the workshop should have taken place from 3 to 5 December 2021, it was again affected by the pandemic, at short notice. The steeply rising incidence numbers made it again impossible to meet in Weingarten. Because the planning for 2022 had already started, it was not possible to postpone the meeting another year. Because of the interest in 2020 and the bookings already made for a workshop in presence, a condensed online event was set up in order not to cancel completely. Going online meant that Aidan G. Msafiri (Kilimanjaro Consortium For Development And Environment, Moshi, Tanzania) could be invited for a talk. Normally it is not possible to invite colleagues from Africa because of funding restrictions.

The event started with a talk about *Environmental Change in Africa – Dynamics of Developments and Challenges* by Krüger and Samimi on Friday evening. Saturday morning Msafiri spoke on the topic Development and Environment. This was followed by a presentation by Matthias Rompel, who works for the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). He reflected on *Climate Change and Climate Adaptation in Southern Africa and the Role of Development Cooperation*. After his presentation, a session in which the controversial topic of nature conversation and its impact on indigenous and

local communities was presented and discussed. The first input was by Christoph Heinrich of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF Germany) with the title *Africa's Change – Observation of a Nature Conservation Organisation*. His talk was directly followed by the presentation *New Conservation Areas, Old Ideas. Colonial Myths and its Consequences in the Congo Basin* by Linda Poppe (Survival International Germany). A panel discussion based on the two presentations followed around the issue of *Nature Conservation, Point of View?* The topic was discussed in breakout rooms, where lively and controversial debates emerged amongst the workshop attendees. The last presentation was by Tobias Haller (University of Bern). His talk, *Wrong Reading of African Landscapes: Towards Participative Resource Management*, also served as a nice summary of the workshop, as it elaborated on controversial issues of resource management but also presented possible solutions.

Overall, and despite its online format, the event was a success with approximately 40 participants actively engaged in the discussions and breakout rooms. Hence, the decision to move from an in-presence event to online was very viable – but of course, it would still have made a huge difference to meet in Weingarten in person for face-to-face exchanges. 🌍

Photo: Fred Krüger



Board of directors, advisors, and non-hybrid participants respecting the COVID-19 regulations

## Annual meeting of CrossArea e.V. held at the University of Bayreuth in November 2021

Text and photo DORIS LÖHR

**Founded in 2014, the CrossArea e.V. association gives voice to the common concerns of Area Studies and aims to increase networking in that regard. In November 2021, the annual meeting of the association was held in Bayreuth.**

From 18 to 19 November 2021, the annual meeting of CrossArea e.V. took place at Kolpinghaus in Bayreuth. Doris Löhr, the present Chairperson and Academic Coordinator of the Internationalisation and Public Engagement portfolio of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, organised this hybrid event, during which 30 colleagues from various German institutions engaged in Area Studies discussed topics related to the annual theme, *Africa's Entanglement in the World*.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting in Bayreuth had to be postponed for one year; the last pre-pandemic conference at the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA), Hamburg, organized by the deputy chairperson Dr. André Bank, in 2019 had focussed on *Solidarity and Counter-Solidarity – Cross-Area Perspectives*.

After words of welcome by Löhr and

the Cluster's Dean, Rüdiger Seesemann, Hannes Warnecke-Berger (Coordinator of the project *Extractivism* at the University of Kassel) took over the chair for the session with Jana Hönke, Professor for Sociology of Africa and Director of the project *Africa's Infrastructure Globalities* (INFRAGLOB), and Mia Yifan Yang (INFRAGLOB/BIGSAS) to discuss *Africa-China – How Do Emerging Powers Challenge the Traditional Theory and Practice of International Relations?*

The impulse lecture by Matthias Middell, Professor of Cultural History and Director of the Global and European Studies Institute, Leipzig, reflected on *Africa's Entanglement in the World*, setting the frame for the conference, while Alexander Stroh-Steckelberg, Professor of African Politics and Development Policy at the University of Bayreuth, gave his insights on *Subregional Integration in Africa and the Selection of Regional Judges*; this research is part of a joint Cluster project, *Multiplicity in Decision-Making of Africa's Interacting Markets* (see QR-Code on the right).

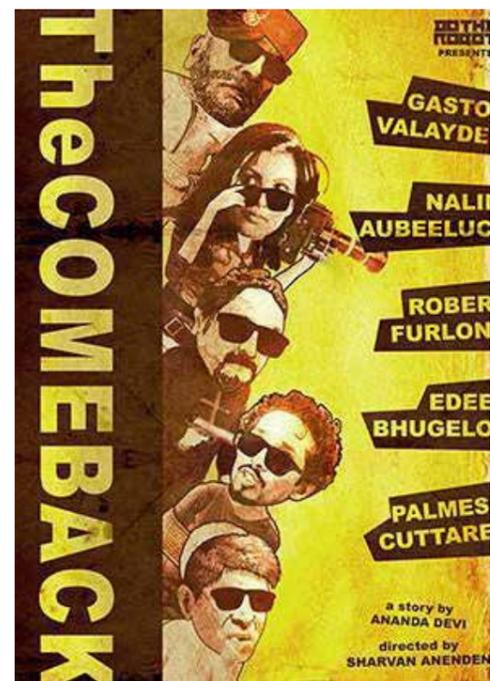
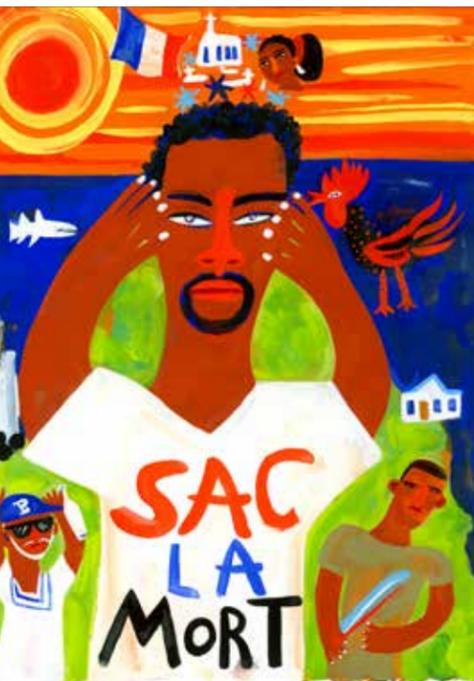


On the second day, André Bank, as Middle East expert from GIGA, chaired

the session by Jens Heibach, postdoctoral Research Fellow at GIGA, to discuss *Middle East Regional Powers in Africa: Preliminary Notes on the Causes and Modes of their Engagement*. After a presentation on her book *Modernization Dreams, Lusotropical Promises* by Ana Beatriz Ribeiro, a conversation about ongoing initiatives within CrossArea e.V. concluded the successful hybrid meeting.

The conference was another opportunity for the Cluster to create synergies with the Leipzig Research Centre Global Dynamics (ReCentGlobe). In July 2021, the Cluster Africa Multiple was invited to contribute to the newly established science festival GLOBE21, with its central theme #BorderCrossingSolidarities. Funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the festival uses a wide range of science communication and media formats to share and discuss debates from research and education with a broad and international audience: with citizens as well as members of the Maria Sibylla Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA), Ghana, an international partner of the Cluster. The festival is planned to take place annually, and the theme in 2022 will centre around #ClimateSolidarities.





## Cinema Africa 2021 – A Journey to the Indian Ocean

Text SABINE GREINER

**I**n November 2021, the Bayreuth film festival *Cinema Africa* took place for the 13th time. All of the four films selected shared one common denominator: all were set against the diverse backdrop of the Indian Ocean. All four directors were present during the screenings and answered questions from the audience afterwards.

After the Bayreuth film festival *Cinema Africa* had to be cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic, the event fortunately had the green light to go full speed ahead in 2021. From 14 to 17 November 2021, the *Cinema Africa* took the audience on a cinematic journey to the colourful world of the Indian Ocean. Over the course of four evenings, the movie festival presented stories that were set in La Réunion, Mauritius, South Africa, and Tanzania, showing examples of the broad spectrum of African filmmaking today.

On Sunday evening – the premiere night of the festival – the audience at Bayreuth's Cineplex was greeted with special vibes from the Indian Ocean. While Malagasy

musician Tao Ravao played the kabosy, the audience had the chance to wander through an exhibition of works by Mozambican photographer Sérgio Santimano. Ute Fendler, the Cluster's Deputy Spokesperson, had put together the exhibition as part of a series of events on the Indian Ocean (see also p. 38).

### Emmanuel Parraud: *Sac la mort* and *Maudit!*

When the audience eventually took their seats they were presented with a double feature of movies by French filmmaker Emmanuel Parraud: *Sac la mort* (*Body Bag*) and *Maudit!* (*Damn!*). In the first movie of the evening – *Sac la mort* – Parraud takes his audience to La Réunion, where the protagonist Patrice has to face a series of life-altering challenges: He first loses his brother, then his house. While contemplating revenge and trying hard to find a remedy for his problems, Patrice has to also fight for his sanity. With *Sac la mort*, director Parraud has created a social drama with intricate narrative levels showing the realities of modern day La Réunion.

After a short break, the cinematic evening continued with *Maudit!* In this movie,

Parraud focuses on the protagonist Alix who seems to be stuck in a nightmarish state in which he is accompanied by shadows of the past while looking for his friend. The movie invokes the past of an island that has known colonialism, indentured labour, and slavery, sending his audience on a tightrope walk between mysticism and harsh reality. *Maudit!* is a sometimes disturbing allegory on the repression of the island's history that shows how violence and alcohol serve as a means to cover a historic weight that has been ignored for too long.

Following both presentations, Parraud was eager to hear the questions and the reaction to his movies, especially *Maudit!*, as it was one of the first times that he had shown it to an audience. He explained the process of creating the movies and that his motivation to make them was to bring the sociological effects of unemployment and the colonial era of the region to the surface. In both movies he worked closely together with local actors who brought in their own experience.

### Sara Blecher: *Mayfair*

On the second day of the festival, the audience was taken to South Africa. The

film *Mayfair* by filmmaker Sara Blecher is set in Johannesburg and tells the story of an estranged son who desperately wants to break ties with his family's business. However, during a visit back home, he gradually gets pulled back into his father's criminal empire and the audience must watch how his moral compass slowly but surely becomes more and more compromised. In the Q&A that followed, Blecher explained that she wanted to show how money can corrupt and destroy families.

### Sharvan Anenden: *The Comeback – A Tale of Irrelevance*

*The Comeback – A Tale of Irrelevance* was shown on Tuesday evening. In this comedy, director Sharvan Anenden follows three forgotten Bollywood movie stars who try to make a comeback by kidnapping a current superstar during a shooting in Mauritius. They get help from a young woman who herself is aspiring to become a film director. Among other things, the movie beautifully showcases why Mauritius is a coveted vacation spot. Following the screening of the film, Anenden talked about his reasons for choosing Bollywood not only as a topic that is linked to the Indian cultural heritage in Mauritius, and also explained that the implementation of typical Bollywood elements was the idea of his Indian producer. As with his first movie *Les enfants de Troumaron* (*The Children of Troumaron*), the screenplay for this movie was

also written by renowned author Ananda Devi, who made the problem of ageism a central theme of the film.

### Seko Shamte: *Binti*

*Binti* (*Daughter*) is the most recent film of Tanzanian filmmaker Seko Shamte and was the last movie of the 2021 *Cinema Africa* festival. The movie tells the story of four women with very different careers, desires, and social backgrounds in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The film slowly and intricately interweaves the perspectives of all four protagonists. In making the movie, the all-women team, consisting of internationally renowned filmmaker Seko Shamte and the producers, sisters Angela and Alinda Ruhinda, have created one of the few movies that shows a kaleidoscope of women's lives in East Africa. In the Q&A that

followed, Shamte talked about the process of making her movie and why it was important to her to make films with women about women.

Fendler, who has been organising the renowned film festival in Bayreuth since 2007, was happy with the outcome of the 2021 edition of *Cinema Africa*. "Year after year, we are very proud to be able to show the public movies that are usually not on regular rotation in Germany," Fendler explained. "In 2021, however, the movies were also selected because they harmonised beautifully with our series of events on the theme of the Indian Ocean. In doing so, we were able to combine our long-year tradition of showcasing African movies with presenting a part of the Cluster's research agenda and making the Cluster's work more visible in the process."

## AfriKaleidoskop: Afro-European and Afro-Brazilian Identities

As part of the programme *AfriKaleidoskop* established in 2020, the Africa Cluster of Excellence invited the interested public to a new series of films and discussions.

On 19 April 2021, the film and discussion series *AfriKaleidoskop* launched a new round of insightful screenings. The first part of the series featured three showings in the context of Afro-European identities:

- *Afro.Deutschland* – a documentary by German filmmaker and journalist Jana Pareigis,
- *Roots Germania* – a documentary by German filmmaker Mo Asumang and
- *Mariannes Noires* – a documentary by French professor Mame-Fatou Niang and US American filmmaker Kaytie Nielsen.

The movies screened in the second part originated in Brazil. Organised by former Cluster fellow Jonas do Nascimento and part of the subproject *Brazilian (Black) Memories: Renegotiating the Past in the Country of the Future*, integrated into the *Cluster's Black Atlantic Revisited* project, the subseries of *AfriKaleidoskop* invited five filmmakers to show and discuss their work.

All of them are examples of attempts to rescue and reflect on the historical memory of slavery experience and African culture in Brazil, in addition to the absence of black characters in the iconography and Brazilian collective memory. In this space, the Cluster screened and debated films such as:

- *Novo Mundo* [New World] (2020) by Natara Ney,
- *Tudo Que é Apertado, Rasga* [Pressed, It Will Be Burst] by Fabio Rodrigues,
- *Raízes* [Roots] by Simone Nascimento,
- *Egum* by Yuri Costa, and
- *Chico Rei entre Nós* [Chico Rei Among Us] by Joyce Prado.

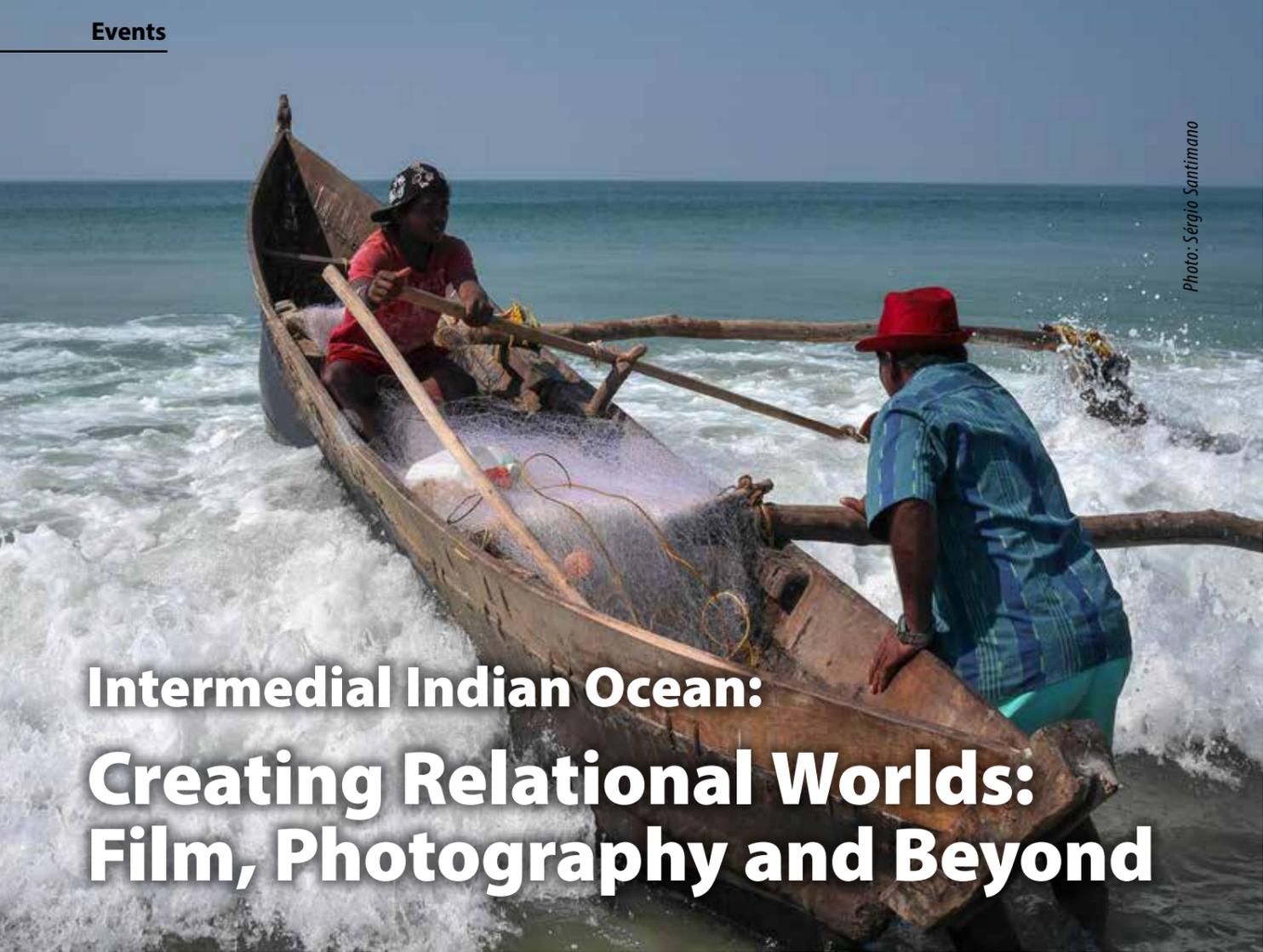


Photo: Sérgio Santimano

# Intermedial Indian Ocean: Creating Relational Worlds: Film, Photography and Beyond

Text SABINE GREINER

**O**n Saturday, 13 November 2021, Ute Fendler and Clarissa Vierke invited the interested public to an exciting and eventful themed day dedicated to the Indian Ocean. Music, films, dance, photography, and poetry transported the audience to the regions hugging the shores of both sides of the Indian Ocean.

Ever since the Tanzanian Abdulrazak Gurnah won the Nobel Prize in Literature, the African region of the Indian Ocean has been on everyone's lips. However, the researchers of the Cluster of Excellence have been working on this region's issues for several years already: Reason enough to organise a series of events focusing on this very topic. In addition to the 2021 film festival Cinema Africa that took place in the middle of November, Ute Fendler and Clarissa Vierke also invited the interested public

to a whole day of experiencing various forms of art and expression of the region and following the discussions around the Indian Ocean.

### Intermedial Indian Ocean themed day

The audience that gathered on Saturday, 13 September 2021, in the Reichshof/Kulturbühne cultural venue in Bayreuth to attend *Intermedial Indian Ocean* was in for a treat; the organisers had come up with a varied and entertaining programme, from music to film and photography to dance and performance. The artists and scholars who had come especially for this event arrived from the Indian Ocean region (Goa, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Zanzibar, and Tanzania) and provided international flair to Bayreuth's otherwise tranquil ambience.

### The Club

The first item on the agenda was the screening of a documentary by film-

maker Nalini Elvino De Sousa and anthropologist Pedro Pombo. *The Club* portrays the life of Goans in Tanzania and the cultural club that unites them. The film team followed families who recounted their memories of the club in Dar es Salaam, from the traditions maintained there to the music they listened to together. After the presentation, de Sousa and Pombo talked together with Duncan Tarrant – a UBT doctoral student working on poetry and performance - about their motivation to make the film as well as the intricate process that was involved.

### Relating Mozambique and Goa

Mozambican photographer Sérgio Santimano subsequently took the stage, discussing his latest series of photographs entitled *Goa/Mozambique – Olhares Cruzados / Crossed Glances*. The photographer, born in Mozambique and of Goan origin, showed images taken in Goa and in the northern provinces of Mozambique (Nacala, Niassa, Cabo

Delgado, and the Island of Mozambique) that recount the memories of families living on both sides of the Indian Ocean. Santimano gave insights into his personal biography and creative process, and also explained that there are very strong connections between Goa (India) and Mozambique, with continuous migratory movements between the two regions. Santimano's works were displayed during the talk and gave insight into the crossed glances across the Indian Ocean, thus explaining the subtitle of his series.

### Sound waves from Madagascar

Next on stage was Tao Ravao, sharing sound waves from the Indian Ocean on his kabosy, a box-shaped wooden guitar, which captivated the audience. Born in Madagascar, Ravao had always been fascinated by the music of the big island and the multi-instrumentalist took up playing the kabosy in the 1980s, which took him around the world (Canada, the United States, Japan, East Africa). His love for Malagasy music led Ravao to become the artistic director and producer of albums by the great D'Gary, Jean Emilien, Senge, and Rajery. He has also produced the albums of Sékou Diabaté of Bembeja Jazz and Ba Cissoko.

### Polyrhythmic narratives: sounds and movements

For the next segment, Kenyan poet and scholar Abdilatif Abdalla and Vierke impressed the audience with an extraordinary performance. They read Swahili dance poetry from the beginning of the 19th century, on whose translation they have been working for some time with a whole group of experts. The poems, rich in images, have been preserved in manuscripts in Arabic script in European and East African archives, and they reflect the performative poetry, music, and dance culture of the western Indian Ocean in the pre-colonial period. The poems also particularly raise questions about mediality – language, writing, performance – and Diaspora – Ngoma dance culture and its wide dissemination throughout the entire Indian Ocean region. With Abdalla reading in Swahili and Vierke in English, the poetry recital, which went back and forth between the two like an exchange of blows in a Western, was made even more dramatic and remarkable by Ravao's musical accompaniment.

### Polyrhythmic gestures

Ravao also musically accompanied the act that followed: a dance performance by Mozambican dancer and choreographer Luis Sala. To the sounds of Ravao's kabosy, Sala interpreted the music with dance and gestures. Sala, whose 25-year long career includes a ten-year stint with the renowned National Song and Dance Company of Mozambique, based his performance on a film clip entitled *Polyrhythmic Gestures*. The film, also shown to the audience, was conceived by Fendler and Sala in the context of Fendler's project on relational imaginaries linking Mozambique with the islands of the Indian Ocean.

### Performance Lecture

After a short introduction by ACC-Moi director Peter Simatei, the audience was presented with another highlight. In her engaging and entertaining performance lecture entitled *Hadithi Njoo: Leso as Palimpsest*, Mshai Mwangola talked about the history of the evolution of leso, a fabric typical of the Eastern African region, as well as some of the social, cultural and political uses of this textile. There is no single textile so intimately associated with the Eastern African region, particularly the nations of Kenya and Tanzania, as the rectangular pieces of cloth known also known as kanga. Popular discourse and much academic research on its origin focus primarily on its emergence in the latter part of the nineteenth century in the Swahili coast seaports of Mombasa (historically known as Mvita) in Kenya and Unguja (the main island of Zanzi-

bar) in Tanzania. In the century or so since then, leso has become ubiquitous in these two countries, and is also found in many others in the eastern African region. The talk explored three reasons for which leso is famously celebrated as "the cloth that speaks". First, most lesos bear a prominent pithy legend inscribed in writing as a prominent feature of the design. Secondly, lesos have played a historic communicative role in several East African communities inclusive of, but far beyond, the Swahili. Leso 'speaks' in a third way as a palimpsest that gives us a glimpse into centuries of the rich history of the Indian Ocean world.

### Draupadi's Veil

The eventful day ended with the world premiere of the film *Draupadi's Veil* by director Harrikrishna Anenden, who was also in attendance. This movie about a mother's sacrifice to save her son who has come down with a serious case of meningitis was shown to the Bayreuth audience. Afterwards, Anenden, who received his training in Nairobi, Antwerp, and London, answered questions from the audience on the making and subject of the movie. Anenden has only been working as a filmmaker since 2005 and has since then directed both documentaries and feature films across Africa and in India, such as the award-winning feature films *The Cathedral* (2006) and *The Children of Troumaron* (2012, co-directed with Sharvan Anenden), which are both based on the writings of the Mauritian author Ananda Devi, and portray life in Port-Louis – the capital of Mauritius.



Photos: Sabine Greiner

## Photo Exhibition: Goa/Mozambique – Crossed Glances

In mid-November, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence invited Mozambican photographer Sérgio Santimano to show a selection of his work in Bayreuth. The exhibition, entitled *Goa/Mozambique – Olhares Cruzados/Crossed Glances*, was curated by Ute Fendler.

Mozambique's history bears witness to the connections between the East African coast, Arabia, and India. Due to their Portuguese colonial history, there are very strong links between Goa (India) and Mozambique, with constant migrations between the two colonies. Within this large contact zone, identities developed as continuous processes of dynamic encounters. Photographer Sérgio Santimano's works are an expression of this encounter, showing glimpses of worlds separated by an ocean and people who are strongly connected. Santimano's photographs taken in Goa and in the northern provinces of Mozambique (Nacala, Niassa, Cabo Delgado, and the Island of Mozambique) recount the memories of families living on both sides of the Indian Ocean.

In November 2021, the Mozambican artist was invited by the Cluster of Excellence to present his work in Bayreuth for the first time. The exhibition, entitled *Goa/Mozambique – Olhares Cruzados / Crossing Glances*, curated by Fendler



Ute Fendler and Sérgio Santimano

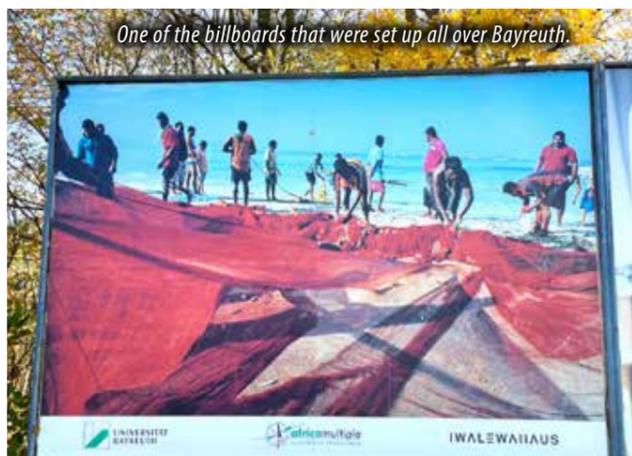
Photos: Sabine Greiner

ler and consisting of 14 photographs, was first presented at Bayreuth's movie theater Cineplex. Presenting the images at the newly renovated movie theater perfectly set the mood for the Cluster's film festival Cinema Africa, which focused on the same topic.

To draw attention to the exhibition as well as to the series of concurrent events taking place, Fendler organised four big billboards with images from the exhibition to be strategically placed throughout the city of Bayreuth. "Due to their size, the billboards impressively showed the unique and re-

markable expressiveness of Sérgio Santimano's work," Fendler points out.

The exhibition was on display at Cineplex Bayreuth until 21 November 2021, before it moved to the exhibition rooms of the Central Library of the University of Bayreuth, where it was shown until the end of January 2022.



One of the billboards that were set up all over Bayreuth.

## Leso Workshop: The Cloth that Speaks

On 15 November 2021, Clarissa Vierke organised a workshop of a special kind: The interested public was invited to join Mshai Mwangola to learn about the leso – a fabric typical for the Eastern African region – and come up with individual designs.

Mshai Mwangola, who with her per-



Mshai Mwangola

formance lecture *Hadithi Njoo: Leso as Palimpsest* was part of the themed day on the Indian Ocean a few days before, was also invited to give a workshop on leso design at Iwalewahaus. On Monday afternoon, 15 November, Mwangola talked to the participants about the history of this traditional piece of clothing and explained the common structure of the cloth as well as its elements and possible iconography. Afterwards, Iwalewahaus turned into a pop-up leso design studio, with Mwangola encouraging her audience to come up with individual designs, which subsequently were presented to the group and discussed.

## Malagasy rhythms and poetry in Bayreuth

Raharimanana performing live at Kulturhaus Neuneinhalb in Bayreuth.

Text and photos SABINE GREINER

**M**usician and poet Jean-Luc Raharimanana from Madagascar visited Bayreuth in December to give a music lecture of a special kind. During *Witness-Islands and (en)Tangled Memories*, Raharimanana played on his marovany and read extracts from his works.

On Wednesday, 8 December 2021, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence invited the interested public to a special evening in a hybrid format. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, only a few people were able to attend in person at the Neuneinhalb Kunst- und Kulturhaus in Bayreuth, but they were joined by an audience online to experience a *lecture musicale* with musician and poet Jean-Luc Raharimanana from Madagascar. Raharimanana had been invited to come to Bayreuth as part of the Cluster's workshop *Multifaceted Relations: Africa-Asia* in July (see p. 33). but the pandemic dictated that his visit had to be postponed until December.

During his extraordinary and engaging performance entitled *Witness-Islands and (en)Tangled Memories*, the Malagasy novelist, essayist, poet, and playwright read, accompanied by the notes of his marovany, a Malagasy zither, extracts from his

books *Tisser (Weave – Éditions Mémoire d'encrier, 2021)*, and *La Voix, le loin. 100 poèmes (The Voice, the Distance. 100 poems – Édition Vents d'ailleurs, 2021)*.

### Raharimanana's works

In the excerpts that he performed, as well as in his other works, Raharimanana often reveals the lingering presence of the violent colonial past of Madagascar. Corruption, political upheavals, and poverty have had a tremendous impact on the current situation of his homeland. He is also a writer and director of theater plays combining performance, music, and poetry. In 1990, his first play *Le Prophète et le Président (The Prophet and the President)* was awarded the Tchicaya-U'Tamsi Prize by the Inter-African theatre competition, but the theatre performance was banned by Madagascar's government due to the political nature of the play. In June 2002, Raharimanana's father Vénance Raharimanana, a history professor at the University of Antananarivo, Madagascar, was tortured and subsequently arrested following a radio programme he hosted that dealt with the pre-colonial tension in Madagascar. Raharimanana writes about the loss of his father in his novel *L'Arbre anthropophage (The Cannibal Tree)*. In 2004 he became the subject of the documentary *Gouttes d'encre sur l'île rouge (Drops of Ink on the Red Island)*.

December 2021 in Bayreuth," states Ute Fendler. "Raharimanana is one of the most relevant contemporary artists of Madagascar and it was an honour to experience his performance live here in Bayreuth."

### Witness-Islands and (en)Tangled Memories.

*From the movements of the worlds, the islands were formed. Convergence of currents. Utopia of the breaths. Raharimanana is aware of the influx of sources in him. Multiple origins, Africa, Asia, the West. An archipelagic identity where history is sometimes violent, but culture always heals and restores. Poetry, music. Reintegrate the fullness of the world and reconnect with the body. To shiver. To be attentive. Drawing from the myths of the Big Island to write a contemporary fable where the ancestors teach the place of the human, living among the living, "humus of the Earth". Describing the dreams of excess of some and the quest for freedom of others. To live then as fibers to weave humanity.*



The Lecture Musicale by Raharimanana was recorded and is available on YouTube.



"We were delighted that Jean-Luc Raharimana was able to be our guest in De-

Clarissa Vierke (left) and Thierry Boudjekeu (right) moderated the evening at Kulturhaus Neuneinhalb.



## GDO ICDL Lecture Series 2021

Text CHRISTINE VOGT-WILLIAM  
and LINDA BESIGIROHA

**T**he lecture series organised by the Cluster's Gender and Diversity Office (GDO) was part of the events that took place in the framework of the Cluster's Knowledge Lab Events. It comprised a number of insightful lectures with renowned speakers.

**Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Thursday 28 January 2021**

**Borders, Occupations, and Bridges: On the Modalities of Radical Feminist Praxis**

On 28 January 2021, the Gender and Diversity Office (GDO) of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence hosted renowned transnational feminist scholar Chandra Talpade Mohanty. Her lecture forms a valuable contribution to the Cluster's Knowledge Lab

forum as part of a steadily growing archive of decolonial and decolonising knowledges that centre Intersectionality and Critical Diversity Literacy (ICDL) approaches. Against the backdrop of the ongoing pandemic, the event took place in a recorded Zoom session. The two discussants, Diana Kisakye (AMC / BIGSAS, Bayreuth) and Thando Njovane (GDO, ACC Rhodes) engaged with the lecture's substance. Mohanty made a case for transnational, anti-racist decolonial feminist work, which involves thinking historically, comparatively, and relationally. It also fundamentally involves addressing cartographies of power and difference. Mohanty spoke of the modalities of relating that the Cluster's ICDL measures defined, like entanglements and networks, and suggested the idea of bridges as a relationality mode along the three key nodes of border-crossings, multiple interconnected histories, and building intersectional social movements.

**The 3-D Dialogues on Diversity, Democracy, and Decolonisation.**

**ACC GDO Round Tables on Democracy and Decolonisation, and Black Women's Knowledge Production in African Continental and Diasporic Contexts: Processes, Politics, and Perspectives**

**22 April 20  
21 and 17 July 2021**

Featuring: Catherine Kiprop (ACC Moi); Eveline Compaore (ACC Joseph Ki-Zerbo); Ndidi Zedomi (ACC Lagos); Thando Njovane (ACC Rhodes); Aminata Cécile Mbaye (AMC, Bayreuth); Christine Vogt-William (AMC, Bayreuth)

The GDO held two round tables in the summer of 2021, the second and third in the series 3-D Dialogues on Diversity, Democracy, and Decolonisation, which started in November 2020.

The Round Table on 22 April 2021 addressed particular understandings of democracy as regards Black women's knowledge politics. The various contributions considered, among other salient topics, the necessity of rethinking academic freedom as being equally accessible to those who may not be readily imagined (i.e., those in marked raced, gendered, and classed positions) in academic contexts from hegemonic positions often coded as white and masculine. The discussants, Akosua Adamako Ampofo (University of Ghana) and Serawit B. Debele (University of Bayreuth) raised two valuable points of engagement: while theorisations of gender hierarchies and relations are undertaken in certain African higher education institutions, the relevance and mobilisation of such epistemic insights for lived realities among young Africans bears scrutiny; the connective relationalities between Global North and Global South understandings of democracy are complicated by intersectional aspects as regards academic, epistemic, and political freedoms. These insights will hopefully spark further conversations, such as how to move diversity work beyond

individuals at the institutional level as regards mere representation to building transformative epistemic communities of praxis.

The Round Table on 17 July 2021 dealt with the necessity of decolonisation and took place at the annual Cluster conference Africa\*n Relations: Modalities Reflected. Drawing on ICDL approaches, the participants examined the modalities of relationality, currently exemplified through the underrepresentation of Black women scholars and their knowledge production in university contexts, a feature common to higher education spaces of both the Global North and the Global South. The discussants, pioneer African feminist scholar, Fatou Sow (French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) Paris/Cheikh Anta Diop University, Dakar, Senegal), as well as Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (AMC, Bayreuth) considered two important aspects of knowledge production: that all scholarly and scientific works have racial, gendered, and classed political dimensions attached, even those purporting to be objective, whereby knowledges and the spaces they are produced in are intersectionally marked – colonially and

(hetero)normatively – as patriarchal and masculine, in sexist and androcentric ways. What became clear in the course of the Round Table was that more critical stances are required towards decolonising knowledge production processes and spaces, especially as regards current neoliberal claims and co-optations of decolonisation as a trope towards implementing diversity, whereby both concepts lose their political purchase when structural power imbalances are not scrutinised.

**ICDL Reproductive Health Symposium, 14th May 2021**

Featuring: Jenny Douglas (Open University, London/St. Anne's College, Oxford, UK); Eunice Siaty-Pallangyo (Aga Khan University School of Nursing and Midwifery, Tanzania); Esmeralda Mariano (Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique); Ghadeer Ahmed (The American University in Cairo, Egypt); Dorothy E. Roberts (University of Pennsylvania, USA)

On Friday 14 May 2021, the GDO Director Christine Vogt-William and Cluster member Valentina Serrelli co-convened

a one-day digital symposium on Intersectional Interrogations of Reproductive Health for Women from Africa and its Diasporas. A keynote on reproductive justice from Dorothy E. Roberts led into a series of conversations which considered how the intersectional complexities of Black women's lives in continental and Diasporic contexts, address the socio-political identity vectors of race, gender, class, geophysical location, socio-economic status groups, colonial histories, and environment effects on fertility, maternal health, sexuality, and sexual abuse. In light of how the current global health crisis has etched in sharp relief the intersections of structural inequalities, this event brought together intellectuals, scholars, and students of Africa and its Diasporas in the framework of Black women's reproductive health. The symposium ended with the screening of and a subsequent discussion of the short film *A Thousand Needles*, which addressed the complexities of women's reproductive health and sexuality. The film was produced by Nikitta Adjirakor, a post-doctoral fellow at the Department of African Linguistics and Literatures at the University of Bayreuth.

**Iyiola Solanke, Thursday 1 July 2021  
Intersectional Interrogations of the Impact of COVID-19 on Black Asian Minority and Ethnic (BAME) Groups**

Iyiola Solanke, Chair of EU Law at the Leeds University School of Law, UK, co-established the Consortium on Practices for Wellbeing and Resilience (Co-POWeR) in Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Families and Communities (BAMEFC). The project explored how the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected people from

BAME backgrounds. Research showed that sociocultural and economic factors during the crisis had considerable mental and physical health impacts on these particular groups, especially in the areas of care politics and care work. Thoko Kaime, Chair of African Legal Studies at the University of Bayreuth, reflected on these findings. Partly drawing from her seminal 2017 work *Discrimination as Stigma*, Solanke spoke about critical race theory (CRT) within the context of CRT from critical legal studies through to feminist legal theory, which challenged the idea that law is neutral yet it does not accommodate the question of race. Moreover, CRT "is very clear that challenging racism must be intersectional. So racism is one of many -isms: sexism, classism, ableism that needs to be taken into account in order to tackle racial discrimination." Keeping the Cluster model of reconfiguring African Studies in mind, the higher education space, too, need to reckon with how structural or systemic discrimination is very much a part of how these institutions are still working (or not) to foster critical care politics and ethics in how they produce knowledge.

**GDO ICDL and Economic Geography Round Table, Thursday 2 December 2021**

**Reconfiguring African Studies, Reconfiguring Economics: Recentring Intersectionality and Social Stratification**

Featuring: Franklin Obeng-Odoom (University of Helsinki, Finland); Nyamekye Asare (Gatineau, Canada); Tanita Lewis (London, UK); Liepollo

Lebohlang Pheko (Johannesburg, South Africa); Abena Daagye Oduro (University of Ghana, Accra); David Stadelmann (University of Bayreuth, Germany); Sara Stevano (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London)

The GDO ICDL Roundtable in cooperation with the Chair of Economic Geography aimed to take the margins to the centre within the grander scale of reconfiguring African Studies and reconfiguring economics. The intergenerational makeup of the panel of speakers greatly enriched the insights produced in this conversation based on Franklin Obeng-Odoom's 2020 book *Property, Institutions, and Social Stratification in Africa*. A key take-away of the session was how the role that feminist economists and African feminists have played in broadening the lens of economics research should be raised above the 'noise' of mainstream economics, even as they are not sufficiently cited in research. Such noise threatens to obfuscate the structural everyday realities of those who live and embody these realities, especially when questions of who holds the power in which context are not acknowledged. Feminist economists were already doing the work in novel ways, by looking beyond statistical variables to uncover the structural and intentional processes that generate and maintain hierarchies. It was, therefore, important to understand that what stratification economics was looking at was a structural and intentional process of under-development, which often presents as the devaluation of Africa and Africans. While there was a lot more to say, the Round Table sparked necessary provocations for many to think beyond mainstream economics tenets. 🌍

The Cluster's GDO team (from left): Marie Tsogo, Director Christine Vogt-William, Linda Besigiroha and Lisa Nagel



Photo: Sabine Greiner

# afriBIAN: Religion in Times of Transition: The Case of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Africa – and Bayreuth

Text and photo MIRJAM STRABER

**It took a long time to finally hold the kick-off conference of the Africa-Bayreuth International Alumni Network (afriBIAN): the conference eventually took place at the end of 2021 under special circumstances.**

In early 2020, the project team of the newly founded Africa-Bayreuth International Alumni Network – afriBIAN – announced the inauguration of the conference series *Rolling Religion on the African Map: Beliefs, Practices and Contentions in Times of Transition*. Thanks to the support of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and funding by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Federal Foreign Office (AA), four conferences in Fes (Morocco), Jos (Nigeria), Dakar (Senegal), and Eldoret (Kenya) were supposed to take place in 2020 and 2021.

A few weeks later, the COVID-19 pandemic started, and the first event, which was to take place in Fes in May 2020, had to first be postponed and later cancelled. One and a half years and numer-

ous virtual project team meetings later, it was finally possible to organise the first afriBIAN event. A one-day conference with the title *Religion in Times of Transition: The Case of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Africa* and a workshop about the future of the alumni network took place from 17 to 18 December 2021. Due to the circumstances, it was a hybrid event in compliance with all COVID-19 rules, and only a few alumni could finally attend the kick-off meeting physically in Bayreuth.

Leo Igwe, BIGSAS alumnus, opened the conference with a keynote titled *A Virus Became a God: The COVID-19 Pandemic and Religious Legitimacy Crisis in Africa*. Three major sub-themes: *The Importance of Religion in Times of COVID-19*, *The Influence of COVID-19 in Everyday Religious Life*, and *Spirituality, Prayer and Healing in Times of COVID-19*, were discussed by other alumni of the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS), who gave presentations on various topical issues, followed by discussions and feedback by the participants online and onsite.

On the second day, the workshop par-

ticipants discussed what the future of the afriBIAN could and should look like – with and without COVID-19. Perspectives of the present alumni and thoughts from future alumni and current students were considered.

How much COVID-19 would influence the (religious) life of the afriBIAN members was demonstrated only two days later. As the participants prepared to return to their home countries, two alumni tested positive for the Omicron variant of COVID-19. This led to the immediate isolation and quarantining of all participants for 14 days. Christmas, in its usual form, was cancelled for everyone. Instead of celebrating the most important Christian feast of the year (for many) with their loved ones, most of the afriBIAN members spent the end of 2020 and the beginning of the new year either alone or with another member of the network. The seemingly adverse situation brought about a heightened sense of togetherness. Thankfully, none of the participants had any COVID-19 symptoms during the whole time of quarantine.

Moving forward, the conference series *Rolling Religion on the African Map* will continue, having received the approval and sponsorship of the DAAD. The first conference in this series is titled *The Idea of Religion: African Perspectives and Planetary Considerations*, and will be held at the Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University in Fes, from 6 to 10 June 2022, if COVID-19 does not have other plans, and, of course, it will be held in hybrid form. 🌍

Before quarantine: the conference dinner with all attendees.





Foto: © Iwalewaha, Universität Bayreuth, Oyelami in front Gbais

# Artist in Residence

## Celebrating a connection over decades — Chief Muraina Oyelami at Iwalewaha

For its 40th anniversary in the summer of 2021, a very special guest honoured Iwalewaha with his presence: Chief Muraina Oyelami, a master drummer, performer, and one of the most important artists of Nigerian modernism, visited Bayreuth for a three-week residency. During his stay, Oyelami produced works on site especially for the Iwalewaha collection.

Oyelami was the first ever Artist in Residence at Iwalewaha in its founding year of 1981 under the direction of Ulli and Georgina Beier, and 40 years later he remains closely associated with the institution. His works remain key pieces in Iwalewaha's internationally important collection of modern and contemporary art from Africa, and Oyelami looks back on a successful international career spanning more than forty years.

His artistic career began in the early 1960s as a member of the theatre company centred around the renowned playwright Duro Ladipo. Oyelami was also a member of the first generation of the Osogbo School,

an art movement established from the workshops held in Osogbo by Georgina Beier starting in 1964. Oyelami's unique style, his sense of delicate colours and the interplay of his forms make his Œuvre outstanding and exceptional. Oyelami lives and works in Iragbiji, Nigeria, where he also directs the Abeni Visual and Performing Art Institute (AVPAI).

Text // Lena Naumann, Felicia Nitsche  
Curator // Lena Naumann, Felicia Nitsche, Ulf Vierke  
Project Coordination and Logistics // Lena Naumann, Felicia Nitsche  
Cooperation // Institute of African Studies

## Pour la liberté – always! — Obou Gbais' mural for Iwalewaha

Standing on scaffolding in the courtyard of Iwalewaha, multi-media artist Obou Gbais, when asked where his vision for the massive mural he was creating comes from, said, "From the soul." Invited as an Artist in Residence for Iwalewaha's programme 'not yet'-that aimed at a critical celebration of Iwalewaha as both an idea and a space.

In the days of the creation, the courtyard became a meeting space where an interested crowd of locals and international guests gathered to watch an idea come to visible life. While the iconic figures of Obou Gbais grew, entangled and interacting, the conversations did as well. In these few magic days art transformed a courtyard into a space of encounters and beauty. "Dan Ambassadors" fill his paintings and murals – representatives of the culture of the Dan. What colonialism did,

among a whole set of evils, was to destroy African people's relationship to the mask as a spiritual interface, as Obou Gbais puts it.

The mural at Iwalewaha is dubbed, Boogie-Woogie / Pour La Liberté. It is a daily reminder that freedom is born from daring to think, act, or dance differently, and from insisting on the right to joy. In the spirit of inclusive aesthetics, the work is also accessible as an audio piece for people who cannot see it. Climbing down from the scaffolding, Obou Gbais looked exhausted and content. His vision and demand – to respect one another, and to finally face the coloniality of the contemporary world, and to oppose it – is here to stay, tirelessly.

Text and Curator // Katharina Fink  
Cooperation // Freundeskreis Iwalewaha e.V.

# Artist in Residence

## Melting, activating — Talya Lubinsky's residency with the Flossenbürg Concentration Camp Memorial

In an intense residency phase lasting several weeks, Talya Lubinsky, artist from Johannesburg, explored the material forms of commemoration of the Shoah. In the project with the Flossenbürg Concentration Camp Memorial, curated by Katharina Fink/Iwalewahauss and supported by the IAS and the Cluster of Excellence, she devoted herself to the materials granite and glass. Through material experiments with granite, which is quarried in an adjacent quarry, she deals with the history of the memorial. The solid material stone, usually used in the service of memorialization, is heated to a liquid substance and thus returned to its

state as lava. In this way, the ossified matter of hegemonic memory cultures is criticized and the question of the nature of historical narratives – especially as contemporary witnesses become fewer – is poetically posed anew. As a true laboratory we will be eager to see where the project leads her to in 2022, when we open a solo exhibition of Talya Lubinsky on site in Flossenbürg. Text and Curator // Katharina Fink Cooperation // Institute of African Studies, Flossenbürg Concentration Camp Memorial, Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence



© Sketch by Talya Lubinsky, 2021



Foto: ©Iwalewahauss, Universität Bayreuth

# A Spiritual Journey

## — Stories in Black and White

Every artwork and every exhibition tells stories. Many of these stories are personal and emotional and a reminder of past events. The exhibition A Spiritual Journey – Stories in Black and White by the artists and curators Temidayo Oyeniran and Loana Oyeniran presents visual stories created through re-living certain emotions.

05.11.2020 –  
28.02.2021

To re-evaluate grief, fear, and sadness, the two artists retraced times in their lives shaped by such (supposedly negative) emotions. They travelled to their inner selves, exploring memories and feelings.

Through this process, which they describe as a spiritual journey, the Oyenirans found that there is more to these experiences than just pain and suffering. Travels through the past reveal immense potential – the potential of healing, of accepting help, of sensibility, of creativity, of growth, and even of happiness.

In various media and forms of expression, and working in the reduced colour palette of black and white, the Oyenirans present a multiplicity of stories in the exhibition rooms of Iwalewahauss. The surrounding walls were

painted black and white, in the colour scheme, but the stories within the exhibition space are told in manifold ways: in drawings and paintings, in a video and sound installation, in a children's book (in both German and English), in an accompanying music playlist, in tactile copies, and in interactive elements.

The aim of the curation and choice of artworks was to create a storytelling exhibition showing that all emotions are valid and important, and that they include moments of joy, hope and self-reflection as well as the potential to make us grow.

Text and Curators // Loana Oyeniran and Temidayo Oyeniran



# Tewa Barnosa

— Cursed and Sacred

Winner of the Iwalewa Art Award 2021

“A war that is not artistically documented will either be forgotten or denied.”  
Tewa Barnosa

Libyan artist and cultural manager Tewa Barnosa has kept this sentence as a reminder to collect and archive materials in the years of her artistic work. These materials are narratives, stories, and events that document the Libyan civil war and its impact on Libyan society.

Barnosa is the winner of the Iwalewa Art Award 2021, which is given to emerging artists from the African continent and its Diaspora for outstanding artistic achievement. The award is associated with an artist residency and exhibition sponsored by the University of Bayreuth International Office and Iwalewahaus.

Barnosa, born in 1998, was raised in Tripoli and currently lives in Amsterdam, where she is a resident at the Rijksakademie for Visual Arts. In her artistic practice, she deals with definitions of identity and belonging, the history of ancient languages and their uncertain futures, and the relationship between written and spoken language and collective memory in the social and political context of Libya and North Africa. The main elements of her artistic production are various forms of calligraphy and texts. Her works range from paper-based works to installations and digital mediums of moving images and sound art.

In her exhibition *Cursed and Sacred*, which was on view at Iwalewahaus from 22 October 2021 to 16 January 2022, Barnosa explores the connections between Bayreuth, known for the composer Richard Wagner and its

Wagner festival, and the civil war in Libya. In the accompanying texts she asks: What does Wagner have to do with the war in Libya?

The starting point of her exploration is the so-called Wagner Group: a paramilitary unit of Russian mercenaries and snipers, deployed to provide military support to the armed militants led by Khalifa Belqasim Haftar – a major player in the ongoing Libyan civil war. According to Barnosa the Wagner Group describe themselves as „musicians of the battlefield,“ playing Wagner’s masterpieces while fighting on the frontlines. The mercenaries, emblematic of Russian intervention in Libya, led Barnosa to conduct exploratory research on Western intervention on the African continent.

Text // Lena Naumann, Felicia Nitsche  
Curator // Katharina Fink, Lena Naumann, Felicia Nitsche  
Project Advisory // Ulf Vierke  
Project Coordination and Logistics // Paúl Bedón, Katharina Fink, Katharina Greven, Lena Naumann, Felicia Nitsche, Ellen Gossel, Manuela Pape, Sefer Polat, Steffen Riess, Philipp Schramm



Fotos: @Iwalewahaus, Universität Bayreuth



## Meet the Art

— Artworks from the Collection of Iwalewahaus in University of Bayreuth Buildings

Meet the Art makes the unique and diverse collection of contemporary and modern art from Africa, India, Australia, and Papua New Guinea visible on campus and in city buildings: The collection is moving from the dark basement into the light.

Artworks are displayed in offices and meeting rooms on campus, decorating hallways and classrooms. In this way, the collection is shared with the public and, even outside the premises of Iwalewahaus, showcases the treasures that the University of Bayreuth houses in its depots. The diversity of the collection is reflected in the selection of its temporary hosts. The future hosts have the opportunity to get to know the artworks more closely and to select the pieces they would like to have on loan; they choose works

that relate to their research interests or personal tastes. The collection thus becomes a link between the university’s employees and its institutional artistic potential.

Art from the Iwalewahaus collection can be discovered at several locations around the University of Bayreuth. On campus, artworks can be found in the central university administration, the central library, GW II, GEO II and RW II. In addition, numerous works from the Iwalewahaus collection adorn the new campus in Kulmbach. Treasures

from the collection can also be admired at the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies in Hugo-Rüdel-Straße 10 and at the Bayreuth Center for Ecology and Environmental Research (BayCEER) in Dr. Hans-Frisch-Straße 1–3.

Text // Felicia Nitsche  
Curator Programme // Felicia Nitsche, Philipp Schramm  
Project Advisory // Sigrid Horsch-Albert  
Project Coordination and Logistics // Felicia Nitsche, Sefer Polat, Philipp Schramm

# New Additions

to the Iwalewaha Collection



## Collection Kristin Diehl    Collection Kleine-Gunk

The currently selection of 24 works is characterised by well-known representatives of modern and contemporary art from Zimbabwe. It is particularly noteworthy that the collection includes many key works and works from creative periods by artists that are extremely difficult or impossible to obtain on the art market. The artists are integrated into Zimbabwe's sculpting scene through their families and teachers.

Taguma Mukomberanwa, the son of the world-renowned Nicolas Mukomberanwa, belongs to a famous family of sculptors.

Or Daniel Gutsa, who came to stone carving through his brother, the sculptor Tapfuma Gutsa.

Itai Nyama, who worked as an assistant to the internationally accepted sculptor Joseph Muzondo in Harare from 1996 to 2000, soon developed his own unmistakable style with a characteristic gossamer stone processing.

In cooperation with the German Embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe, the Kristin Diehl Sculpture Prize was awarded for the first time in 2002. This competition has, over a number of years, enabled the prizewinners to work artistically, at least temporarily, without financial pressure.

This year's selection of 21 works is also characterised by „classics“ and well-known representatives of modern African art such as George Lilanga or Twins Seven Seven. As a result, there are currently more than 70 works by the latter in the Iwalewaha collection. Also extremely renowned in the global art world are the two Ghanaian artists Kane Kwei and Paa Joe, who for decades have been referring to the lives of the deceased with their figuratively designed coffins.

This part of the collection is supplemented with works by stone sculptors from Zimbabwe, including Fanizani Akuda (1932–2011) from the first generation and Davison Chakawa from the second generation, who was initially a student of the leading artist Henry Munyaradzi. Also to be mentioned are Wonder Luke (Wanda Luke), who was inspired and encouraged by the great Bernard Matemera, and finally the sculptor Alice Musarara, born in 1953, who increases the proportion of female artists in the Iwalewaha collection.

Fotos: ©Iwalewaha, Universität Bayreuth



## Collection J. Maurer

The collection, which comprises 39 works, was created over the course of three decades that Jochen Maurer spent working in Africa.

In addition to works by the artist Ben Oyadiran (1930–2013), there are mainly works by the second generation of Osogbo artists. These complement the works of the first generation from the 1960s in the Iwalewaha collection wonderfully.

The second group of works in this collection was acquired by Maurer in Kenya in the 1990s, while a third group of works from Freetown, Liberia, regionally fills a “blank area” in the collection of Iwalewaha.

This collection is supplemented by archival material that is particularly valuable for research, such as artist photos and correspondence.

The special thanks of Iwalewaha and the University of Bayreuth go not only to the artists and collectors mentioned, but also to the Oberfrankenstiftung Bayreuth, without whose support this would not have been possible.

Texts // Sigrid Horsch-Albert



# Art Passport

— Artworks from the Iwalewahaus Collection on Loan in Inter\*national Exhibitions



## Michael Armitage Paradise Edict

04.09.2020 – 18.04.2021, Haus der Kunst München

The young British-Kenyan painter Michael Armitage (born 1984 in Nairobi, Kenya) has quickly become one of the most exciting voices in contemporary painting. In his large-format, nuanced oil paintings, he combines East African and European motifs and painting traditions. He draws inspiration from political events, pop culture, folklore, and personal memories, weaving these into mythically charged and dreamlike images. With Paradise Edict Michael Armitage, who will be awarded the renowned Ruth Baumgarte Art Award in the fall, celebrates his first major presentation in a museum setting and his first show in Germany. Curator // Anna Schneider

Fotos: © c Haus der Kunst, Munich, Photographer: Markus Tretter



Foto: © Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau München

## Stolen Moments Namibian Music History Untold

11.10. – 21.11.2021, Projektraum Kunstverein  
Wagenhalle Stuttgart

The history of Namibian popular music from the 1950s to the end of the 1980s lies in the focus of the cooperation between Iwalewahaus, the University of Bayreuth, and the Stolen Moments Research Group in Windhoek, Namibia.

For the first time in the 26 years after independence the exhibition project, fostered within the scope of the TURN Fund for artistic cooperation between Germany and African countries by the German government's endowment for culture, illuminates the musical culture of the townships which was suppressed and marginalised by apartheid.

The artistic examination of the so far untold musical history not only spotlights the creative work of each and every artist but also reflects on issues of cultural identity, origin, and regional history. In this context amongst others, the exhibition has a focus on the ancestral halls of Namibian popular music through which for the first time pioneering musicians along with their music are made available to the general public.

Curators // Aino Moongo, Sabine Linn, Ulf Vierke

Foto: @Iwalewahaus, Universität Bayreuth



## Group Dynamics Collectives of the Modernist

19.10.2021 – 12.06.2022, Städtische Galerie im  
Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau München

Beijing, Buenos Aires, Bombay (today's Mumbai), Casablanca, Khartoum, Kyoto, Lahore, Łódź, Nsukka, São Paulo, Tokyo: in the 20th century, artists all over the world banded together in collectives. The tendency of like-minded individuals to work in groups and support each other is universal, yet the concerns pursued by these groups, their aesthetic methods, political objectives, and utopian visions express themselves in widely diverse ways depending on the time and place. The exhibition Group Dynamics – Collectives of the Modernist Period examines selected examples to shed a light on the emergence and evolution of collectives and their engagement with the societies and cultures around them. The period under consideration in the presentation – from around 1910 to the 1980s – spans international modernisation movements and anticolonial struggles for independence.

Curators // Karin Althaus, Susanne Böller, Sarah Louisa Henn, Dierk Höhne, Eva Huttenlauch, Matthias Mühlhling, Tanja Schomaker, Stephanie Weber

Foto: © Btihal Remli, Always Say Assalama Alaykoum when you Enter Somewhere



## The Migration of Djinn Chapter One: Codes of Conduct

One buys a bed, lays down a carpet, unzips the suitcase, hangs a clock, and eventually opens the window to the street, which from then on will be called “my street.” With few variations and much more minutiae, the immigrant begins the process of settling into the new home. This new home will be tasked with providing shelter and protection. It is where the most intimate aspects of life will take place: dreaming, remembering, and narrating.

Emphasizing the complexities of this immigrant experience, in *The Migration of Djinn – Chapter One: Codes of Conduct*, Btihal Remli (b. 1987, Germany) works with intimate spaces and rituals. She combines images of domestic, private space and handwritten text to scrutinize the belief in djinn in the Maghreb-Muslim communities of Germany.

Text // Sumeja Tulic  
Curator // Nicole Marina Klug  
Cooperation // Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence

## Publications

Foto: © Tunji Beier



**“Das Archiv als Heimat – Die ‘Fantasie Afrika’ des Kunstpatrons Ulli Beier und der Künstlerin Georgina Beier”** Bayreuth: Universität Bayreuth, 2021. (Greven)

The book gives an insight into the archive of U. and G. Beier, which contains modern art from Africa (and some other countries), documents and photos as well as the institutions they created. Among others it shows their image of Africa refined during their several stays in Nigeria, their role within the emerging art scene and their idea of a ‘modern artist’ all linked to the political climate in the newly independent Nigeria. Their archive is a testimony of their personal search for a place of belonging and existence and their ‘Phantasy Africa’ rooted in the loss of their home and in their self-perception of being ‘outsiders’ on different levels.

Foto: © Iwalewahauss, Bayreuth



**“Diversity Gains – Steppingstones and Pitfalls”** Böllinger/Mildner/Vierke (eds.) Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2020.

Diversity Gains – in visibility, acceptance and creative power, but also in contradiction and complexity. The authors discuss experiences and analyses, practices and politics from European and African contexts in different forms: essays, academic articles and a poem. The topics range from the social differentiation of the Kenyan middle class to inclusive art and culture mediation to politics and experiences of disability, gender, race and sexuality as well as intersectional experiences. All deal with how we recognize social complexity and how diversity could be gains for everyone.

**You are welcome to request the complete list of publication:**  
[iwalewa@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:iwalewa@uni-bayreuth.de)

# Living Together

## — In Memoriam Georgina Beier

Last year the artist Georgina Beier died on July 11, 2021 in Sydney, Australia. In 1981 she and her husband Ulli Beier founded Iwalewahauss in Bayreuth as a meeting place for artists and their works. Together they designed the profile of the house and gave it its programmatic name from the Yoruba: Iwalewa, character is beauty.

**Georgina Beier**  
**\*08.1938 (London) –**  
**11.07.2021 (Sydney)**

Georgina Beier shaped both the content-related character of the house and its aesthetic orientation significantly – her ideas of artistic community and sensual access to art and culture determine the work of Iwalewahauss to this day.

Beier maintained a close contact with the house until her death. The team of Iwalewahauss as well as long-time friends and companions in Bayreuth and the world said goodbye in gratitude to an impressive painter, graphic artist, and sculptor. Deepest condolences go to her family. The obituary from Katharina Greven, Post Doctoral Researcher and Coordinator of Research at Iwalewahauss, who spent a lot of time with Georgina Beier as part of her research, remembers this exceptional woman.

Some people live with and in pictures, with the associated memories, emotions, and people who have changed their own life and work and made it worth living. Georgina Beier was such a person. In her house in Sydney, the last station in her life, she surrounded herself with images associated with her time in Osogbo, Nigeria and Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Her own work hung next to photographs showing her family, and works of art next to everyday objects and handwritten notes. Community and participation in the broadest sense were important to her; in fact, they were of central importance for her work and her self-image as an artist. The fact that this was only possible to a limited extent, if at all, in her last years strained her very much.

In 1959 the young British artist came to Zaria, in the north of Nigeria, ready to get involved in an art scene that was as yet unfamiliar to her. In Osogbo, the place with which her name is usually associated, she found her place of belonging. There she married Ulli Beier and from 1964 to 1967 led a series of workshops that received international attention. She repeatedly rejected the dominant role attributed to her by art history, because for her these workshops were places of

collaboration in which all those involved influenced each other and went on an artistic journey together. Her own works, which were created in the following years and show a change in her formal language, testify to this, as do the long-term, deep friendships that she kept even in old age.

In 1967 Georgina Beier moved with her family to Port Moresby, another place she longed for, with which she connected many memories and close friendships. In contrast to her husband Ulli Beier, she approached her surroundings in an all-encompassing sense. Smells, taste sensations, feeling the environment on the skin – all of this was part of Georgina’s world of experience, which again and again included the community, her steadily growing family. Eating together, creating together, i.e., living together was essential for her, and that she realized in Iwalewahauss in Bayreuth from 1981 onwards. Here she not only maintained close ties to artists but was also responsible for the sensual aspect of every exhibition, every encounter, every house in which the Beier family lived.

I met Georgina for the first time in Bayreuth in 2012 and visited her several times in Sydney in the following years. I also helped her to pack her husband’s photographic estate and her own archive on her career as an artist. Her stories around these images and the long nights on the veranda with a gin and tonic in hand I won’t forget. She was a friend, an extraordinary artist, and a contemporary witness. Now she has passed away, alone in a time when loneliness and social distance dominate. Her pictures will continue to accompany us and tell her story.

I will miss her.  
Katharina Greven



Foto: © by Heidi Herbert 1974 Sydney

# The 2021 Activities of the African Cluster Centres in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa

With the COVID-19 restrictions slowly being lifted in 2021 the African Cluster Centres (ACCs) at the University Joseph Ki-Zerbo in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), Moi University in Eldoret (Kenya), University of Lagos (Nigeria) and Rhodes University in Makhanda (South Africa) were able to go full speed ahead with their projects and collaborations driving forward the Cluster's agenda.



The four ACC directors (from left): Muyiwa Falaiye, Peter Simatei, Yacouba Banhoro, and Enocent Msindo

Text YACOUBA BANHORO

**A**part from conducting its various research projects, the ACC Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso organised various events within its Research Sections (RS) and worked on areas like supporting early career scholars, and strengthening the partnership with the other ACCs.

## RS Learning

Under the leadership of Pierre Malgoubri and Emilie F. Sanou-Ouattara, the RS Learning held a workshop on *The Issue of Languages in Education in Burkina Faso: Bilingual Education and Second Language Teaching* that took place in June 2021. The workshop featured administrators in curriculum development and the implementation of school programmes as well as scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds. The discussions revealed that language choices depend on the quality of the diplomatic relationships of the country with the rest of the world. Burkina Faso – with French being the official administrative and educational language – appears to be an open laboratory where pedagogical experiments take place.

In collaboration with the Institute for Social Studies (INSS/CNRST) the RS Learning organised a training workshop on cultural heritage research in Burkina Faso for 30 doctoral and post-doctoral students that was held from 25 to 26 November 2021. The main objective was to strengthen research capacities on the theoretical and practical knowledge of doctoral students and post-doctoral students working in the field of cultural heritage.

The RS also organised a panel discussion on *Communication in a Context of Crisis: the Case of COVID-19 and Ter-*

## ACC Ouagadougou: University Joseph Ki-Zerbo, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

*rorism* which was held on 10 November 2021. The last event organised by the RS Learning was a panel discussion on *Faced with Fake News, How Newsrooms Are Organising Themselves* held on 16 December 2021. In this panel, four presentations were made by journalists and researchers from Bayreuth and Ouagadougou.

## RS Mobilities

On 17 October 2021, the RS Mobilities conducted a panel to question the practices of pedestrian mobility in the two biggest cities of Burkina Faso to help define research and action on the question. Chaired by Lassane Yaméogo, the panel brought together professionals in charge of communal strategy for pedestrian mobility in Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso, professionals from the Ministry of Urbanism and Habitat, and scholars of the ACC and the University Joseph Ki-Zerbo. In a context of strong urban growth and horizontal extension of the city, people have developed individual modes of transport based on two-wheeled vehicles to the detriment of pedestrian mobility. The decryption made by the panellists made it possible to understand that the city's mobility policy is mainly based on motorised mobility by public transport.

A collaboration with the city of Ouagadougou on the topic is set to be developed.

## RS Moralities

One of the events organised in the RS Moralities was a workshop on *University-Business-Community Relations* held at Bobo-Dioulasso University on 29 October 2021 and organised by Fernand

Bationo. The workshop's concept of a "science shop" is a mechanism linking civil society to the public research sector through collaborative research projects that respond to societal issues expressed by the communities. The aim of this science shop was to highlight the moral issues of collaboration between universities and the community. The university-company-community approach which was presented and discussed was welcomed by the students, who felt that the communities have knowledge that is not valued or is only very little valued by researchers and that university teaching applies little or nothing to the social context.

Under the leadership of Cyrille Semde, a panel discussion on *Technoscientific Progress, Personal Identity, and African Cultures* was organised on 22 December 2021. This multidisciplinary panel brought together a sociologist, a legal expert, a philosopher, and a historian around the question of transgender or bisexual people with the objective of contributing to reflections on the LGBT issues in relation with African cultures.

The last panel discussion with Semde was on the topic *Around the Concept of Generation: Variations in Meaning and Consequences on the Idea of 'Sustaina-*

*ble Development'*, and it was held on 23 December 2021. The objective was to highlight the complexity of the notion of sustainable development based on the multivocal character of the concept of generation.

## RS Knowledges

Two important events were conducted within the RS Knowledges in 2021. The first one was on *Cultural Heritage Knowledge* led by Lassina Simporé and the second an international conference on terrorism from 13 to 15 December under the leadership of Boniface Somé.

The first event was a panel discussion which took place from 3 to 11 November 2021 in the framework of "The Knowledge Café on Cultural Heritage". One of the panel communications of the Café was on *Putting the Cultural Heritage of Burkina Faso in Tourism*. This revealed the potential of the cultural heritage in Burkina Faso to be transformed into a tourism product or a tourism destination. It briefly addressed the legal framework of the tourism sector before focusing on the conditions of tourism development and its impacts on cultural heritage. The other panel was focused on *What Role Can Women Play in the Protection and Transmission of Cultural Heritage?*

The second event was the most preeminent of ACC Ouagadougou in 2021. In fact, this international conference on terrorism united 40 communicators and more than 625 participants, including 116 online. It brought together researchers, teacher-researchers, religious and customary leaders, professionals from the world of associations and NGOs, from Burkina Faso, Mali, Togo, Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, Mauritania, Germany, and France. On the one hand, most of the participants subscribed to the idea of negotiating with terrorist groups using appropriate methods and know-how, but without compromising national sovereignty, people's rights, freedom, and democracy. On the other hand, others did not advise negotiating with terrorist groups as it could be an admission of failure.

## Gender and Diversity

The Gender and Diversity Research Section at the ACC Ouagadougou is led by Fatoumata Badini Kinda and Eveline Compaoré-Sawodogo. They organised a workshop on 28 December 2021 on the preliminary results of an internal research project. This first activity was on *Female Identity and Moral Philosophy in the Academic Profession*. The study documented the experiences of teachers and/or researchers, the causes of frustra-

tions in the academic careers of teachers/researchers, the institutional initiatives put in place in this framework, the forms of constraints and challenges, and the experiences of teachers/researchers.

**Early career**

In order to support the Cluster’s Early Career programme, a seminar for the post-doc and doctoral fellows was organised by the ACC and was co-led by post-doc fellow Emilie F. Sanou-Ouattara. The objective was to allow the fellows to present the results of the research carried out within the framework of the doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships offered by the ACC. During the workshop’s two days, 13 presentations were delivered, covering topics of civil engagement, health issues, children in conflict with the law, road harassment, education, and gender issues.

**Strengthening the relationships with African ACCs**

One of the core principles of the Cluster of Excellence is to strengthen the relationship with both the ACC Bayreuth and the Africa Multiple partner institutes, but also between the four ACCs

in Africa. On this basis, ACC Ouagadougou hosted three scholars from the University of Bayreuth and two from the University of Eldoret, Kenya. These scholars participated in the working groups of research projects. Scholars from partners universities were also hosted by ACC Ouagadougou.

One important aspect of the cooperation was the hosting of the ACC Directors in Ouagadougou between 28 February and 5 March 2021. This was a unique opportunity for the four ACC leaders and the leading staff of different faculties and offices of the University Joseph Ki-Zerbo to physically meet with guests and discuss the importance of academic cooperation in the framework of the Cluster of Excellence.

Two academic fellows from ACC Lagos were hosted at ACC Ouagadougou thanks to the mobility fellowship programme of the Cluster. Each of them came for one month in October 2021 and each presented the preliminary results of his prospective research project. Feyi Ademola-Adeoye presented on *Sankara’s Pan-Africanism, University*

*Students, and the Future of Left-Wing Ideological Politics in Burkina Faso* and Yakubu Moses shared his research on *Premarital Pregnancy and Parturition in Burkina Faso*. For both presentations, the discussions with Burkinabe students and lecturers helped presenters to contextualise their works to better fit the Burkinabe context and consider some aspects which were previously left out.

**Book publication**

Two books related to the ACC funding system have been published so far: One book on COVID-19 which is the proceeding of the conference held on the subject in October 2020 under the co-leadership of ACC Ouagadougou, and one collective volume on the problematic of disease in African written literature.

In the end, the ACC leadership remain very hopeful that more research outputs will come out of the internal small grant research projects as well as the six short-term research projects financed by the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence and hosted at ACC Ouagadougou.

Text PETER SIMATEI

**The year 2021 was very busy for the African Cluster Centre at Moi University, Kenya. During the course of the year numerous events took place and a total number of ten Cluster projects were driven forward.**

2021 was a most active year at the Moi University African Cluster Centre (Moi-ACC). To pick out the most obvious of the events that happened at the Centre: ten workshops (one of them a major regional conference) and 18 seminars were held over the course of a year that also had researchers at the Centre engaged in ten Cluster-funded research projects. There were several other events. For instance, a researcher based in Moi University, Peter Odhiambo Ndege, sadly now deceased, made a presentation in the Knowledge Lab of the Cluster, and Moi-ACC co-hosted the Swahili Colloquium of the University of Bayreuth at which several Moi University researchers participated.

2021 also saw Moi-ACC host two research fellows and one local artist in residence. The research fellows, Ademola Kazeem Fayemi and Peter Oni, are both

scholars of philosophy based at the University of Lagos. Their residencies were most productive, and they continue to participate in the activities of Moi-ACC. A scholar based at Moi University, Bernard Sorre, made the reverse journey and had his fellowship at the University of Lagos, Nigeria.

In the midst of this uplifting release of energy that characterised 2021 at Moi-ACC there was heartbreak. The Centre lost two of its pillars: Omar Egesah and Peter Odhiambo Ndege. The anthropologist and professor Egesah was a Cluster Member, a Principal Investigator who also doubled up as the spokesperson for the Research Section Mobilities and a member of the Moi-ACC Board. The historian and professor Peter Odhiambo Ndege, a scholar of note in Kenya, gave guidance and, especially, mentorship by example to the researchers engaged in Cluster work.

There have been several major outcomes of the intense activity at Moi-ACC over 2021. The first has been the creation of awareness in the East African region about Africa Multiple: Reconfiguring African Studies Cluster of Excellence and its work. This awareness has triggered an important debate on the defi-

nitions, histories, practices, and uses of African Studies in the African academy that is ongoing in Kenya.



Peter Oni makes his contribution at the East African Community: Drivers of Cooperation and Integration workshop on 13.10.2021.



The late Prof. Egesah makes a point at the East African Community: Challenges and Opportunities workshop on 26 February 2021.

**ACC Moi: Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya**

The Cluster’s PI Martin Doeverspeck on a visit at the ACC Ouagadougou.



Table 1: Workshops 2021 of the Moi-ACC.

Date	Title	Convener(s)
25-26.02.2021	East African Community: Challenges and Opportunities	RS Affiliations
26-27.03.2021	Human Agentive Mobility and Identities: Emerging Patterns in East Africa	RS Mobilities
06-07.05.2021	Ways of Knowing: Indigenous Knowledges, Decoloniality, and Worlding of Alternative Realities	RS Knowledges
06-07.07.2021	The Multiplicity and Relationality of Learning in Africa: The Roles of Language, Digital Platforms, and Religious Imaginations	RS Learning
29-30.07.2021	Interrogating Gender and Diversity in Research	Catherine Kiprop, Moi University
06-08.09.2021	On Radical Joy – The 5th Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies Conference	Peter Simatei
30.09.2021-01.10.2021	Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa	RS Moralities
13-14.10.2021	East African Community: Drivers of Cooperation and Integration	RS Affiliations
11-12.11.2021	Art, Aesthetics, and Cultural Productions during the Pandemic	RS Arts and Aesthetics
02-03.12.2021	Tafsiri na Ukalimani: Nafasi na Changamoto Zake	Mosol Kandagor

Table 2: Seminars 2021 of the Moi-ACC

Date	Title	Presenter
09.02.2021	<i>Regional integration, peace, and development in Africa with specific focus on ECOWAS and SADC</i>	Frank Matanga, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technol. Kakamega, Kenya
15.02.2021	<i>Some necessary but incomplete reflections on critical diversity work by a Gender and Diversity Officer of a research community doing African Studies: the beginning of a much-needed conversation?</i>	Christine Vogt-William, University of Bayreuth
16.02.2021	<i>Making films in 21st Century Kenya: a personal journey</i>	Bob Nyanja, Film Director and Producer
16.03.2021	<i>Moralities and Identities of Africa's Urban Centres</i>	Jesse N.K. Mugambi, University of Nairobi, Kenya
23.02.2021	<i>Local Community Interaction and Change in Africa: The case of Hadzabe in North-Western Tanzania</i>	Amani Lusekelo, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
20.04.2021		Damaris S. Parsitau, Egerton Univ., Kenya
04.05.2021	<i>A reflection on the role of naming in constructing gendered ideologies among the Bakiga</i>	Allen Asiiimwe, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda
18.05.2021	<i>Strategies and challenges of communicating gender information in a non-gender marking language: the case of Kiswahili</i>	Iribe Mwangi, University of Nairobi, Kenya
22.06.2021	<i>Morality and Film Censorship in Kenya</i>	Susan Nyawira Gitimu, Kenyatta University, Kenya
27.07.2021	<i>Lockdown Literature: Writing as Intervention</i>	Moraa Gitaa, Writer
10.08.2021	<i>Literary Translation and Knowledge of Language in Uganda: A Contextual Analysis in Relation to Language Preservation and Growth</i>	Edith Natukunda-Togboa, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda
24.08.2021	<i>Kiswahili dhidi ya Ukoloni wa Maarifa katika Afrika</i>	Aldin Mutembei, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
31.08.2021	<i>Regional Integration in East Africa: Past, Present Challenges and Future Prospects</i>	Philip Nying'uro, University of Nairobi
14.09.2021	<i>Globalisation and the Mobility of Ideas: A Critical Analysis of the Academia in Africa</i>	Margaret Nasambu Barasa, Kisii University, Kenya
19.10.2021	<i>A Reflection on Film Pedagogy in Kenya</i>	Rachael Diang'a, United States International University – Africa
22.10.2021	<i>Climbing the Mountain of God: The Multiple Aesthetic in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Kenda Muiyuri: Rugano rwa Gikuyu na Mumbi (The Perfect Nine)</i>	Njogu Waita, Chuka University, Kenya
16.11.2021	<i>Land, Gender, and Personhood: A Moral Perspective</i>	Michael Ntabo Mabururu, Rongo University, Kenya
30.11.2021	<i>Rethinking the Role of the Soapstone Industry in Cultural Tourism in Africa: Experiences and Lessons from Kenya</i>	John Sorana Akama, Kisii University, Kenya

Table 3: Projects of the Moi-ACC

Duration	Title	Directors
18 months	<i>East African Asian Writing</i>	Peter T. Simatei
12 months	<i>Changing Life Projects: African Identities, Moralities, and Wellbeing</i>	Eunice Kamaara
18 months	<i>Framing Identities from Human Agency Mobility on the Kenya-Uganda Highway</i>	Omar Egesah (deceased)
24 months	<i>Regional Integration in Africa: The Case of East African Community</i>	Kenneth K. Oluoch (deceased)
12 months	<i>Mediated and Mediatisation of Islamic Knowledge</i>	Hassan J. Ndzovu
first-year funding	<i>Indigenous Intelligence and Livelihoods</i>	Mosol Kandagor
first-year funding	<i>Pots, Fire, and Gourds: A (Re)presentation of Cultural Knowledge Systems</i>	Justine Sikuku
first-year funding	<i>Ethics and Legitimacies in Modification of Moving Material Cultures in North Rift, Kenya</i>	Joram Kareithi
48 months	<i>Beyond the Digital Return: "New Heritage(s)", Sustainability, and the Decolonisation of Music Archives</i>	Markus Coester, Tom Mboya, Lee Watkins
48 months	<i>Islamic Popular Culture and Public Performance Practices</i>	Hassan J. Ndzovu

Text and photo AKINMAYOWA AKIN-OTIKO

**I**n 2021, Lagos-ACC proved once more to be committed to the Cluster's agenda by encouraging exchange, mentoring emerging scholars and organising various events.

**Early Careers Mentorship**

Lagos-ACC remains highly committed to equipping and inspiring emerging generations of African Studies scholars. In line with this vision, Lagos-ACC hosted its inaugural graduate conference: a two-day event with the theme *Studying Contemporary Africa: Politics, Society, and Decoloniality*. The conference brought together 30 Ph.D. candidates from various parts of Nigeria. The students were able to present their work and receive feedback from established scholars through a series of workshops and mentoring sessions. Lagos-ACC provided accommodation and transportation for the 30 graduate-scholars, a relatively unprecedented provision. At the conclusion of the conference, many of the participants expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the opportunity to participate in such a generously sponsored and well organised event.

In addition to the graduate conference, Lagos-ACC established a doctoral completion scholarship to support PhD candidates in the humanities whose work contributes to reconfiguring African Studies. Since 2020, six students have

received this scholarship, which has vastly assisted them in completing their degrees.

In the second half of 2022, Lagos-ACC will commence its MPhil/PhD programme in African and Diaspora studies.

**Collaboration**

In line with both the conceptual and structural mission of the cluster to have Cluster Centres and Principal Investigators collaborate, Lagos-ACC has used this past year to take advantage of opportunities for the cross-pollination of ideas with other ACCs. In 2022, Peter Oni (RS Affiliations) and Ademola Kazeem Fayemi (RS Morality) completed visiting fellowships at Moi-ACC in Kenya. In response to the call for PIs to collaborate,

Kayode Eesuola (RS Knowledges) and Moses Yakubu (RS Affiliations) took advantage of the mobilities programme, and spent some weeks researching at Joseph

Ki-Zerbo University in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Eesuola researched the theme Sankara's Pan-Africanism, Public University Students, and the Future of Left-Wing Ideological Politics in Burkina Faso, while Yakubu researched the theme, Premarital Pregnancy and Parturition in Burkina Faso and Nigeria: Pre-requisite for Modern Marriage?

**Academic Coordinator's Forum**

In a bid to foster greater collaboration among the ACCs, Lagos-ACC hosted the inaugural Academic Coordinator's Forum from 4 to 8 October 2021. In

attendance were Tom Mboya from Moi University, Kenya, Émilie Sanon-Ouattara from Joseph Ki-Zerbo University, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, and Ayo Yusuff from Lagos-ACC. The four-day programme was conceptualised and led by Yusuff. The programme allowed academic coordinators to compare notes and share best practices for enhancing and supporting research activities in their various ACCs. Lagos-ACC hopes that the Forum marks the beginning of further collaboration to come.

**Cluster Conference**

Lagos-ACC organised two panels for the 2021 annual Conference of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence entitled *African and Relations: Modalities Reflected* on 15 July 2021. The panels had the theme Thinking and Acting.

**Documentaries**

As part of its research agenda, Lagos-ACC has explored different media of disseminating PIs' research findings as they emerge from research projects. Documentaries have been a medium that has allowed the general public to easily access Lagos-ACC's research. In the past two years, Lagos-ACC has produced three documentaries. These include: *Lagos Ownership & Identities* and *African Conceptions of Development*, both by Taibat Lawanson and Abisoye Eleshin, and *Nkuho – The Fattening Room*, a documentary about traditional Efik initiation practices, by Akinmayowa Akin-Otiko and Oluwatoyin Olokodana-James. The three documentaries have reached a combined total of over 12,000 views on YouTube and it is a medium that the Centre desires to pursue further.

**ACC Lagos: University of Lagos, Nigeria**



Members of the IADS with visitors from Moi and the head of Goethe-Institut Lagos Nadine Siegert.



Participants of the Graduate Conference that scrutinized the topic „Studying Contemporary Africa: Politics, Society and Decoloniality“.

Text: ELIJAH MADIBA, BOUDINA MCCONNACHIE, RUTH SIMBAO, ZINZI SIXABA, LEE WATKINS

**The de-escalation of the pandemic and the associated relaxation of lockdown restrictions have presented the Rhodes-ACC with an opportunity to accelerate work in terms of their research endeavours. Below a few initiatives from the projects funded by the Cluster are highlighted.**

**Ruth Simbao**

Ruth Simbao, Professor in the Fine Art Department at Rhodes University, collaborated with Zambian artist, Stary Mwaba, to create a photography essay, “Abapakati: Chinese Intermediaries and Artisanal Mining on the Zambian Copperbelt”. This essay is published in the book, *Visualising China in Southern Africa: Biography, Circulation, Transgression*, which is edited by Juliette Leeb-du Toit, Ruth Simbao and Ross Anthony (Wits University Press, 2022). The book also includes Simbao’s chapter, “A Letter to My Cousin in China: Migrancy and Dilemmas of Burial”, and the Editors’ introduction, “Geopolitics by Other Means: Navigating the Chinese Presence in Southern Africa through Art”.

In December 2021, Simbao and Mwaba ran an artists’ workshop in Kitwe, Zambia, and invited Lusaka-based artists Mulenga Mulenga and Boyd Bishonga to work with Kitwe creatives including Nalipapa Obby, Norton Musonda, and Stephen and John Kalaba. And in April 2022, Simbao filmed the art competition that took place at the new Tazara Memorial Park in Chongwe District,

which is due to open to the public later this year. In extension of this, she is currently creating a documentary film that commemorates the Zambian and Chinese people who died while building the Tazara Railway in the early 1970s. Focusing on artistic interpretations of Africa-China encounters and the Tazara, as well as Zambian and Chinese ways of mourning and commemorating, she is collaborating with the artists Stary Mwaba and Gladys Kalichini, and PhD candidate Binjun Hu.

**Boudina McConnachie**

In December 2021, Elijah Madiba and Boudina McConnachie travelled to Mozambique, Inhambane District, to record a timbila orchestra with a Rhodes African Ensemble Masters student, Venancio Mbande Junior. Timbila instruments are indigenous Mozambican xylophones which are played in both traditional and contemporary styles in villages and cities around the country. In Mbande Junior’s home village of Zavala, they recorded a final recital and new content for an album and this programme was historic for many reasons. Firstly, the recording of a traditional timbila orchestra is unusual, because the art of performing on these xylophone shaped instruments in a traditional manner has not been culturally supported for decades. The orchestras are made up of over seven instruments and are accompanied by carefully choreographed dances. Sec-

**ACC Rhodes: Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa**

ondly, the performance took place in the same homestead on the same site that former directors of ILAM, Hugh Tracey and his son Andrew Tracey, recorded Venancio’s father (Venancio Mbande Senior). The initial recordings were made in Zavala by Hugh Tracey in 1955 and Andrew Tracey followed some years later to visit Mbande senior and record him with his (then) young son, Venancio Junior. Finally, a handful of the musicians playing with Venancio Junior were in his father’s orchestra and remembered earlier field trips by the Tracey family. This collective memory made the recording expedition particularly rewarding and a poignant moment in ILAM’s history. As timbila music and performers become fewer and fewer due, amongst other reasons, to political neglect and globalization, the privilege of recording a full timbila orchestra in Zavala, the traditional home of timbila performance, cannot be understated. This was an honour and Rhodes University is a leading timbila research institute due to Mbande Junior and the International Library of African Music (ILAM).

This trip was the final event in an innovative approach to learning and teaching at ILAM where an African master musician was accepted to complete a Masters degree in Ethnomusicology, based on his musical prowess and skill. Mbande Junior is awaiting his graduation in October where he will receive his Masters degree with distinction.



Visiting Professor Ayotunde Bewaji hosted a public on lecture on The Dire Future of Humanity – the Ubuntu/Omoluabi Alternative to the Destructive Individualism of Western Culture.

**Lee Watkins**

The project “Sounding Africa on the Indian Ocean littoral and in the Southwestern Indian Ocean” headed by Lee Watkins is about researching African music and its vestiges on the Indian Ocean littoral and the islands of the southwestern Indian Ocean. The project commenced in 2020 with the intention of doing research on a particular community of African descendants, a group of people referred to as the Sidis.

In the original proposal for the project, Watkins had intended doing fieldwork only. Following a visit to Reunion in May 2022, however, he realised there is a greater urgency with archiving and publication. The archive in Reunion has connections with other archives that are in a poor state. One such case is in Madagascar where there is great interest in digitisation but no human and technological resources are available. The archive in Reunion, called La Phonotéque Historique de l’Océan Indien (PHOI), itself has poor facilities and their holdings have little protection against the

elements. The research team are in the process of purchasing mobile digitisation equipment so that digitisation can be expanded to Madagascar. Through ILAM they are collaborating with the PHOI as a primary partner – and through them work with the archives in Madagascar, for example. Zanzibar is another island where resources are inadequate.

**Visiting Professor Ayotunde Bewaji**

In July 2022, the Rhodes University African Studies Centre had the privilege of hosting Emeritus Prof. Bewaji as a Visiting Research Fellow, who is currently a Distinguished Researcher at the PJ Patterson Institute for Africa Caribbean Advocacy, University of the West Indies, Jamaica.

As part of the Centre’s seminar series Bewaji hosted a public lecture on The Dire Future of Humanity – the Ubuntu/Omoluabi Alternative to the Destructive Individualism of Western Culture. In his discussion he speaks about the trajectory of human development since the dominance of Western soci-

ety gained ascendancy, and the certain disaster that lurks in plain sight should this Western narrative and tradition continue without let or hindrance. He is particularly concerned about the fact that the dominance of Western traditions has not be fully challenged and this impacts on ways we perceive Africa today. Bewaji referred to the intellectual/mythical legs on which the Western tradition rests which include economics, religion, politics and science. In his discussion Bewaji mentions how Western culture is projected as superior and is universally accepted. He disputes this notion and indicates that these foundations are neither valid verities nor universal, and he further mentions how these set mythical legs of Western tradition are leading the African society in the direction of destruction. However, he offers restorative alternatives in Ubuntu/Omoluabi where he suggested ways of coming up with African Knowledge Systems, emphasizing on the importance of reeducating ourselves in African traditions and channeling our energies into developing the African society.



Left: Artists’ workshop on the Copperbelt, 2021 – Boyd Bishonga with an artwork made from materials collected around the Black Mountain mining slag. Right: Photographer Norton Musonda also participated in the Artists’ workshop.



# FÁBRICA DE IDEIAS 2020/21

PANDEMIAS & UTOPIAS: DESIGUALDADES DURÁVEIS E AUTORITARISMO

Text and photo FÁBIO BAQUEIRO FIGUEIREDO

**Due to COVID-19, the renowned summer school Fabrica de Ideias (Factory of Ideas) in Bahia, Brazil, was divided up into two blocks of online meetings, the first in November 2020 and the second from May to June 2021, both of them streamed via YouTube.**

With a history of more than twenty years, and now collaborating with the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, Fabrica de Ideias is an advanced doctoral school in Ethnic and African Studies organized by the Graduate Program in African and Ethnic Studies at the Centre of African and Oriental Studies (Posafro/CEAO) at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), Brazil.

Up to the end of 2019, the interest of social scholars around the world was focused on a range of broad, concomitant transformations, affecting electoral politics and the restructuring of global power arrangements, the redesigning of human relations, from labour to leisure to love, by new medias and connected technologies, as well as the building of worldwide political agendas regarding our relation to the environment and a renewed impulse to fight racism. The rapid unfolding of the pandemic situation added to this already complex picture, speeding up some of these processes while other trends were hindered, halted, or even reverted. Governments and media corporations enjoyed broad popular support when implementing new forms of personal surveillance and data collection as tools to control the spread of COVID-19. The redefining of labour relations, already under the impact of 'Uberisation', was intensified by remote work as much as by tax-funded direct payment schemes. Social isolation affected gender roles, family relations, and all sorts

of activities that depended on physical interactions, including religion, schooling, or shopping. Race, class, gender, nationality, and other social hierarchies certainly implied that these new realities have been experienced in quite different ways within societies and throughout the globe.

Continuing the conversation initiated in the previous year, the Fabrica de Ideias decided to further explore the social implications of the pandemics in the second bloc of our summer school. Limitations to mobility were taken as an opportunity to experiment with the field of digital humanities, deploying a cheap, open-access technological package to deliver a global graduate-level course attended by a global audience. In the first session, epidemiologist Mauricio Barreto (Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, Bahia, Brazil) and social scientist Dzodzi Tsikata (University of Ghana) introduced this year's major theme, Pandemics and Inequalities. Along the next few weeks, the summer school featured a series of

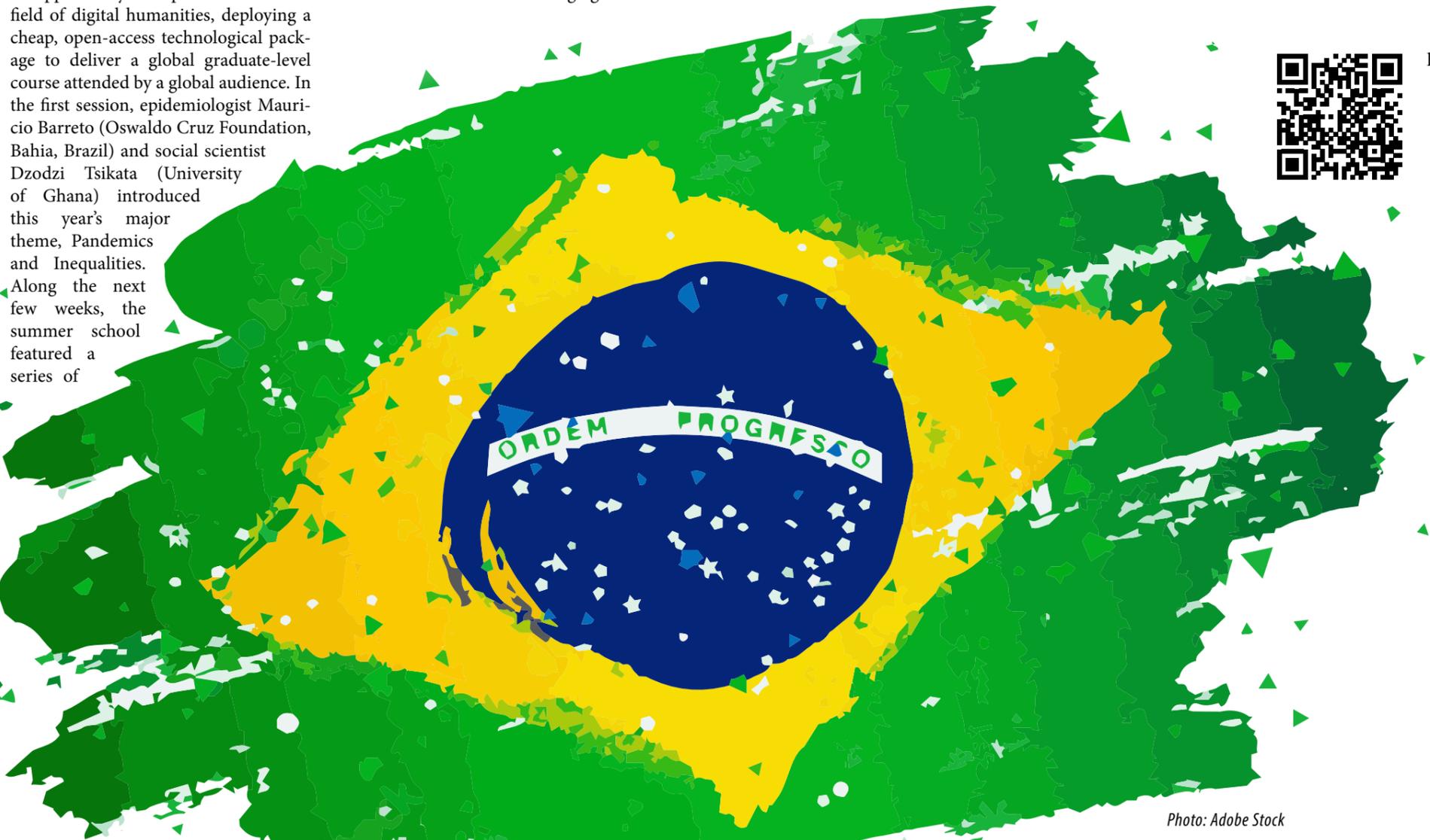
panels that brought together some 30 scholars from a dozen countries in the Americas, Africa, Europe, and Asia. The webinars related pandemics to a broad range of issues such as xenophobia, racism, biopower, and necropolitics, shifting biomedical concepts, gender, identity, infodemics, and fake news. The last session, delivered by political scientist Kayode Eesuola (University of Lagos, Nigeria), and sociologists Elisio Macamo (University of Basel, Switzerland) and Claudio Furtado (University of Cape Verde (UNICV), Brazil), discussed methodological innovations within the social sciences emerging from

forced isolation, heightened connectivity, and the whole new set of research problems brought about by COVID-19. The program also included a three-session mini-course on the social history of pandemics and epidemics, focusing on colonial-occupied Africa, given by historian Valdemir Zamparoni (UFBA).

Summer school participants were selected from among PhD students around the world, who joined the conversation in Zoom virtual rooms. The meetings were also streamed via YouTube to the general public, and remain freely available. The activities were conducted in both Portuguese and English, with simultaneous translation provided to participants as well as to YouTube viewers. For the second year

in a row, the online format was a great success, with around a hundred people live, and later views totaling another two hundred on average. All speeches and debates were transcribed and will soon be turned into an edited volume within

the open-access Afrofuturas book series, published by Posafro/CEAO. The series' first volume, on the conferences delivered in 2020, was launched during the summer school and can be freely downloaded from our institutional repository:



<https://repositorio.ufba.br/handle/ri/33935>

The Coordinating team of the Fábica de Ideias is formed by:

- Lívio Sansone** (UFBA)
- Jamile Borges** (UFBA)
- Omar Ribeiro Thomaz** (UNICAMP)
- Claudio Furtado** (UNICV, Cape Verde)
- Antonio Evaldo Almeida Barros** (UFMA)
- Fábio Baqueiro Figueiredo** (UNILAB)
- Felipe Fernandes** (UFBA)
- Patrícia Godinho Gomes** (UFBA).

The conferences are available on YouTube:



Photo: Adobe Stock



Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies

# BIGSAS Status Quo 2021

Text JULIUS JUNGINGER

**D**espite further restrictions due to the pandemic, the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) was able to continue its work within the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence and thus looks back on a successful year 2021.

Following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020, the succeeding year, 2021, was likewise dominated by pandemic-related restrictions. Access

regulations for premises of the University, online and/or hybrid event formats, etc. forced BIGSAS to adjust in their day-to-day work. However, thanks to its well-structured organisational and academic framework, BIGSAS was able to assist its doctoral candidates, the Junior Fellows, in these demanding times. Nevertheless, 2021 was another challenging year for the doctoral candidates, their supervisors, and the administrative team.

### Eleven new doctoral candidates from six countries

The high level of interest in the grad-

uate school is reflected by a stable number of newly admitted doctoral candidates. In 2021, eleven new Junior Fellows were welcomed at BIGSAS. The slightly lower number of new Junior Fellows, compared to previous years, was influenced by the pandemic and its global impact. This downturn is not confirmed in any way when the high number of intakes for early 2022 is considered. The new doctoral candidates come from Burundi, Egypt, Germany, Mali, South Africa, and Uganda. By the end of 2021, the total number of Junior Fellows at BIGSAS reached

The 2021 group of BIGSAS Junior Fellow included:  
 (First row left to right:) Ange Dorine Irakoze, David Malluche, Eileen Jahn, Hasnaa Essam  
 (Second row:) Monika Rohmer, Saskia Jaschek, Tibelius Amutuhaire, Yifan Mia Yang  
 (Third row:) Isabelle Zundel, Patricia Pinky Ndlovu  
 Not depicted: Bintou Koné

75, from more than 25 different countries. The great majority of the Junior Fellows, 42, come from Africa, followed by 28 from Europe, four from Asia and one from South America. The gender distribution within the Junior Fellows displays a shift towards a more feminine group. Women make up 55% of the Junior Fellows, while 45% are men.

The Covid-19 pandemic's influence on BIGSAS can additionally be seen when contemplating the application numbers. In 2021, BIGSAS received 48 applications, most submitted by candidates interested in one of the DAAD Graduate School Scholarship Programme (GSSP), scholarships for female researchers based on the African continent. At the end of 2021, BIGSAS filed another call for applications for two scholarships to be awarded in 2022 to female scholars from Africa.

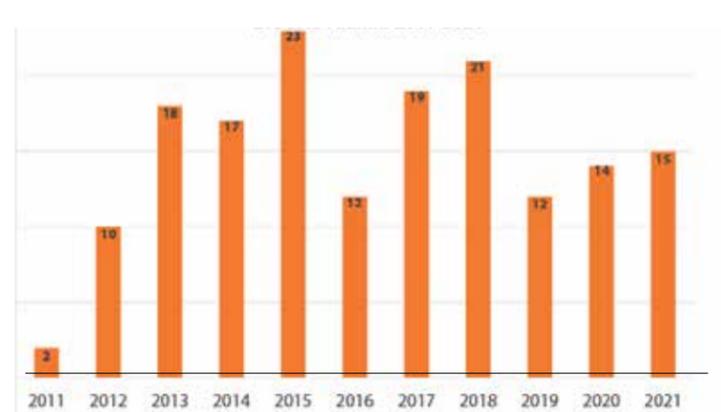
### BIGSAS alumni network

The other pillar besides the Junior Fellows, which makes up the unique and career-oriented BIGSAS network are the alumni. The BIGSAS alumni network, which provides a platform for the graduates to exchange ideas and make use of synergies, is steadily growing. Thanks to 15 successful doctoral defences, the number of alumni climbed to 171 from more than 30 different countries, mostly from the African continent. Multiple BIGSAS alumni published their dissertations with well-known publishers in 2021, including the Nomos Verlag - Politik und Gesellschaft in Afrika (Baden-Baden) or the Rüdiger Köpper Verlag (Berlin).

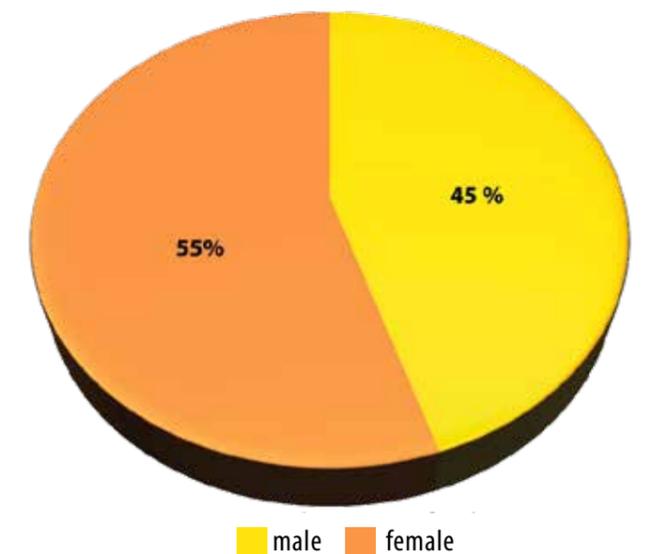
### Another year with fruitful events and workshops

Consistent with its goal to provide conditions for a successful doctoral completion, BIGSAS offered a diverse portfolio of workshops for the Junior Fellows. The doctoral candidates benefited from workshops on media training, proposal writing, and presenting at international conferences. In addition, Junior Fellows were invited to present their scientific work at BIGSAS colloquia taking place online and in a hybrid mode throughout the year. These are unique platforms for all Junior Fellows and senior researchers to engage in an interdisciplinary dialogue of mutual benefit. The foundation for further successful work in a rapidly changing environment was laid at the General Assembly of BIGSAS in December 2021. During that meeting, the new BIGSAS Steering Committee Members were elected.

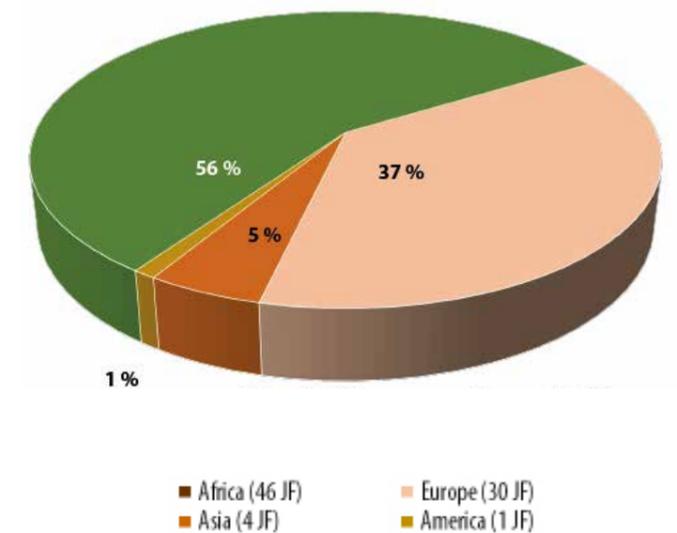
BIGSAS ALUMNI 2011 – 2021



GENDER RATIO JUNIOR FELLOWS



REGION OF ORIGIN JUNIOR FELLOWS



# Post-BIGSAS Trajectories

**The alumni of the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) are found in nearly every part of the world and engage diligently in a wide spectrum of academic and non-academic endeavours. We caught up with two BIGSAS alumni to shed light on their times in BIGSAS and the impact of that institution on their career paths and intellectual visions.**

Text MERON ZELEKE ERESSO  
and DUNCAN OMANGA

## Meron Zeleke Eresso: BIGSAS, a Decisive Juncture of My Academic Journey

My PhD journey in BIGSAS starts with the very history of BIGSAS itself, as I was part of the first batch of PhD candidates admitted in 2008. I treasure the golden days in BIGSAS, an institution which paved the way for my academic career. Developing the individual Research and Training Plan (IRTP) in the first three months of our arrival in a context where we did not have any precedence and prior experience to draw on was challenging but very rewarding. This require-

ment helped us all to develop both the sense of autonomy as well as responsibility in coming up with a well-thought-out individual training and personal development plan. This unique approach in BIGSAS empowers the graduate students in such a way that by giving them the opportunity to make a self-assessment and identify their existing strengths and weaknesses and further enables them to suggest strategies to address their needs. The lively academic environment in and around BIGSAS, the dynamic working groups, engaged discussions at the colloquia, and the spirit of cooperation were all the assets on which we capitalised. Having been elected on two rounds and serving as the international student representative at the academic commission at that earlier phase of the graduate school was an edifying experience.

I graduated in 2012 and my longtime dream of joining the oldest and elite university in my home country Ethiopia was realised. I left BIGSAS in 2012, I joined my home institution, Addis Ababa University, where I am currently teaching and supervising several graduate students at Masters and PhD level. I was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor in 2018. I received numerous international and national awards and research grants, including two rounds of prestigious postdoctoral fellowships from Volkswagen Foundation, a fellowship from the World Academy of Science (TWAS), a research fellowship from the International Peace Research Foundation (IPRF), a fellowship from DFG, an award for young female scholars from Addis Ababa University, a fellowship from Social Science Research Council (SSRC), and several others.

I have also had international teaching

and guest scholar opportunities in Europe, Asia, and North America such as at the University of Singapore, California State University, Georgetown University, University of Cologne, and the University of York in Canada. I am actively collaborating with a team of international researchers in several international research projects, including a project funded by the Norwegian government, an ongoing research project being conducted by the Danish Institute of International Studies (DIIS), an ongoing project funded by the UK Global Challenges Research Fund Migration for Development and Equality (MIDEQ), and a Volkswagen-funded research project where I am currently leading the Ethiopian component of the project as a Principle Investigator (PI).

Since my graduation, I have extensively published in internationally renowned peer-reviewed journals on a wide range of topics and have authored and edited books and journals, contributed chapters to several edited volumes, and entries in encyclopedias, including the Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African history. I am an international editorial board member of Islamic Africa (Brill) and the Editor-in-Chief of the Ethiopian Journal of Human Rights. I also have also extensively consulted different international development organisations including the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the World Bank, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the African Union, and more. In recognition of my academic achievements, I am on AcademiaNet, a database of profiles of excellent women researchers from all disciplines. 🌍

## Duncan Omanga: On my Post-BIGSAS Journey – Notes from a Recovering Academic

It was in a cybercafé in the dusty Kenyan town of Narok that I first read through the details of this graduate school in Germany located in a town that I thought was pronounced 'Beirut'.

I made the application and was invited to an interview at Moi University's School of Arts and Social Sciences. By mid-April 2009, I checked into Bussardweg Hostel to begin my doctorate under the tutelage of Said Khamis, and later Jurgen Mueller. At BIGSAS, I would later meet colleagues from all over the continent. I wrote a thesis probing the framing of terrorism in Kenyan newspapers and editorial cartoons.

During my doctoral journey in Bayreuth, I was privileged to be joined by my wife and toddler son. My daughter was born in Bayreuth in the wintry Christmas week of 2010, and it was such an honor and privilege that they were part of my studies. I think I must have been the first BIGSAS student to have my family come from abroad to stay with me while I studied, a practice that became fairly common afterwards.

Generally, academic life at BIGSAS was vibrant, but at the time the faculty was not diverse, and scarcely represented the idea of an 'African Studies' Centre. In the entire programme, it was only Said Khamis who was from Africa. As a consequence, some of the broader intellectual framing that dominated the graduate school seemed two or three times removed from our experiential frame. I also got the impression that because of this, this overall intellectual framing swung from extreme abstraction, to research concerns that barely spoke to the pressing, quotidian lives of Africans, in Africa. There was also some incongruity between regional faculty expertise and junior fellows' work. Mercifully, BIGSAS offered numerous opportunities to attend conferences and summer schools that would ordinarily fill those gaps. Also, generous funding allowed for rich and extensive fieldwork that was simply unparalleled in Europe. It is through BIGSAS-funded conferences that I was able to forge intellectual networks in and outside Germany.

We left Bayreuth for Kenya at the end of October 2013, two months after my final dissertation defense. In Kenya, an application to a lecturer's position I had made in 2012 'matured' and I was invited for an interview and eventually got the job in a place that had all the familial markings. Although I never took up the post-doctoral fellowship, I applied for an 'in-country' post-doc with the Social Science Research Council's African Peacebuilding Network (APN). From this experience, I found the value of funding African researchers in their own countries. In 2015, I won one of the Cambridge African Fellowships with the University of Cambridge's (UoC) Centre for African Studies. The fellowship furthered my interests in social media, community policing and shifting forms of local governance in Kenya.

In 2017, the African Studies Association of the United Kingdom (ASAU) selected me to become that year's Mary Kingsley Zochonis Memorial lecturer, an award given to an early career Africa-based researcher. At the end of 2017, I was the first recipient from Africa to win the inaugural Facebook Protect and Care Research Awards (December 2017). The research award was worth \$50,000. In September 2018, I was back at UoC after winning a British Academy-funded visiting fellowship, during which I worked on a research project on Facebook and everyday policing in Eastlands, Nairobi. Meanwhile, I had since been appointed the chair of the media and publishing department at Moi University's School of Information Sciences. My family had grown, and my wife Pamela had also completed her doctorate from BIGSAS in 2015 and was a lecturer at Kisii University in Kenya.

However, between 2017 and 2018 I confronted a dilemma which many of my colleagues in Africa face. I was constantly away from home owing to the trajectory of my career. I felt I needed a job that would require less 'prolonged' travel, yet offering flexibility to do research in Africa, more time with family, and, of course, a chance to reclaim my 'sanity'. When the New York based Social Sciences Research Council (SSRC) sought to fill the position of a programme officer for its Africa Initiatives Department, I knew this was the ideal job. I applied and got the job. I moved to New York in 2019. The SSRC has over 24 programmes, and



Duncan Omanga

my main role is helping the programme director run the council's two Africa focused programmes namely, the Africa Peacebuilding Network (APN), and the Next Generation Social Sciences Africa (NextGen). As a former APN grantee, I was pretty familiar with the expectations of the job. The APN supports mostly post-doctoral independent African research on African countries as well as the integration of African knowledge into global policy communities. On its part, NextGen operates to strengthen tertiary education in Africa by offering a sequence of fellowship opportunities for promising PhD students based on the continent.

My main tasks involve sending out calls for our doctoral grants to Africa, doing outreach with African universities, and mounting a team of reviewers to evaluate proposals sent to us. We also organise methodology and writing workshops with African universities and research institutions. I also get time to do my own research. My BIGSAS network has been a great resource in getting some of this work done. Already, we have about twenty BIGSAS alumni from across the continent helping with reviewing our competitions each year.

As a programme officer at the SSRC charged with the day-to-day management of the NextGen programme, the BIGSAS academic network is an invaluable resource in supporting and nurturing the next generation of African social scientists in Africa. 🌍



Meron Zeleke Eresso



# An Ongoing EIMAS Journey

From Bayreuth via Bordeaux to Porto and back – the Coordinator’s Perspective

Text MIRJAM STRABER

**M**irjam Straßer reports on the arrival of the first European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies (EIMAS) students at Bayreuth under lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The year 2021 was something very special because the University of Bayreuth, or at least I, the coordinator of EIMAS, eagerly awaited the arrival of the first cohort of EIMAS students in Bayreuth. Thirteen students from twelve different countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America had successfully finished their first EIMAS semester at the University of Porto and were – some more, some less – looking forward to leaving the rainy second biggest city in Portugal to continue with the summer semester in Germany (Reminder note to myself and all other coordinators of international programmes: Be careful with the use of the word “summer” ...!).

Almost all students arrived as planned in Bayreuth at the beginning of April.



EIMAS students and staff on an excursion to Nuremberg in May 2021.

Nothing else unfortunately worked as planned. COVID-19 was still an issue and the Welcome Week in Bayreuth, which was one of the highlights during the first semester in Porto, could not happen at all. Meetings could only take place in “household sizes”, and I could only offer the students either a welcome breakfast or dinner in small groups in my not-too-fancy kitchen.

Additionally, the city did not show its best side: The summer semester started with temperatures around the freezing point and snow. Perhaps it was fate that during one of the coldest springs that I can remember COVID-19 happened at the same time so that nobody had to leave their warm rooms to go to the campus.

Even when the temperatures finally went up, COVID-19 did not feel like disappearing and the classes continued online until late June. On 29 May, after the COVID-19 regulations had been eased for gatherings outdoors, the first EIMAS excursion to Nuremberg could be or-

ganised. It was quite exciting for everyone to see the others in person and not only on the screen, and there were obviously a lot of things to talk and laugh about. The 90 minutes allotted were not sufficient at all for walking around the Nazi Party Rally Grounds and the Great Dutzendteich Lake (Reminder note: It is probably not the very best idea to confront international students with Germany’s dark past in the first official “fun event” ...).

After having seen all these monuments to megalomania, we visited the old town of Nuremberg with its castle, until some people’s feet could not carry them anymore (Reminder note: Some students do not like discovering each and every thing on foot ...).

After this long day and so much – in COVID-19 almost atypically – fresh air, we really needed the hearty dinner we got, to everyone’s satisfaction, at the Ethiopian restaurant “Shashamane” in Erlangen. (Reminder note: Go there with every cohort, this is the place to be!)

What I also learnt after these few weeks with the EIMASers: There is almost nothing that can make students happier than giving them food.

In mid-June, the sun finally decided to prove that it is more than just a light in the sky, and that it can actually make Bayreuth a warm, if not to say hot, place. It was time for the first EIMAS BBQ! But instead of thanking their coordinator for a nice afternoon and evening, everyone just fell in love with Mr. Gardener ...



By reading this summary of activities, one could think that EIMAS is just about fun, but actually the students, of course, also worked hard and learnt a lot! In July, we invited two guest scholar to give workshops, which the EIMASers attended in addition to their already full timetable. Lamine Doumbia discussed with them The Partition of Africa by using a social anthropological perspective, and Cornelius Were Okello gave them An Introductory Look at the Geography of Africa in his two-week workshop.

In July, after a get-together at Iwalewaha, where the EIMASers got the chance to meet other students and lecturers, their second Master’s semester at the University of Bayreuth ended.

The students continued their EIMAS journey to southwest France, where their third semester started at Bordeaux Montaigne University. To make sure that none of them got lost on their way, and in order to meet the French colleagues for the first time, I accompanied them to Bordeaux, where it was time to say goodbye to them. I also had to leave after a few days because the next cohort of

EIMASers was already waiting for me in Porto.

Sixteen new students from 14 different countries were waiting in the wings, ready to start their EIMAS adventure. During their Welcome Week in one of Portugal’s most beautiful cities, they not only got to know the university, the city, Portuguese cuisine and culture, but also the EIMAS staff and, last but not least, themselves. In December, the first and the second cohort of EIMAS students met for the first time. Fully organised by the first cohort, the first EIMAS winter school on Economic Integration in Africa: Prospects and Challenges took place at Bordeaux Montaigne University from 1 to 2 December 2021. Students, professors, and several guest speakers discussed, on-site and by attending the event virtually, the winter school’s main themes:

- Trajectories of economic integration in Africa: Lessons from the economic blocs
- Regionalisation from below: The role of the African private sector in economic integration
- Regional integration to landlocked countries: The importance and relevance of the integrated transport infrastructure
- The potential impact of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) on Africa’s socio-economic transformation in Africa
- Economic integration in the face of a globalised economy: Foreign direct investment (FDI) in Africa

One hybrid assembly of the EIMAS Advisory Board with the students and the first physical Executive Committee Meeting later, it was again COVID-19 which brought 2021 to an unexpected end: the author of last year’s EIMAS contribution for the NAB, Edidiong Ibanga, and this year’s writer had to spend Christmas and New Year in isolation together. The EIMAS family holds together, voluntarily or not ...

The first EIMAS Winter School took place in Bordeaux in December 2021.





## Model African Union Bayreuth Conference 2021: Made in Africa

Text LUENA ABIGAIL PIMENTA RICARDO

**R**esilience, networking and teamwork were the great drivers of the Model African Union (MAU) Bayreuth 2021 Conference (BAYMAU21). From 3 to 6 June, the association Model African Union Bayreuth e.V. hosted its 5th annual conference, with the theme *Made in Africa: Innovations, Concepts, and Solutions for the Challenges of Our Time*.

After a year's pause due to the COVID pandemic and social distancing rules, the conference took place online for the first time. It brought together participants from all over the globe in a format that combined speeches, workshops, panel discussions, a movie night, an MAU art space, an entrepreneurship forum, and the traditional African Union simulation.

The presidents of MAU Bayreuth in 2021, Chengetai Choto and Dyoniz Kindata, were chairpersons of the MAU simulation of the African Union. The activity had a number of diverse delegates who were able to discuss different topics in one of four selected committees. The theme *Made in Africa* was chosen to foster multiple discussions related to Africa's potential. This year, there was an exceptionally large number of distinguished guest speakers: Salah S. Ham-mad (Sudan), Gina Blay (Ghana), Ad-jany Costa (Angola), Edmilson Angelo

(Angola), Adhieu Majok (South Sudan), Hamza Ghedamsi (Tunisia) and Car-oline Aluoch Obure (Kenya).

The event had engaging panel discussions. The first discussion, called *Emerging Worlds of African Imaginaries*, was moderated by Pedro Affonso Ivo Franco (Brazil), a consultant for cultural and creative industries. This panel discussed the importance of traditions in African cultures, the relationship between these traditions, and the role of tradition and innovation in shaping and reshaping the way the world perceives Africa's past, present, and future. The second panel discussion, called *Music, Film, and Arts from Africa to the World*, was moderated by Jeannot Moukouri Ekobe, from the Graduate School of Language and Literature at Ludwig Maximilian Uni-versität (LMU), Munich. The panel discussion focused on the issue of art as a catalyst for building a positive image of Africa and posed the hypothesis that the symbolic domain (art) is a more effective ambassador of Africa's image than the purely political domain. The discussion was infused with ideas of how art/imagination can participate in the production of a positive and conquering image of Africa, an image that can slowly disseminate to the subconscious of all to influence the perception the world has of the continent.

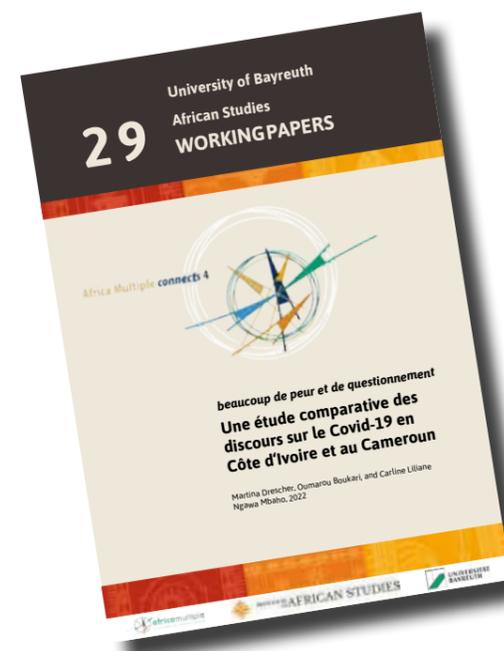
During the entrepreneurship forum, possible improvements to the conditions for African entrepreneurs were discussed. A

space for entrepreneurs in Africa and in the Diaspora to present their brands and discuss their journeys was offered, creating a safe arena for sharing their challenges and next moves with their businesses. Following MAU's tradition, a movie night was held, showing *Atlantics* (2019), by the director Mati Diop, followed by engaging discussions. Twenty workshops offered the participants exciting and diverse themes concerning Africa and guaranteed a vibrant exchange of ideas. The MAU Art Space in 2021 was a collaboration with the South African-German artist Mduduzi Khumalo. The intervention *Black Bodies in Bayreuth* (available on MAU's YouTube channel) reflected on education and opened new pedagogical spaces. Furthermore, the artist prepared a virtual reality -space for the immersion of the participants during the digital conference.

The BAYMAU21 Digital Conference proved how valuable MAU's platform is to fostering discussion among people interested in African affairs. The online format amplified the event's audience, guaranteeing a truly diverse and rich space for discussions and learning experiences. The lessons from this experience will be considered for MAU's next events and will ensure the continued success of this engaging event on Bay-reuth's calendar. Stay tuned for the 2022 Conference, to be held this year in October. If you would like to participate and organise it, visit [www.modelafricanunion.de](http://www.modelafricanunion.de) for further information. 🌍



INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES  
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### University of Bayreuth African Studies Online

University of Bayreuth African Studies Online presents results of Africa-related research at the University of Bayreuth. Publications include articles, edited collections, and single authored monographs – including but not limited to PhD-theses.

The series is registered under ISSN 2628-1791 in the online catalogue of the University of Bayreuth library. Submitted documents are subject to external double-blind review.\*

The editor-in-chief is Dr. Lena Kroeker ([Lena.Kroeker@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:Lena.Kroeker@uni-bayreuth.de)).

\*PhD theses submitted at the University of Bayreuth are not subjected to further review. This facilitates a fast publication process within a series of University of Bayreuth African Studies.

### The IAS Online Publication Series

The Institute of African Studies (IAS) promotes and coordinates the multi-disciplinary field of African Studies at the University of Bayreuth. The IAS publication series provide Bayreuth-based and visiting scholars with opportunities to publish their work on ongoing research and completed projects.

IAS Online Publications are uploaded on the Epub document server at the University of Bayreuth library. They are open access and connected to all common search engines.

### University of Bayreuth African Studies Working Papers

University of Bayreuth African Studies Working Papers present insights into ongoing research projects in the field of African Studies at the University of Bayreuth and beyond.

In addition to the main series, there are three subseries: *Africa Multiple connects*, *Academy reflects* and *BIGSASworks!*.

IAS members, scholars from the University of Bayreuth as well as national and international cooperation partners are welcome to submit their work to these series. Submitted documents are subject to internal peer review.

The editor-in-chief is Dr. Jane Ayeko-Kümmeth ([IAS@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:IAS@uni-bayreuth.de)).



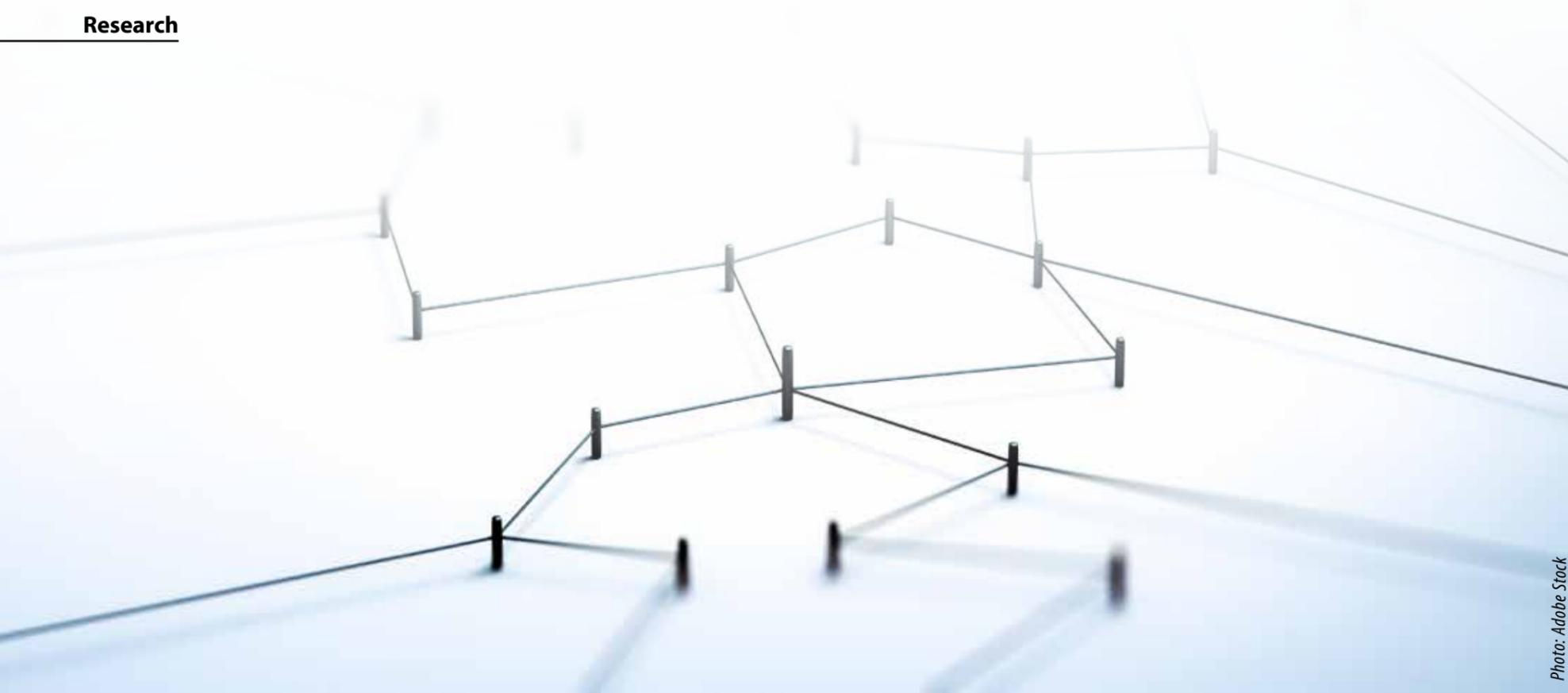


Photo: Adobe Stock

## 26 more projects expand the Cluster's research endeavours

Text SABINE GREINER

**T**he Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence's research portfolio is ever-growing. In 2021, the Cluster started to fund an additional 26 research projects run by its members based at the five institutions that form the organisation: **Moi University in Eldoret (Kenya), Rhodes University in Makhanda (South Africa), the University of Lagos (Nigeria), Joseph Ki-Zerbo University in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), and the University of Bayreuth (Germany).**

*When the Law is Not Enough: Tackling Intractable Problems of Human Rights*  
**Thoko Kaime (Bayreuth), Uchenna Okeja (Rhodes) – Affiliations**

This project addresses the discrepancies between the incidence of human right violations and the growing number of established legal frameworks by focusing on child labour, human trafficking, and the protection of LGBTIQ rights – three intractable problems of human

rights, so defined because of the seeming impossibility of resolving them.

*Rethinking the "Informal" and Mainstreaming African Popular Arts*  
**Patrick Oloko (Lagos) – Arts & Aesthetics**

In this project, the research team engages with a variety of entertainment forms such as stand-up comedy, hip hop music, spoken-word poetry, and musicalised histories and biographies as popular entertainment forms that are reshaping the cultural economies of African urban centres.

*From 2000 to 2020, Two Decades of Burkinabe Fiction in Film: Actors and Orientations*  
*(De 2000 à 2020, deux décennies de films de fiction burkinabé: acteurs/actrices, orientations)*

**Justin Ouoro (Ouagadougou) – Arts & Aesthetics**

This case study examines scientific data on Burkinabe film production of the last two decades – an era marked by a

revolution in the film industry in connection with a radical change in African societies in general. The study draws up a repertoire, the social and professional status of the actors, thematic orientations, and aesthetic profiles.

*Taiwo Shango*

**Christine Matzke (Bayreuth), Patrick Oloko (Lagos) – Arts & Aesthetics**

This project analyses and evaluates the long-lost TV film *Taiwo Shango: Der zweite Tag nach dem Tod* (*The Second Day after the Death*) that makes controversial use of an historical incident – the interruption of the ritual suicide at Oyo that took place in the mid-1940s.

*Knowledge State in Francophone West Africa: Experience of the State and Institutionalisation of Science in Burkina Faso and Senegal*

**Natéwindé Sawadogo, Cyrille Semdé (both Ouagadougou) – Knowledges**

The research team sets out to fill the gap in the literature on science in Africa regarding the status of scientific institu-

tions in society by looking at the configuration processes between the state and science in two African countries, namely Burkina Faso and Senegal.

*Etude socio-anthropologique sur les sources endogènes de dialogue et de paix contre le terrorisme au Burkina Faso*  
*Socio-anthropological Study on Indigenous Sources of Dialogue and Peace as a Means of Fighting Terrorism in Burkina Faso*

**Désiré Boniface Somé (Ouaga) – Knowledges**

This study aims to understand the way terrorism is perceived and depicted in population and, above all, how to manage this crisis through revealing their socio-cultural sources. The study helps to identify all types of violence, its participants, and all the traumas suffered by the victims, particularly women, children, and the elderly.

*"African" Knowledges and the History Publication since the 1970s*

**Cassandra Mark-Thiesen (Bayreuth) – Knowledges**

The research team suggests that the discipline of (African) History, with its sustained contestations over who qualifies as the ideal narrator of the past, what qualifies as a "proper" primary source, its conceptualisation of time, and the

politics of the archive, presents a particularly rich foundation for exploring the intersection of processes of production, dissemination, usage, and preservation of fluid medialities in line with African knowledge systems.

*Locating the Albatross in Women's Political Participation*

**Feyisayo Ademola-Adeoye (Lagos) – Knowledges**

Contemporary gender relations have not reflected women's exercise of socio-political power in the past and despite the achievements and progress made, African women still face political marginalisation. This project investigates the reasons for the albatross in African women's political participation despite the efforts to promote women political-ly.

*African Urban Complexities and the Governance Challenges of Urban Rivers – A Systemic Relational Inquiry*

**Nelson Odume (Rhodes) – Knowledges**

In this project, the researchers argue that if African urban rivers are to be on an ecologically sustainable path, then a new approach that recognises the complexity of the interconnectedness and dynamic interactions between social and ecological systems within African urban landscapes is required.

*PLURA 2.0: Project Learning and Resource Platform Africa*

**Doris Löhr, Gabriele Schrüfer (both Bayreuth) – Learning**

The overarching goal of this project is to decolonise learning "about Africa" in the classroom at schools in Germany. The project provides an online-platform which will offer continuously new teaching materials about Africa in order to contribute to a deconstruction and critical reflection of Eurocentric perceptions of the continent.

*The Pre-Death Bequest of Gerd Spittler*  
**Gerd Spittler (Bayreuth) – Learning**

This pioneering project is dedicated to processing research material collected by Gerd Spittler from 1967 onwards. The material comprises audio material in Hausa and Tamashek and around 6,000 photos taken between 1967 and 2006 in Niger and Nigeria.

*Mediated and Mediatization of Islamic Knowledge*

**Hassan J. Ndzovu (Moi) – Learning**

The project explores the production and transmission of Islamic knowledge as well as the religious artifacts and institutions involved in these processes in Africa, with a focus on a case study of Kenya.

*Approaches to African Sonic Pedagogies*

**Boudina McConnachie (Rhodes), Anthony Okerege (Lagos) – Learning**

Viewing approaches through the methodological lens of embodied and experiential learning, one goal of this project is to challenge established norms of teaching and learning music which are still based on pedagogies established in the Global North.

*Islamic Popular Culture and Public Performance Practices*

**Hassan J. Ndzovu (Moi) – Learning**

The project will explore the production and transmission of Islamic knowledge as well as the religious artefacts and institutions involved in these processes in Africa, with a focus on the case study of Kenya.

*Globalisation and Health Policy in West Africa*

**Yacouba Banhoro (Ouaga) – Moralities**

The project's goal is to understand not only the impact of global health on regional and local health systems reforms, but also to produce knowledge from a global health governance perspective that will help to grasp the shifting movement in international relations towards globalisation.

*Judicial Institutions and Teenagers/Young People in Burkina Faso*

**Fernand Bationo (Ouaga) – Moralities**

The aim of this project is to examine endogenous practices in the area of adolescent/youth punishment and the interface between these and contemporary systems in Burkina Faso. The researchers examine the endogenous negotiation strategies (actor logics) for dispensing justice within the community or the forms of mediation in the resolution of conflicts or crimes committed in the territorial space with regard to the colonial knowledge that remains there.

*Politics of the Unknown: Conspiracism and Conflict*

**Joschka Philipps (Bayreuth) – Moralities**

Focusing on the case of Guinea, and

combining ethnography, quantitative survey research, photography, and experimental cartography, this project's aim is to allow for a truly multiple perspective on the complexities of postcolonial politics in Africa, notably as a lens that can help us better understand politics in general.

*Sexualities, Political Orders, and Revolutions in Africa*

**Serawit B. Debele (Bayreuth) – Moralities**

This project proposes to investigate histories and politics of sexuality in three African countries (Tunisia, Ethiopia, Sudan) which recently experienced political transformations, in order to shed light on glob(c)al and historical forms of unequal relations.

*African Studies without Ethics Dumping: An Integrative Study of Research Ethics Governance in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa.*

**Ademola K. Fayemi, Akin Akin-Otiko (both Lagos) – Moralities**

The project investigates the different modes through which research ethics committees' positions arise and influence ethics dumping in African Studies. The study seeks to theoretically develop an African-inspired research ethics protocol in African Studies by exploring the tensions between indigenous moralities and Western ethical frames.

*Mobilities and Socialities: COVID-19 in the Drylands of Africa and Beyond*

**Andrea Behrends (Bayreuth) – Mobilities**

A large team of researchers and collaborative researchers study the effects of the COVID-19 containment measures in the drylands of 14 countries in Africa, Asia, and North America, focusing on two aspects that have been particularly impacted by these measures: mobility and sociality.

*The Political Economy of Monetary and Financial Dependency: West African Policy Space Compared*

**Kai Koddenbrock (Bayreuth) – Moralities**

The project's team contributes to the study of financial subordination in international political economy (IPE) and to debates on the future of the post-Bretton Woods monetary and financial order. The project breaks new ground with its historical and qualitative field research and its choice of West African case study countries in order to foster post- and decolonial perspectives in IPE.

*Invisible Intellectuals? "Endangered Scholars" and the Question of African Academic Mobilities*

**Nadine Machikou (University of Yaoundé II) – Moralities**

The project examines how and why the visibility/invisibility of African scholars in the social category of "endangered scholars", "scholars at risk", and "threatened researchers" are framed in the double context of academic mobility and refugee mobility by investigating the socio-history of instruments for endangered scholars, the trajectories, strategies, and (im)mobilities of African scholars as well as mobile epistemolo-

gies/construction of topics/fields.

*Migration Control, Violence, and COVID-19*

**Serge Ouédraogo (Ouagadougou) – Moralities**

In this project, the researchers scrutinise the entanglements of migration control, pandemic-related immobilisation and violence, and the currently changing (im)mobility regimes emerging from and shaping these entanglements in the border triangle of Benin, Niger, and Burkina Faso.

*Mobilities and Flows across West African Urban Corridors*

**Taibat Lawanson, Abisoye Eleshin (both Lagos) – Moralities**

Acknowledging the dominance of urban migration in the 21st century, the research focuses on the multidirectional processes of social integration in urban destination contexts and their effects on the formation of new identities and relationalities across critical corridors of the West African sub-region.

*Municipal Road Construction in Kenya and Nigeria: Investigating the Politics of Infrastructure Development*

**Moses Yakubu, Franca Attoh (both Lagos), Omar Egesah (dec.) – Moralities**

This study interrogates the politics, power dynamics, and modalities of municipal roads construction in Kenya and Nigeria, and how these affect access and mobility of people, transportation means, and goods that define human livelihoods and general development.

*Mobile Capital and (Im)Mobile Entrepreneurs: Start-up Success, Institutional Context, and the "Laws of Start-up Money" in Silicon Savannah*

**Stefan Ouma (Bayreuth), Bitange Ndemo, Ben Mkalama (both University of Nairobi) – Moralities**

This project's research accounts for the fact that capital accumulation in venture capital domains is a process often mediated via raced, gendered, and ethnic social relations with strong historical underpinnings, but also seeks to uncover the full range of factors that shape social (im)mobility in Silicon Savannah, the technology ecosystem in Kenya. It assembles a data bank on the socio-economic profiles of founders in the Kenyan entrepreneurial ecosystem and detailed entrepreneurial biographies.

The Cluster's Junior Research Group Leaders (from left): Kai Koddenbrock, Joschka Philipps, Serawit Debele, and Cassandra Mark-Thiesen



Photo: Robert Götze/Fabrica Lux

# Cluster Establishes Four Junior Research Groups

Text SABINE GREINER

**In accordance with its early career support strategy, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence established four Junior Research Groups. After an extensive selection process, Serawit B. Debele, Kai Koddenbrock, Cassandra Mark-Thiesen, and Joschka Philipps started their work as Junior Research Group Leaders in 2021.**

Creating new pathways to academic careers is one of the structural objectives of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence. To pursue this goal, the Cluster of Excellence executed a complex and extensive selection process in order to establish four independent Junior Research Groups (JRG) as one of the pillars of the Cluster's early career support strategy. By the deadline of 31 December 2019, 39 applications had reached the Cluster of Excellence, each with a

detailed project proposal. The selection committee comprised five members of the Cluster's Management Board, a member of the University Board, and two external members. The 15 application dossiers that were chosen for the shortlist went to external review. For each of the shortlisted candidates, the committee received two detailed evaluations. After the COVID-19 pandemic had delayed proceedings for a while, the committee eventually invited a total

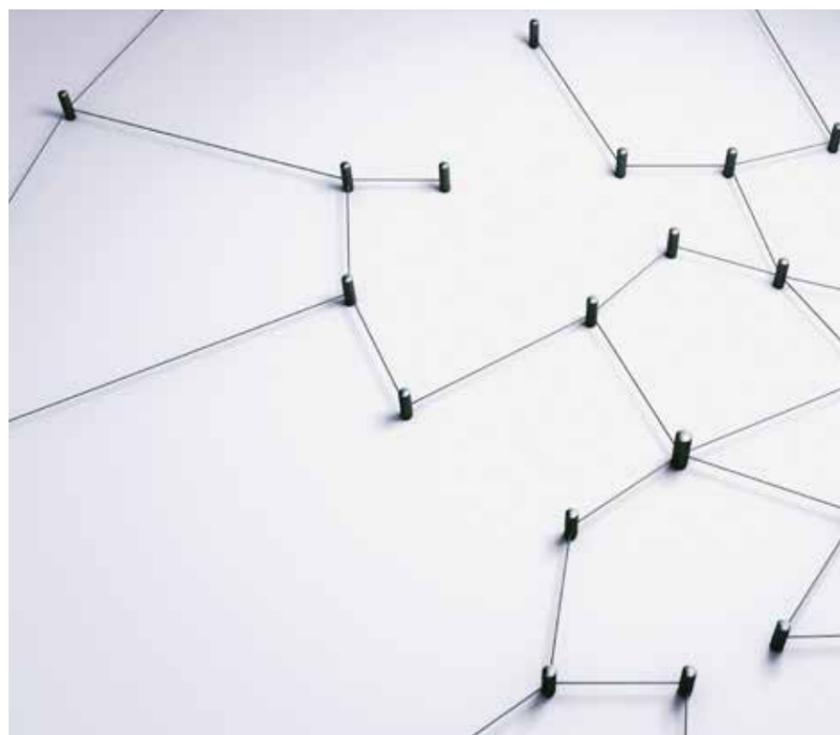


Photo: Adobe Stock

of eight candidates to campus in October 2020 and January 2021. The final selection was made by the Cluster's Academic Committee on the basis of the selection committee's recommendations.

The four scholars that were selected have since assembled their teams and started on their respective projects:

**Serawit B. Debele**  
*Sexualities, Political Orders, and Revolutions in Africa: Into the Heart of Tunisia, Ethiopia, and Sudan*



The JRG *Sexualities, Political Orders, and Revolutions in Africa: Into the Heart of Tunisia, Ethiopia, and Sudan* led by Serawit B. Debele investigates the history and politics of sexuality in three African countries. Within the project, the research aims to shed light on glocal and historical forms of unequal relations in Tunisia, Ethiopia, and Sudan, which have all undergone political transformations in the last decade. In 2011, Tunisians took to the streets, sparking social movements and protests in other parts of North Africa and the Middle East in what later became known as the Arab Spring. The Oromo protests in Ethiopia (2014-16) led to a political transformation process in 2017/18, a development of great significance in shaping the course of events in the Horn of Africa region. And in December 2018, Sudanese popular protests consequently led to the ousting of Omar al-Bashir who had been in power for three decades. These political developments, perceived as "moments of danger" disrupting the authoritarian grip on power can also be viewed as "moments of hope" replete with possibilities for the oppressed to shake the roots of their longstanding subordination. With this in mind, this JRG asks if and what possibilities these moments have created for sexual minorities and what we might learn about broader socio-political orders, histo-

ries, and forms of inequalities in a rapidly globalising world in which Africa has a complicated place.

Before joining the Cluster of Excellence as JRG leader, Debele worked at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity in Göttingen, Germany, where she examined topics of religion and sexuality in Ethiopia. In her research, she generally focuses on historical and ethnographic approaches to trace the change and continuity of discourses on sexuality and how religious formations shape those discourses. Debele received her MA in cultural studies from the Institute of Ethiopian Studies at Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia) and her PhD in religious studies from Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies, BIGSAS (Germany).

**Kai Koddenbrock**  
*The Political Economy of Monetary and Economic Sovereignty in West Africa Compared*



The research group led by Kai Koddenbrock investigates historically and in a comparative fashion how West African societies have attempted to increase their political and economic sovereignty with a particular focus on the interaction between governments, finance, and labour. The group will attempt to find out how historically most West African countries became exporters of only one or two commodities with the help of foreign capital and military force. In

the second step, the scholars will focus on how postcolonial, newly independent governments have attempted to move away from this with the help of domestic resources, the creation of public and private banks, foreign debt, and, most recently, stronger relations to China since independence. Increasing economic complexity, diversifying the economy, and thus the reduction of dependencies on the world market have been perennial pursuits but have often failed. The COVID-19 crisis has put this into stark relief again. How can the recurrent debt crises and the difficulties in moving away from raw commodity export dependency be explained? Which role do global and domestic social relations play and what does that mean for the state in West Africa? To find answers to these questions the researchers investigate the role of colonial legacies and the various attempts by governments to increase national self-determination through public policies to arrive at a nuanced picture of what can be done in the current global political economy.

Before coming to Bayreuth, Koddenbrock, with a doctorate in political science from Bremen, and post-doctoral studies in political science from Goethe University Frankfurt, taught at the universities of Aachen, Duisburg-Essen, Witten/Herdecke, and Frankfurt am Main. He was visiting researcher at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Paris, at Sciences Po, Paris, the Max-Planck-Institute for the Study of Societies, Cologne, the University of Sussex, Brighton, and Columbia University, New York. He convenes the international German Research Foundation (DFG) network on the Politics of Money and until 2021 was one of the speakers of the International Relations section of the German Association for Political Economy (DVPW). Koddenbrock is currently working on a monograph on financial dependency

with Ingrid Kvangraven and Ndongo Sylla and has recently co-edited *Economic and Monetary Sovereignty in 21st Century Africa* (Pluto Press) as well as *Capital Claims: Power and Global Finance* (Routledge, with Benjamin Braun).

**Cassandra Mark-Thiesen**  
*African Knowledges and the History Publication since the 1970s*



The JRG led by Cassandra Mark-Thiesen scrutinises the practices of African and Africa-based knowledge production in African Studies, in particular as recorded in history publications of African publishers since the 1970s – with the term "publication" being used in the broadest sense of the word. Heightened turmoil in the realm of global knowledge production has recently stimulated questions leading to research on inequalities and relationalities within the university, between universities in the "Global South" and "Global North", as well as between experts and non-experts in a given society. In connection with these tensions, the JRG is concerned with questions related to power and the production of history. It wishes to contribute to debates on Africa-centred knowledge(s), touchpoints between memory (including the forgetting and recalling of events) and history, the "work" history does in the public sphere, co-production between community members and the academy, North-South collaborations, digital humanities for Africa, "postcolonial" African archives, peace, and the preservation of the past. They are also actively collaborating with partners on the African continent to preserve an audio-visual archive consisting of public television content from the 1980s in Liberia. Mark-Thiesen recently published a co-edited volume on memory, commemoration, and the politics of historical memory in Africa.

Leading up to her engagement at the Cluster of Excellence, Mark-Thiesen

was a lecturer in African history at the University of Basel, Switzerland. She spent 2016 to 2018 as a Marie Heim-Vögtlin Research Fellow (Swiss National Science Foundation). Mark-Thiesen has previously researched the social and economic history of West Africa, especially Ghana and Liberia. Her first book took a global labour history approach to the history of the first mechanised gold mines in the Gold Coast Colony. She is also working on an entangled history of state-sponsored agricultural research and practices in Liberia.

**Joschka Philipps**  
*Politics of the Unknown. Conspiracism and Conflict*



How do we make sense of politics that are too inaccessible to be known and too significant to be ignored or left uncertain? The JRG *Politics of the Unknown. Conspiracism and Conflict* led by Joschka Philipps revolves around this question to analyse how political conflicts shape and are shaped by different perceptions of truth and reality. The project consists of different case studies, zooming in on contexts of particular uncertainty. Saïkou Sagnane and Kingsley Jima, for instance, focus their PhD research on the Guinean coup d'état in 2021 and the ongoing Nigerian media debate on banditry (the so-called "unknown gunmen") in the country's Northwest, respectively. Philipps leads an interdisciplinary team of researchers and artists concerned with the broader history of Guinea, fraught with real and imagined conspiracies against the postcolonial regime of

Ahmed Sékou Touré. Their work combines diverse methodologies, ranging from (auto-)biographies (researched by Nana Barry and Philipps), surveys, and ethnographies (Sagnane and Philipps), to photography (Aurélien Gillier), audio-mapping of the capital city Conakry (Tuline Gülgönen and Paul Schweizer) and cinematographic approaches (Bilal Sow and Wulah Mohamed), which are to be exhibited in Conakry and Bayreuth in 2024.

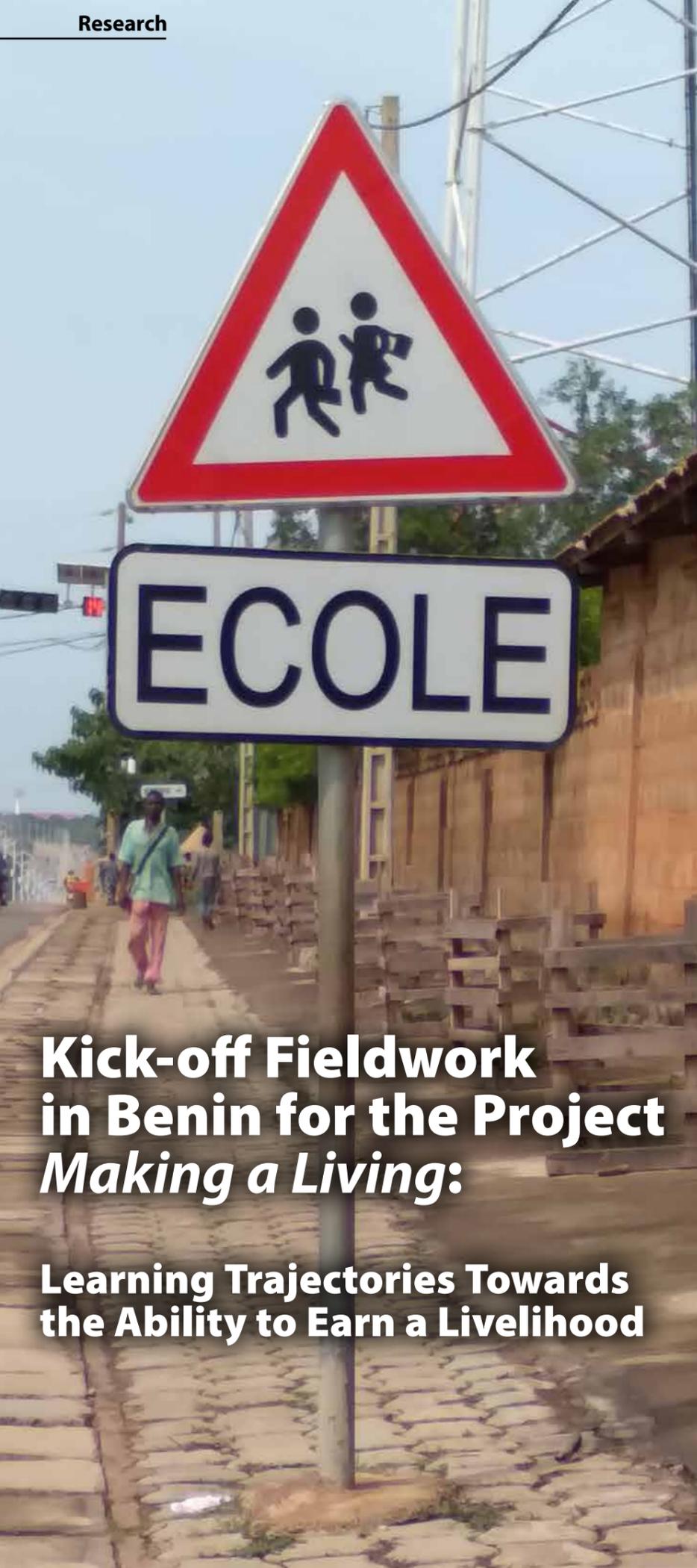
Across these cases and approaches, the JRG Politics of the Unknown scrutinises concepts that have come to describe contemporary dissent and contestation in the public sphere, notably "post-truth", an expression that was declared the International Word of the Year 2016 by Oxford Dictionary, and "conspiracy theories", a concept that features prominently as the social sciences' "other" since the 1960s. Interrogating from a critical African Studies perspective what these concepts describe and prescribe, the JRG seeks to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of contemporary politics in Africa and beyond.

Before joining the Cluster of Excellence, Philipps worked as a senior researcher at the University of Basel. Holding a PhD in Sociology from the Centre for African Studies Basel, Philipps' research focuses on urban youth and protest movements, the role of disruptive events in socio-political transformations, as well as mixed methods approaches.

Please find more information on the Junior Research Groups, their projects and their teams by following this QR code:



<https://www.africamultiple.uni-bayreuth.de/en/JRG/index.html>



## Kick-off Fieldwork in Benin for the Project *Making a Living:*

## Learning Trajectories Towards the Ability to Earn a Livelihood

Text ERDMUTE ALBER, IRIS CLEMENS, SABRINA MAURUS, ISSA TAMOU

**The Cluster project *Making a Living: Learning Trajectories Towards the Ability to Earn a Livelihood* examines the roles that learning processes play in becoming an adult, making a living, and earning a livelihood in Benin.**

The project's research team understands 'making a living' as a relational and multifaceted process entangled with socio-economic conditions, as well as social embeddedness and hopes of upward mobility. The educational landscape in rural West Africa is currently shaped by a unique historical process. As a result of the large globally-influenced schooling campaigns (United Nations Millennium Development Goal II, 2000–2015) which contributed to the global enrolment of all boys and especially girls, a whole generation of young adults is now growing up who have almost all at least briefly attended school. Many of these boys and girls were educational pioneers in their families. Thus, a whole generation of youths who were deeply influenced by these campaigns and the related immense hopes and expectations is now becoming adult. However, only a small minority have finished secondary school. Within this context, the project asks about the roles multiple learning processes – within and outside of school – play in becoming an adult, making a living, and earning a livelihood in one francophone country, Benin.

The project asks how the general and abstract promises and hopes of the schooling campaigns are related to actual biographical processes. Population growth, scarcity of land, the rising importance of formal exams, and specific problems of the formal labour markets seem to be obstacles to finding one's place in adult life. Regarding this specific historical moment, at which scientific perspectives on youth in Africa oscillate between hope, 'waithood', and hopelessness, the researchers take a pragmatic and relational perspective in reconstructing concrete ways of becoming an adult and making a living for rural members of this generation. The researchers seek to contribute to connected debates on youth, adulthood, and making a living through a relational methodological approach that is oriented towards following

Road Sign in northern Benin  
Photo: Iris Clemens

the actor over time and constellations or networks. Therefore, the project conceptualises new forms of research, bringing together empirical methods from different disciplines and perspectives. Starting from relationality as epistemological basis and research methodology, the team focuses on relations rather than individuals, on processes rather than entities, prefers spaces rather than characteristics.

The beginning of the project was shaken by the pandemic and its travel restrictions. After some team members had to

*Making a Living* were happy that they could finally come together in Benin in September 2021. Iris Clemens, Erdmute Alber, and Sabrina Maurus travelled to Benin to meet Issa Tamou and to conduct a collective inquiry together with Imorou Abou-Bakari (University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin) and Clarisse Tama (University of Parakou), as well as other researchers from the University of Parakou and the LASDEL.

This collective research based on the ECRIS method began with a joint meet-

sible to identify new actors, places, spaces, and relevant indicators to be taken into account in the continuous research. After three days of common ECRIS research, the team came back to Parakou with rich findings and prepared a presentation at the Cluster's partner institution, LASDEL. The shared time in Benin ended with a public presentation of the first research results, which many colleagues from Parakou and Cotonou attended. In a lively discussion, the researchers had the chance to discuss young people's ways of learning to make



Photo: Iris Clemens  
Advertisement for Student Loans in Benin

leave Benin prematurely in March 2020 and others had to cancel their flights on the day of the supposed start, travel restrictions did not allow business trips between Benin and Bayreuth. Nevertheless, despite at times shaky internet connections, the team continued to work together online. While home office was still common in Germany, research in Benin was again possible in summer 2020 and daily life was not much restricted. Thus, the researchers developed a questionnaire and under the guidance of Issa Tamou, the PhD candidate in the project, a team of researchers from the Laboratoire d'Etudes et de Recherche sur les Dynamiques Sociales et le Développement Local (LASDEL) in Parakou, Benin, conducted the survey at the research site.

After one and a half years of online meetings, all members of the project team

ing of all twelve researchers, in which the project goals and the methodology were presented. Then, the team spent three days at their main research site, a small town in northern Benin, to conduct research in pairs. The data collected and the fruitful exchanges carried out each evening after the fieldwork made it pos-

a living and experienced the relevance of the research topic in Benin and beyond.

Tamou and Maurus stayed in Benin for a further six months to conduct fieldwork that will be continued during the next years to follow young people's learning trajectories.



Project Presentation at LASDEL, Parakou

Photo: Issac Sambo



John Blanke, musician at the court of King Henry VII & Henry VIII (Westminster Tournament Roll)

## Cluster Project Travelling Knowledge at World Congress

Text MICHAEL STEPPAT and SUSAN ARNDT

**I**n July 2021, the research team of the Cluster Project *Travelling Knowledge and Trans\*textuality. African Re\*Sources in Shakespearean Drama* was asked to present their work at the World Shakespeare Congress in Singapore.

The Africa Multiple Cluster project *Travelling Knowledge and Trans\*textuality* (Research Section Knowledges) has been presented at the World Shakespeare Congress (WSC) in Singapore. Every five years, this event, organised by the International Shakespeare Association, regenerates understandings of Shakespeare's work across the world, bringing together scholars whose geo-cultural vantage points on Shakespeare may partly overlap but also differ. This WSC, from 19 to 23 July 2021, turned out to be the largest and most inclusive Shakespeare Congress ever. Among the chief topics were "Intercultural, transnational, diasporic engagements" as well as "Tracking and tracing" for echo and revision, and the Cluster project served these interests. At the Congress's top level, a panel of four presenters, addressing the required commitment to international diversity among panelists, was devoted to the on-

going Cluster project. This project aims to investigate, for the first time, how much and in what ways African (and in certain cases Middle Eastern) textualities from different periods have influenced the dramas of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. The project is innovative also in exploring how African narratives, visual arts, and performative practices are likely to have travelled to Elizabethan England, and how such pathways of transmission can be proven and understood.

The object of study is thus textualities that travel rhizomically and partly orally, influencing a text without an author's being necessarily aware thereof, and thus transgressing the traditional category of written and printed "source" with mostly Southern and Western European provenience. Against the prevailing scholarly consensus regarding such influences, the Panel argued strongly for African sources in Shakespearean drama. The first to do so was Susan Arndt as Chair. In her presentation on *Trans\*textuality in William Shakespeare's Othello*, highlighting the importance of oral and folktale influences on Shakespeare, Arndt gave an overview of the methodology of studying folktales before introducing the key categories of re\*source and trans\*text-

uality: if Text A influenced a Shakespearean Text B, earlier materials that influenced Text A can be regarded as influences on Text B. Arndt then presented the case study of Shakespeare's *Othello* in conjunction with Ahmed Yerima's *Otaelo* to illustrate these ideas. Next, Taghrid Elhanafy, who has written a pioneering book on trans\*textual Shakespeare, presented *The Trans\*textuality of the Book of Alf Layla wa Layla and Shakespeare's Drama*, offering evidence of this source as having influenced *Othello* and *The Taming of the Shrew*, while also describing the Arabic and Persian *Layla and Majnun* as a source of *Romeo and Juliet*. Ifeoluwa Aboluwade, who has written a book on the dramatic work of Femi Osofisan, was then able to create a wide-reaching theory frame in *Transcultural Encounters: West African Pre-texts and Epistemes in Shakespeare's Macbeth*. Aboluwade drew on the concepts of relationality and diffraction to show how earlier texts become interlaced with later recipients on a pattern or thematic question produced in the reception process. Thus Aboluwade demonstrated how the appearance of the "Weird Sisters" in *Macbeth* is reminiscent of the West African trickster Esu. Finally Michael Steppat (Shanghai/Bayreuth) in *Transformative Cultural Transfer and African Presences* argued that the study of sources has been based on a set of ideological assumptions and colonial drives operating as an aesthetic system. To move beyond this, Steppat urged considering oral discourse and eyewitness accounts in light of transfer pathways from outside Europe, using Southern European archival records; West African folk narratives are yielding concrete evidence of their influence on Shakespeare, presumably empowered further by the performative engagement of a large number of Africans in early modern England: the hitherto "unrecognised imprint of black people" (Imtiaz Habib).

The Panel presentations met with considerable interest among WSC delegates, apparent in the specially scheduled Q & A period which featured questions on several of the topics and led to mutual discussion. The Panel's recorded versions will remain available to delegates for several months. 



Empowerment billboard in Addis Ababa  
Photo: Jenny Scheffler

the presence of the director Ines Johnson-Spain at Cineplex Kulmbach, and was attended by 65 students of the local Markgraf-Georg-Friedrich-Gymnasium. The autobiographical documentary film deals with the upbringing of a black girl in a white family in former East Germany. Belonging, social norms, family concepts, and persistent racism are the themes of the film, which deeply impressed the students. This was noticeable in the discussion which followed with Johnson-Spain.

On a regular basis, PLURA, in cooperation with the Didactics of Geography Department and Kirstin Wolf of the Centre for Global Learning, organises events to familiarise pupils and their teachers with Africa and Africa-related topics. To sensitise adolescents and teachers to the issue of "racism" is one of the goals of PLURA. In addition, PLURA works to ensure that the topics are no longer treated in a stereotypical way in the classroom, but are included in everyday school life in a contemporary way and without common clichés.

## The Project Learning and Resource Platform Africa – PLURA 2.0 Is back

Text: DORIS LÖHR

**A**fter a lengthier break, a necessity due to restructuring processes, PLURA is back. The initial phase had to be put on hold in mid-2019 but in early 2021 the project started again with a broader approach.

The overarching goal of the project PLURA (Projekt Lern- und Ressourcenplattform Afrika) is to decolonise learning "about Africa" in Germany's classrooms. Based on different didactic approaches (e.g., constructive understanding of space, multi-perspective perceptions and representations, post-colonialism), the team started re-analysing existing teaching materials, also reviewing and scrutinising the original PLURA data

base launched in 2019. The new group, led by Gabriele Schrüfer, Chair of Didactics of Geography, and supported by Doris Löhr and a doctoral student, Larissa Sarpong, also looks at the Cluster's current research findings to be "translated" for the curriculum. The goal is to contribute to a multi-perspective view by providing new teaching material on a digital platform. Furthermore, teacher trainings, workshops, and lecture series will be offered for interested teachers and multipliers.

Due to COVID-19, most of PLURA's activities had been cancelled or postponed in 2020/2021. Work behind the scenes went on and some activities were conducted in 2021 as part of the public outreach section. In December 2021, the film *Becoming Black* was screened in

An online workshop in December 2021 on The Effectiveness of Spatial Representations of Sub-Saharan Africa was conducted by Sonja Schwarze, University of Münster. Representations of space/spaces, and the people living in them, decisively shape which implicit and explicit evaluations and (spatial) actions are derived. The workshop drew attention to this constructivist (learning) understanding against the background of postcolonial theories and visualised this using examples from geography lessons. In this context, the effectiveness of spatial representations of sub-Saharan Africa was worked out theoretically and practically. Using teaching situations and material on the topic of "Sub-Saharan Africa", subject teachers in particular were sensitised to linguistic pitfalls so as not to fall into them unconsciously and unintentionally. For this reason, the workshop was characterised by joint practice and reflection phases. The workshop triggered discussions about the image of Africa held by German students and adults, the causes, and especially how to deal with it as teachers. The workshop series and other events that foster a critical engagement with racism in schools will be continued in 2022. 



Appellate Division EACJ during a hearing on 8.11.2021, Supreme Court Burundi. Image owner Diana Kisakye.

# Researching Regional Court Relations

Text: **DIANA KISAKYE** and **ALEXANDER STROH**  
 Photos: **DIANA KISAKYE**

**D**uring their field work for their Cluster project MuDAIMa, the research team visited the East African Court of Justice and met with the Court President and the Registrar His Worship Yufnalis Okubo.

Not all of Africa's regional economic communities (EACs) possess or operate a functional judicial organ. The East African Court of Justice (EACJ) is one outstanding example of a politically relevant sub-regional jurisdiction and, therefore, a significant case for analysis from the political science angle of the collaborative research project on Multiplicity in Decision-Making of Africa's Interacting Markets (MuDAIMa) in the Africa

Multiple Cluster of Excellence. Diana Kisakye, PhD candidate in Political Science, and Alexander Stroh, Professor of Political Science and Principal Investigator, study regional court relations in complex multilevel systems of judicial governance and focus on the national level processes of judicial appointments to the regional benches and the ties established through these processes. Under the conditions of COVID-related travel restrictions, they had to devise creative ways to get to the "thick of the field" at the the EACJ headquarters and in selected East African Community (EAC) partner states.

Recently concluded fieldwork in Uganda, Tanzania, and the EACJ illustrates the rewards of flexibility in the research process. Even though they had planned

to visit the EACJ in November 2021, at its seat in Arusha, a chance meeting with the Registrar and Court President in Kampala changed the course and format of their research (see Tweet in Figure 1). They quickly arranged to 'follow the Court' to Bujumbura, where it was holding a symposium commemorating twenty years of its existence, and afterwards sat in sessions to hear cases. The symposium highlighted that the Court had implemented its mandate, expanded its jurisprudence, promoted the rule of law, cross-border trade and investment, and provided alternative dispute resolution mechanisms through broad, bold, and intentional interpretation of the EAC Treaty. Kisakye's presence at this event permitted to meet and interact with the most relevant actors in and outside the Court: retired and sitting

Yuf Okubo @yufokubo  
 Visiting Uganda. Met Diana Kasikye a PhD student in Germany who is doing research on EACJ. The President extended an invitation to her to attend November Court sessions in Bujumbura and meet all Judges.



5:48 AM - Oct 4, 2021 from Nairobi, Kenya - Twitter for Android

Tweet by Registrar His Worship Yufnalis Okubo, 4.10.2021.

judges of the Court, heads of EAC organs, the international community, bar associations, senior government officials from the partner states, and civil society organisations.

By attending court sessions in Bujumbura, the researcher witnessed both the first instance and appellate divisions in action. Sitting through court sessions also enabled to observe the dynamics in the courtroom and decision-making processes first-hand. Their presence allowed them to grasp the real-time dynamics of the construction of judicial power in one of Africa's most active sub-regional courts.

In February 2022, Stroh and Kisakye followed the Court its headquarters in Arusha to continue their research on largely ignored aspects of the powerful but hardly known regional judges, their professional trajectories, and personal networks. Archival work and interview research in allowed them to complete their biographical approach. Preliminary results emphasise the variance of professional trajectories of the regional

judges, but also their frequent ties to political affairs. The biographic data will help to better understand the judges' socio-political embeddedness in networks and histories, which promises new insights into the Court's political role in regional integration processes. The importance of fieldwork that includes informal encounters

and conversations for a comprehensive and consistent analysis of socio-political structures and processes was re-confirmed. Therefore, the academics are convinced that digital research will have supplementary merits in post-pandemic times, but cannot substitute for fieldwork. In an increasingly mobile world, we might even need to put more emphasis on 'following' the objects of research.

EACJ stand at the Supreme Court Burundi



Attending a hearing of the EACJ Appellate Division on 8.11.2021, Supreme Court Burundi.



Laura Guadagnano Laura together with the participants of the Pro-Girls Fellowship project in Yamoussoukro  
Photo: Laura Guadagnano.

## Health Discourses beyond COVID-19: Investigating Moral Communication in other Fields

Text ADAMA DRABO and LAURA GUADAGNANO

**In 2021, the research team working on the Cluster project *Health discourses as moral communication? Linguistic case studies from Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon* welcomed Adama Drabo, who will add a new perspective on morality to the project.**

Adama Drabo and Laura Guadagnano are both members of the team *Health discourses as moral communication? Linguistic case studies in Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon*. Their research provides



Adama Drabo, postdoc at the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence  
Photo: Adama Drabo

further insights into the emergence and negotiation of moralities, in addition to the work on COVID-19 which was reported on in the previous NAB. Both have Côte d'Ivoire as a research field, and they are investigating health discourses in different settings and from different perspectives. While Drabo focuses in his research on a particular type of communication, Guadagnano explores sensitisation discourses targeted to young women.

**Reprobation activities in health discourses**  
Drabo is the newest member of the pro-



Laura Guadagnano, BIGSAS Junior Fellow  
Photo: Laura Guadagnano

ject, but already a well-known face, as he is a BIGSAS alumnus. After completing his dissertation on discourse markers and pragmatemes in Ivorian French in Summer 2021, he joined the research team at the beginning of October 2021 to start post-doctoral research. His mission within the project is to develop another perspective of morality in health discourses. More concretely, Drabo focuses on a type of linguistic activity in these discourses that is likely to have moral values: the activities of reprobation. The interest of such a subject lies in its ability to be transversal. In fact, starting with linguistic activities such as reprobation will make it possible to widen the spectrum, since these practices can be found in a whole panoply of health discourses beyond those in the project. Thus, from the general principle acquired by the project, which conceives moralities not in their normative and universalist vision but rather as a co-construction by the participants in the interaction, Drabo has set two objectives. The first one concerns exploring the place of moralities through activities of reprobation and the discursive processes that emerge from them. The second is to conduct an epistemological reflection on the understanding of moralities in relation to discursive genres and social categories. This requires the adoption of an empirical approach that

relies mainly on data collected through interactions, hence the exploratory work in the research field carried out from mid-November to December 2021.

The two biggest cities of Côte d'Ivoire, Bouaké and Abidjan, served as macro-spaces for the investigation. Drabo collected and recorded data through observations, interviews, and group discussions. Audio recording was preferred over video because video recording can be far too intrusive in a socio-politically sensitive field. The recordings were made in homes, health centers, and cafés. The data consists of five categories:

- Free conversations within the family or among friends
- Interviews that provided testimonies or anecdotes about the behavior of hospital staff towards patients or caregivers and vice versa
- Medical consultations
- Meetings between medical staff
- Discussions between socio-professionally homogeneous groups (medical staff, student groups) and between members of the same household.

While these different groups usually meet and discuss independently of the research, the topics were subtly introduced according to the survey locations. These topics focused on the choice between modern and traditional medicine, reception in health centers, the relationship between midwives and pregnant women, and the choice between seeking care in private or public health centers. In total, eight hours of recorded data were collected.

**Research on young women's health discourses**  
In her doctoral research, Guadagnano focuses on a specific health discourse: young women's sexual and reproductive health. How do linguistic and communicative elements highlight the moral dimension of these discourses? Her interest has been inspired particularly by discussions concerning pregnancies in a school context, which have received increased media attention. Looking at the figures of the Ivorian school statistics, the number of pregnancies has increased significantly in recent years. According to some reports, more than 5800 pregnancies have already been registered in primary and secondary schools for the current school year 2021/2022.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Guadagnano has been forced to postpone her fieldwork twice, but was finally able to travel to Côte d'Ivoire from mid-October to December 2021. This gave her the opportunity to explore the field and to expand her preliminary online data corpus, which consisted of interviews with mainly female university students and former teen-mothers.

Thanks to the cooperation with the Ivorian NGO *Pro-Kids Côte d'Ivoire*, it was possible to have insights into the local realities as well as to meet young women who had been affected by a school-age pregnancy. Established in 2017, this NGO is in Yopougon, one of the municipalities of Abidjan. The NGO's main objectives are the improvement of early child development, the reduction of school pregnancies, and the facilitation of the social and professional (re)integration of teen mothers. To achieve these objectives, targeted projects have been launched. Within this framework, Guadagnano has accompanied the work of the NGO in two specific projects: *Pro-Girls Fellowship* and *#Girlschat*. *Pro-Girls Fellowship* is a programme for the social and professional (re)integration of teen mothers in different cities such as Abidjan, Alépé, and Yamoussoukro. This project aims to train teen mothers in various areas within three to six months. During this period, they deal with topics related to sexual and reproductive health, child education, practical education (e.g., sewing or hairdressing), personal development, as well as entrepreneurship and female leadership. Here, Guadagnano conducted focus group discussions with teen mothers who benefited from the programme. Furthermore, she participated in different sessions of the girls' focused sensitisation program *#Girlschat* in various middle schools of Abidjan. Guadagnano contributed to the work of the NGO by organising sessions of talks and exchange with young girls about their sexual and reproductive health.

Moreover, Guadagnano conducted additional focus group discussions with female high school students. She continues to investigate the discourse of female university students concerning sexual and reproductive health as well as continuing the discussions regarding school pregnancies.

### Further project developments

During 2021, the team members not only participated in different conferences, but also published in relation with the project's research focus (for more info, see Cluster homepage). Furthermore, a stimulating guest lecture by Jörg Berg-



Adama Drabo Reception for the vaccination at the urban health center of Nimbo (Bouaké)  
Photo: Adama Drabo

mann, an internationally renowned expert on moral communication, that took place within the Research Section Moralities in November 2021, gave important insights into a communicative approach of moralities. Another guest lecture by Sylvia Jaki on COVID-19 took place in January 2022 during the *Linguistisches Kolloquium of Faculty IV*. In February 2022 the whole research team gave talks at *AFPCON2022 – The Second African Pragmatics Conference* at the University of Nairobi in Kenya. Currently, preparation is underway for an international and interdisciplinary conference on *Doing ethics: Interdisciplinary perspectives on communicative practices and verbal devices* to take place in October 2022 at the University of Bayreuth.

EPISODE ONE

# AFRIKANISTIK UTOPIAS

1

The thumbnail for episode 1 of Afrikanists Assemble

## A Year in the Life of Recalibrating Afrikanistik

Text BRADY BLACKBURN

**A**lthough the pandemic has thrown them a curveball, the research project *Recalibrating Afrikanistik*, which is funded by the *Volkswagen Stiftung*, has managed to find ways to further their endeavour and facilitate exchange.

The research project *Recalibrating Afrikanistik (RecAf)*, which was designed to shift and open up the study of African languages and literatures, got started in late 2019. Two principal goals of the project were to offer week-long winter schools at German partner universities and summer schools at African ones. Due to the pandemic, none of this could happen as envisioned.

By the time 2021 dawned, RecAf had

already been working on an alternative method of accessible, conversational, and intellectual exchange: a video podcast on YouTube called Afrikanists Assemble. Every month, contributors are asked a single question, which they answer with a three-minute audio file (often via WhatsApp). These are then spliced together into a single episode. The format of a video podcast shows who is speaking and features subtitles, meaning that people can (and are encouraged to) contribute in any language. Episode 1 of Afrikanists Assemble first dropped in March of 2021 and nine episodes have appeared in total during the course of the year.

It was also Bayreuth's turn to host a winter school, which had to be done digitally or not at all. The event in March with the theme "Popular Culture & Arts in Africa" on Microsoft Teams was hosted

with both synchronous and asynchronous learning to cut down on screen fatigue. The daily video sessions were led by different partners in Germany. Day one was on Galsen hip-hop, led by Monika Rohmer from the University of Bayreuth. On day two, Matthias Krings from the University of Mainz led a discussion of albinism in African popular culture. Day three was led by a team from the University of Leipzig (Rose Marie Beck, Irene Brunotti, and Lara Stephanie-Krause) on the subject of "Popular Colonisation as Subversion in the Postcolony," and participants enjoyed a reading in the evening by the Nigerian author Zainab Omaki. Day four was on "Communicative Repertoires of Protest" by Anne Storch and Andrea Hollington at the University of Cologne. Nikitta Adjirakor at the University of Bayreuth capped off the week with a dis-

Follow the Research Project RecAf here:



The project's **Twitter** features a lot of the same visual public content as our Instagram, but catering to those who prefer that platform. (Twitter account: Recalibrating Afrikanistik @rec\_af)



The **Facebook** group is a great place to get updates on events, ask questions, and start conversations that are private to people in RecAf. (Facebook group: Recalibrating Afrikanistik – RecAf)



The video podcast series Afrikanists Assemble is on **YouTube**, and the readers are more than welcome to subscribe, watch those episodes, and discuss them in the comments: (YouTube channel: Afrikanists Assemble)



The Project team's **Instagram** is a fun account featuring the excellent graphic design work of Kaitlyn Blackburn, as well as informative carousel posts and trivia games. (Instagram account: @rec\_af)

cussion of digital African literature. The digital model allowed the organisers to go beyond their usual limit of twelve students from just Germany – on average, 25 participants took part every day.

2021 was also supposed to be the year the project's partner Moi University in Eldoret, Kenya, hosted their summer school, but travel restrictions still made it untenable. As a compromise, they hosted two Digital Young Scholars' Workshops, one in September 2021

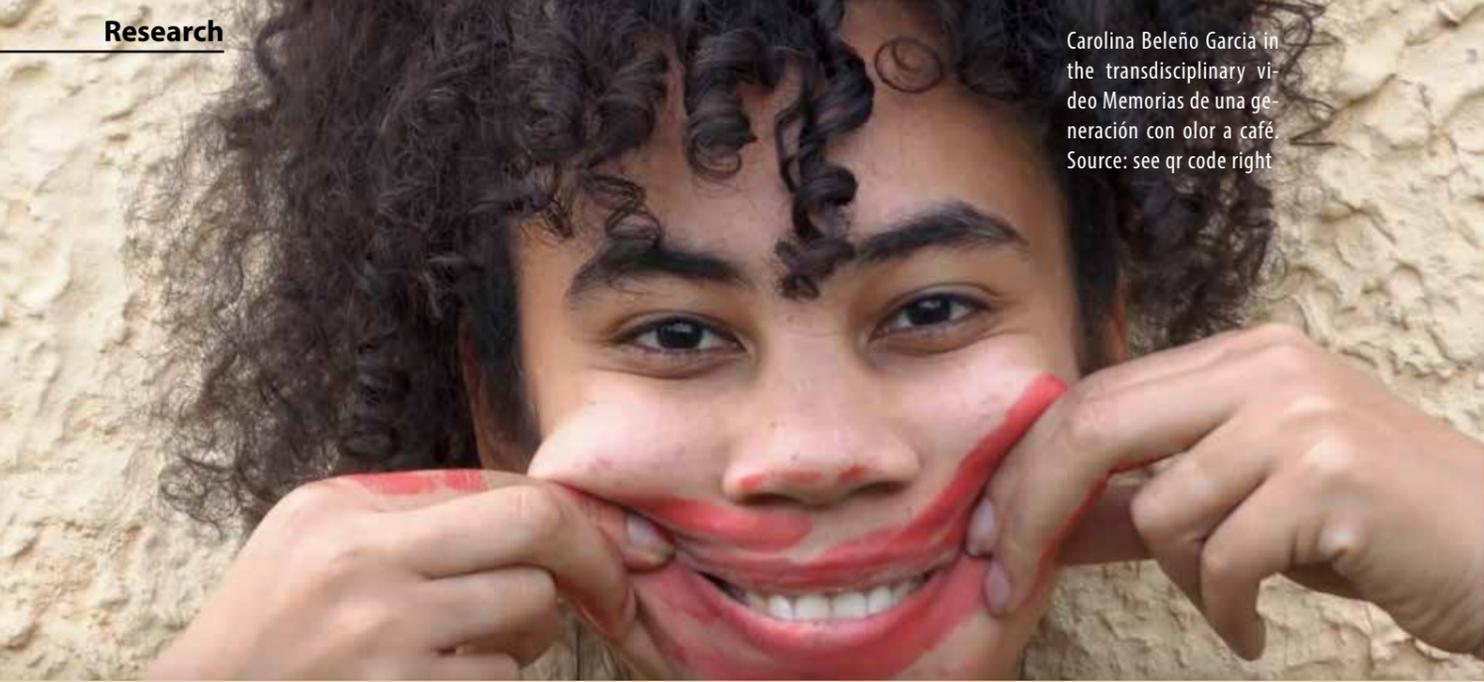
and one in January 2022. The scholars in Kenya got together physically while everyone else joined digitally for nine student presentations and discussions, punctuated by four mini-lectures by staff. The program in September featured people from six different universities, including other African partners: the Federal University in Wukari, Nigeria and Stellenbosch University in South Africa. Feedback from the students was overwhelmingly positive, as they were able to receive compliments and criti-

cism from peers and professors in four different countries.

In order to keep the momentum of all these digital exchanges going, a social media presence was built on several platforms where people can connect and stay up to date. In addition to information about the RecAf events, followers can find insightful infographics about research funding options in Germany, memefied Afrikanists, and a trivia game about African literary works in several different languages. 🌍

The group in Kenya who got together physically for the RecAf Digital Young Scholars' workshop in September





Carolina Beleño García in the transdisciplinary video *Memorias de una generación con olor a café*. Source: see qr code right

## Transdisciplinary Connections: Afro-Latin America meets Bayreuth

Text VALERIE V. V. GRUBER

**A**fter two years of virtual collaboration on questions of the African diasporas, three Latin American research partners of the Cluster project *Moral Geographies of Re-Existence* visited Bayreuth in 2021: Rigoberto Banguero Velasco, Laís Machado, and Diego Araújo. Their guest stays set the project's transdisciplinary knowledge production afloat.

The first Knowledge Lab session in 2021 was on *Emancipatory Methodologies: Transdisciplinarity and Dialogues of Knowledges in Intercultural Contexts*. Rigoberto Banguero Velasco's presentation stimulated a lively discussion in the virtual meeting room, leaving participants curious to continue the conversation on how to do "research with" as opposed to "research on" other(ed) cultures. Banguero, who holds a PhD in Humanities and a Master's in Popular Education and Community Development, is lecturer at the University of Valle in Colombia. His expertise in emancipatory methodologies was shared with Bayreuth in October 2021, when he spent three weeks presenting his longstanding experience in doing

research with indigenous and Afro-diasporic communities.

Among the highlights of his guest stay was the two-day BIGSAS workshop *Participatory Action Research: The Persistence of Utopias*, which Banguero facilitated together with Valerie Gruber (14 to 15 October). Researchers and students on different academic levels gained theoretical and practical skills in adopting the methodological approach developed by Colombian sociologist Orlando Fals Borda. Through group work, the participants experienced how to set up a process of knowledge co-production that aims at minimising power hierarchies between the researchers and the researched. These exercises provoked fruitful discussions on the applicability of this emancipatory methodology in Africa and beyond, gauging opportunities to stimulate social change inside and outside the academic field, without losing sight of challenges such as administrative hurdles, time limits, and quantitative "quality" standards. The participants highly appreciated the focus on research practice, bringing theoretical reflections on decoloniality to concrete terms.

After these methodological considerations, Banguero shifted the attention towards the "Re-Existence of African Spirituality in Colombia" in a public meeting of the Research Section *Moralities* (19 October). Providing examples of funeral rituals and living saints, he explored how memories of African spiritual practices have been reinvented and syncretised with Catholic spirituality and indigenous Shamanism at the Colombian Pacific coast. Facilitated by the translation/mediation of Gruber and commentary by Gilbert Shang Ndi, the dialogue with the audience revealed similarities and differences between religious practices in Africa and Latin America.

One of the most compassionate moments of Banguero's stay was the conversation *La Primera Línea: An Emerging Social Movement in Colombia* on 25 October in the Department of Geography at the UBT. Thereby, he gave insight into the resistance movement *La Primera Línea* (The Frontline), which emerged in Colombia amidst nationwide social protests and violent repression in 2021. Its demand to take the concerns of all citizens into account transcends the street protests and is significantly pro-

pelled by young people. Their collective trauma, caused by the longest civil war in contemporary history as well as ongoing violence and racism, generated a wave of compassion in the seminar room. This sensory dimension was achieved thanks to the video performance *Memorias de una generación con olor a café* ("Memories of a generation with the smell of coffee") directed by Colombian dancer/choreographer Carolina Beleño García and Mozambican musician/composer Matchume Zango. The video is an out-



Valerie Gruber and Rigoberto Banguero Velasco during the BIGSAS workshop *Participatory Action Research: The Persistence of Utopias*. Photo: Sabine Greiner

people, and racialized communities act as change agents.

The transdisciplinary dialogues set afloat during Banguero's guest stay continued in December 2021, when Diego Araújo and Laís Machado visited the Wagner city. The two transdisciplinary artists from Brazil founded the *ARAKÁ Platform* to establish connections between African and Afro-diasporic artists inspired by decolonial and black feminist thought. Araújo is one of the artistic

directors of the *Moral Geographies of Re-Existence* project. He co-directed the video performance *El Encuentro de las Tierras* (*The Confluence of Roots*), launched and discussed with Ute Fendler, Gruber,

methods together with Gruber in the study programme *Verbal and Visual Arts: Languages, Literatures, Arts and Curation* (AVVA) on 13 December. Machado's way of addressing experiences of sexual abuse in her performances provoked an engaged discussion. The guests concluded that arts and academia can nurture each other in transdisciplinary knowledge production, but this does not free academic researchers from solving academic problems, just as it does not free artists from solving problems in the artistic field. The lecture was rounded up with a guided tour at Iwalewahaus offered by Lena Naumann, leaving the visitors impressed by the institutional arts-academia nexus at the University of Bayreuth.

Apart from lectures, workshops, and project meetings, the guest stays also left room for excursions to the Fichtelgebirge and other beautiful places in and around Bayreuth. After two years of virtual collaboration, all the project members enjoyed these personal encounters amidst the white snow after watching bright screens for two years. In this way, the activities constituted a productive and joyful kick-off for the participatory action research carried out in 2022 in Colombia and Brazil, where emancipatory research methodologies are put into practice.

El Encuentro de las Tierras:



Memorias de una generación con olor a café:



come of the Participatory Action Research of the Cluster project *Moral Geographies of Re-Existence*, supported by Eberhard Rothfuß through the Chair of Social- and Population Geography. Beleño's dance and poetry performance narrates her mother's experience of forced displacement, and is transformed into a healing process through the musical composition of Zango. Gruber's mediation and Diana Mignano's commentary stimulated profound reflections on new social, cultural, and political protest movements in Colombia, in which women, young



Launch of the video *Memorias de una generación con olor a café* during the conversation *La Primera Línea: An Emerging Social Movement in Colombia*. Photo: Valerie Gruber

and Shang Ndi at the Cluster Conference in July 2021. Machado provided the narrative voice in the video and joined the trip to Bayreuth with Fendler's support.

Invited by Irina Turner, the two artists gave a master class on transdisciplinary



Valerie Gruber, Diego Araújo, Laís Machado and Regiane Marques Lindner at the top of Ochsenkopf.



## Field research on Local Councillors in Rwanda: Demographics and Networks

Text and photos MATTHEW SABBI

**T**he research project *In the 'Shadows of Autonomy': Decentralisation, Municipal Decision-makers and Local Contexts in Ghana and Rwanda* focuses on internationally promoted decentralisation.

The research team particularly analyses the activities of elected councillors whose everyday lives in office have been largely ignored. This includes the logic of actors who run for office in municipal councils, and explores how councillors influence local decisions. The project is affiliated with the University of Rwanda's (UR) School of Governance, thus enriching the established partnership between UR and the University of Bayreuth (UBT). The cooperation enjoys the personal support of the school's dean, Charles Mulinda Kabwete, and researcher Jean Baptiste Ndikubwimana, who is a lecturer at UR's School of Governance. Together with Ndikubwimana,

Jean de Dieu Nkubito, Japhet Kwitonda, and Theophile Sezabungu have become essential members of the fieldwork team. Research was conducted with the permission of the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) and with strong support from their directorate of research, headed by Félicien Usengumukiza, who happens to be a UBT alumnus.

Research has been conducted in four districts (Gicumbi, Huye, Karongi, and Kirehe), one from each of Rwanda's provinces. The team interviewed 203 municipal councillors, mainly representing the respective district's most urbanised and most rural sectors (response rate: 90-98%), supplemented by a sizeable number of district-level councillors, to understand their autonomy in making informed local decisions within the country's administrative settings, their local political networks, and ties that facilitate their roles. The main research instruments have been in-depth interviews and a social network survey using

the name-generator technique. The latter explores councillors' interpersonal networks for daily decision-making processes using a typical question, which triggers a series of related questions: 'With whom have you discussed matters important over the last year at the district, sector, and cell levels of local government?'

The preliminary results of the research project can be summarised as follows:

### Demographics

**Age and gender:** The councillors generally are energetic and motivated in their roles. Over a third of them are aged 40 years or younger, which is striking for a level of politics that typically attracts fewer young people. The strategy of promoting the youth, together with other fixed quotas for gender and special groups, ensures that all elements of society are represented in local decision-making units. The quotas imply that just about one-third of the councillors are directly elected to represent

the cells and sectors. Selection processes for group representatives sitting on the council are less transparent and require further research.

**Education:** The high level of educational attainment compared with elsewhere in Africa is striking, regardless of whether these councillors were directly elected or 'selected' from respective societal groups. Even in the largely rural sectors, an overwhelming number of councillors reported having acquired tertiary level qualifications. This might be the consequence of the unique political arrangements in Rwanda. Educational attainment is a valued asset for political office, and district mayors must have at least a bachelor's degree to run for office.

**Employment:** An overwhelming majority of councillors reported being actively engaged in formal employment, somewhat aligning with the high level of educational attainment. Only a handful of the councillors (about 2%) worked outside a solely formal sector job. This

is particularly striking for a country like Rwanda with a primarily agrarian population where one would expect a certain proportion of self-employed farmers to serve on the councils. The team suspects that additional agricultural activities are not viewed as an 'occupation' per se, but perhaps as a private activity.



ily members. Yet, the denser the councillors' networks, the more options they hold for performing their decision-making role and for finding solutions for pressing local demands. Councillors, on average, report frequent contacts with at least three people within their network to address local challenges.

### Consensual decision-making

Most often, councillors face issues that



mix personal problems with community demands. Citizens have high expectations with regard to problem-solving capacities in situations that frequently reach beyond the limited political mandate of their local political representatives. Yet there is evidence that the councillors accept the challenges and try to deploy their decision-making ties to address community demands responsibly. Councillors address

smaller individual issues and demands on their own but handle topics concerning wider local policies and broader societal issues in concert with colleagues and other district elites. In both ways, councillors derive high social esteem from addressing pressing local needs.

### Networks of decision partners

The project will continue with comparative field research in Ghana and supplementary research activities in Rwanda to consolidate insights into the daily realities of municipal politicians that many government and donor agencies regard as crucial development agents.

Though their political orientation often begins with familiar individuals, the councillors generally seem outward-looking with intensified networks in different arenas (i.e., the district, sector, and cell levels). This might relate to the need for a strong sense of 'self-representation' to outsiders. Indeed, it seems important for councillors to emphasise the formal roles of their opinion-building partners and less their personal or familial ties. Proximity to important network contacts stood out: foremost is councillors' formal political or occupational settings. This is followed

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## Afr(io)futurism: Debates, Contestations, Interventions – A Report

Text MARIO FAUST-SCALISI, XIN LI and BRITTA FREDE

**T**he postdoc Working Group “Afr(io)futurism” met during the winter term 2021/22 and was funded by the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence. Convened by Xin Li, Britta Frede, Mario Faust-Scalisi, and Gilbert Ndi Shang the group engaged with the question of how Africa’s futures can be envisioned by following a multidisciplinary approach, bringing together thoughts about interpreting futurist African art productions and their repertoires of future-making. Researchers from history, political science, linguistics, Islamic studies, literature studies, geography, anthropology, and art met throughout the winter term and approached notions of futurist visioning, their repertoires, and concepts.

The term ‘Afr(io)futurism’ entails two art movements that both intend to create visionary futures but are related in contrasting ways. The first movement concerns ‘Afrofuturism’, a literature and art movement that has developed mainly in the African Diaspora, especially in the United States. Starting in the 1990s, Afrofuturism inspired other emancipatory diasporic movements in the United States: more recently, Muslimfuturism

and Arabfuturism. Afrofuturism deals with concerns of the African Diaspora within the intersections of science and technology. These movements can be understood as a countermovement to the marginalisation experiences of diasporic communities in the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

The second movement is called ‘Africanfuturism’, a literature movement from the African continent that points to the inadequacy of Afrofuturism in addressing the continent and the people who live in it, and in accounting for the different historical realities that shape continental Africa’s contributions to futurist and speculative imaginary. This postdoctoral working group intended to bring both movements together. The term ‘Afr(io)futurism’ hints at exactly these varieties of marginalisation experiences in the Diaspora and on the continent that art productions from these sources make visible through strategies of speculative imaginaries.

### Conceptualising Afr(io)futurism

During the winter term, the Working Group invited several guest speakers to online discussions about various aspects of Afr(io)futurist debates and expressions. The term started with a lecture by Tolulope Oke (University of Bayreuth/UBT) presenting his work on

Artwork: Jessi Jumani

Afro- and Africanfuturist literature as an entry into the discussion of the topic. In the second lecture, Renzo Baas (University of Bochum, Anglophone Literature Studies), presented his research about Rodolpho Leo’s Namibia and Nnedi Okorafor’s *Binti* problematising African marginalisation in the global science fiction genre. This presentation was followed up by a focus on African science fiction productions written in African languages by Alena Rettová (UBT). Her presentation provoked an awareness that speculative thinking in African contexts needs to be broadened from the categories formed by the capitalistic logics of a global book market for so-called “world literatures”.

The following sessions focused on repertoires of futurist thinking. James Wachira (University of Bayreuth, Anglophone Literatures) presented his work on the Kenyan science fiction film *Pumzi*, produced by Wanuri Kahiu in 2009. Wachira contextualised the science fiction production within the Kenyan environmental activism of Wangari Maathai. During the following public lecture *Africanfuturism in Action*, Ralph Borland (University of Cape Town, South Africa), an artist and researcher at the Institute for Humanities in Africa (HUMA) presented an overview of his research engagement and art projects, including *African Robots*, *SPACECRAFT*, and his projects on artificial intelligence (AI). The joint discussion and lecture series concluded with Anima Adjepong (University of Cincinnati, USA), who gave a lecture on sexuality and queerness as embedded in Afr(io)futurist narratives in arts, literature, and activist movements.

The interdisciplinary approach and engagement throughout the winter term resulted in the organization of a two days’ workshop in February where the participants explored postcolonial future making inspired by Afr(io)futurist creative productions in literature, film and art. This has opened pathways of reflecting future making in complex and entangled ways within African studies that are going to be explored further. Ideas that circulated around continuing the debate via a newsletter group and thinking about joint publications will be taken up and further results will hopefully be presented to a broader public within the upcoming months. 🌍

## News

### A warm welcome to the new Academic Coordinator of the Institute of African Studies!

The Institute of African Studies (IAS) welcomes a fresh member of the team: Jane Ayeko-Kümmeth is the new Academic Coordinator. She took office on 1 April 2022. Ayeko-Kümmeth’s career is a blend of academics, journalism, and development cooperation. She holds a PhD in Political Sciences, a master’s degree in Peace and Conflict Studies, and a BA in Communication Science. Her main academic work focuses on governance, politics, and development policy in Africa. She has taught in several universities both in Germany and beyond, including Police Senior Command and Staff College in Uganda, where she taught in the MA programme on Peace and Security Studies. As a graduate of the University of Bayreuth, Ayeko-Kümmeth is no stranger to the IAS and the African Studies community in Bayreuth.

Ayeko-Kümmeth brings not only her expertise in academic research but also from many years of journalism, both in her home country Uganda and in Germany (for example, for Deutsche Welle), and a wealth of experience in public engagement and with international development organisations, including the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), where she coordinated a governance programme in Uganda and the African Union, among other accomplishments.

In 2022, based on her personal achievements and social engagement, the Bavarian State Ministry of Family, Labour, and Social Affairs selected Ayeko-Kümmeth as one of the most influential women in Bavaria.



Jane Ayeko-Kümmeth

### Mingqing Yuan – Prize of the International Club

The International Club (IC) for the University of Bayreuth e.V. aims to support the internationalization process of the University, builds bridges between the City of Bayreuth and the University and thus is considered a valuable support organization for all parties. In 2021 the International Club awarded BIGSAS Junior Fellow Mingqing Yuan with the “Prize of the International Club”. Mingqing Yuan’s research with Prof. Susan Arndt explores the intersections and interweavings of histories, societies and narratives about global and local issues in Kenya and China. The ICs Selection Committee highly valued Yuan’s extra-curricular work on blogposts and online forums which targets to introduce the Chinese public to African literature and change the image of the African continent in Chinese perception. In light of the “Black-Lives-Matter Movement” Mingqing Yuan was an integral part in creating awareness for gender specific topics in the Chinese speaking diaspora/ society.



Mingqing Yuan (left) with the chairperson of the International Club, Mavie Schäfer

## Joh Sarre – Prize of the City of Bayreuth

BIGSAS alumnus Joh Sarre has been awarded the “City of Bayreuth Award (Preis der Stadt Bayreuth)” for handing in a summa cum laude dissertation titled ‘Some call it slum, we call it home!’ - *Negotiations of belonging among the Nubian inhabitants of Kibera, Kenya*. Joh Sarre is one of three candidates to receive the prestigious award for outstanding dissertations at the University of Bayreuth. Sarre’s research centers around questions how forms of belonging are lived, experienced and expressed in the multi-ethnic settlements of Kibera, Kenya. The target group at hand is the Nubi community, who claim to be descendants of African mercenaries in the colonial troops and the rightful owners of the former military settlement now turned slum. Sarre’s thesis is an important contribution to the understanding of the particular situation of Kenyan Nubians. After a successful dissertation in 2021 Sarre plans to work in the field of consulting and coaching (scientific) writing projects.



Mayor Thomas Ebersberger hands the Prize to Joh Sarre (right)

## Dr. Alžběta Šváblová – VAD Award 2020/21

The “Verein für Afrikawissenschaften (VAD)” awarded Dr. Alžběta Šváblová the „VAD Award” for excelling with her dissertation *A tortuous way forward: Peacebuilding process and actor interaction in post-war Liberia*. In her dissertation she examined the interaction of the government of Liberia, Liberian civil society, and international actors against the backdrop of specific institutions, where these actors meet. Additionally she shed light on the institutional framework of the interaction and its challenges in time.

After finishing her Master programme in “International Relations” from the Charles University in Prague she became a BIGSAS Junior Fellow. Šváblová has been teaching classes on development theories, post-conflict contexts, as well as research methodology at Prof. Dr. Jana Hönke’s Chair for Sociology of Africa. She now works as a research associate for the Sociology of Africa Chair Group.



Alžběta Šváblová

## Cluster receives “Gratitude Sculpture” from Faraj Remmo

The Cluster of Excellence was awarded the “Gratitude Sculpture” by Faraj Remmo. The sculpture is meant as a recognition of the Cluster’s engagement in the field of diversity and integration. Faraj Remmo, a scholar of education sciences at the University of Bielefeld in Germany, has made it his life’s mission to work and create awareness for the issues of inclusion.

After an accident that left him a quadriplegic, Faraj Remmo has been working tirelessly to increase awareness for issues regarding inclusion and diversity. To promote his goals even further, Remmo initiated several awards that recognize special achievements in these areas. One of the awards that he created four years ago is the “Gratitude Sculpture” which he has sent out to more than 235 institutions or individuals in 90 countries who have “rendered outstanding services to the global community”. Recipients include, among many others, Stephen Hawking, Margarethe von Trotta, “Reporter ohne Grenzen” – and now the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence.



Photo: Sabine Greiner

## Kenneth Kaunda Oluoch (1961-2022): An Obituary

It is with great sadness that the African Cluster Centre (ACC) at Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya announced the passing of Kenneth Kaunda Oluoch on 2 March 2022. Until his demise, Oluoch was the spokesperson and the Principal Investigator of the Research Section Affiliations at the ACC. He was also the Chair of the Department of History, Political Science, and Public Administration in the School of Arts and Social Sciences, and a member of the Moi University Senate. An Associate Professor of International Relations, Oluoch has published widely on conflicts in Africa, the South Sudan dilemma, statism and regionalism, peacebuilding in the African Great Lakes region, and has edited a book on African international relations.

Oluoch was the Principal Investigator in the team working on the Africa Multiple-sponsored project titled: Regional integration in Eastern and Southern Africa: An appraisal of factors that influence regional integration in Africa: The case of East African Community. The project has just concluded and the team is in the process of publishing and disseminating the results.

Oluoch attended the University of Nevada, Reno, USA for his BA, and earned his MA from the same university in 1996. He received his PhD in International Relations from the University of Nairobi, Kenya, in 2012. Text: Peter Simatei



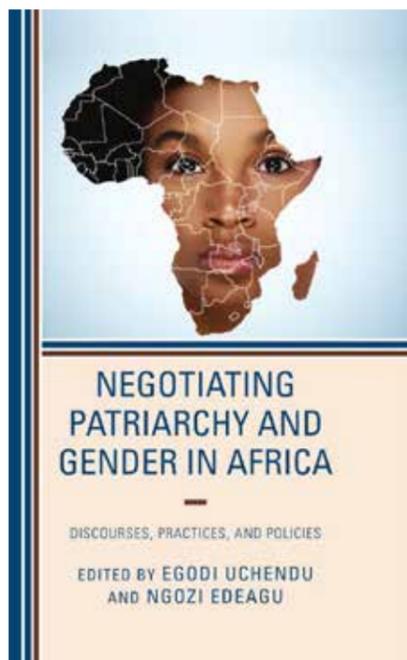
## LOVA Marjan Rens Master’s Thesis Award

The LOVA Marjan Rens Master’s Thesis Award 2021 was granted to Hannah Schild during an online award ceremony on 28 May 2021. Fenneke Reysoo acted as Chair of the jury, which was formed by Kathrine van den Bogert and Kim Knibbe. Schild was awarded the first prize. Her thesis, ‘I am a woman. But in addition, I am a mother’: *Women Navigating Politics, Conflict and Uncertainty in Zanzibar* was written for her Master’s in African Studies at Leiden University. The thesis builds on feminist scholarship on motherhood, mothering, and maternal thinking, and thoroughly discusses controversies in Western feminisms and the counter-reactions in African feminisms. The author coins the concept of ‘maternal navigation’ to explore the maternal subjectivities, practices, and strategies of Zanzibar women in relation to politics. The field research evolved in challenging conditions, but proficiency in Swahili helped Schild collect rich ethnographic data about women’s political activities or the absence thereof. The rather long period of analysis and writing – often underestimated – has contributed to the outstanding final result in which the author seamlessly analysed and reconnected the data to historical, reflexive, and theoretical dimensions. “Thinking through ethnography” really applies to this thesis.



# African Studies in Bayreuth: Reading Recommendations

For NAB 2021, we have introduced a new section in which members of the Institute of African Studies (IAS), the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence and graduates of the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) present their research in accessible prose. We will feature monographs and edited books. While readers should note that our members also publish their work in journals and other formats, books are still the most tangible medium for “touching base.” Enjoy!

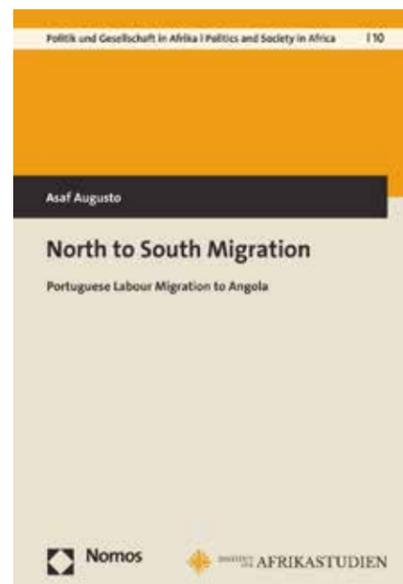


Egodi Uchendu and Ngozi Edeagu, **Negotiating Patriarchy and Gender in Africa: Discourses, Practices, and Policies**, 2021, Lexington Books.

*Negotiating Patriarchy and Gender in Africa: Discourses, Practices, and Policies* examines the entrenchment of patriarchy in Africa and its attendant socio-economic and political consequences on gender relations. The contributors analyse the historical and modern ways in which gender expectations have in some African societies systematically abused and marginalised women, from

unpaid labor to poor representation in decision-making areas. Exploring regions such as rural Uganda, the suburbs of Zimbabwe, the Gold Coast, South Africa, and Nigeria’s Nollywood, contributors incorporate a wide range of academic theories and disciplines to establish the need for improved policy implementation on gender issues at both the local and national government levels in Africa.

Collectively, this volume argues that the entrenchment of patriarchy in Africa and its attendant socio-economic and political consequences for gender relations is far from resolved. The volume ends with a call to action to local, national, international, and global institutions and governments to quicken Africa’s progress towards greater equality in all socio-economic and political spheres. Thus, it will be a useful text for students, practitioners and academics alike.



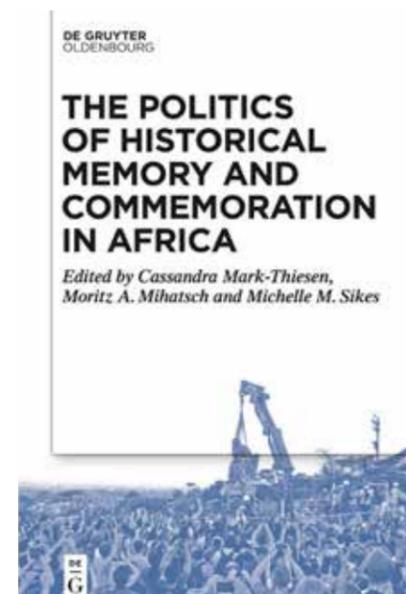
Augusto Asaf, **North to South Migration. Portuguese Labour Migration to Angola**, 2021, Nomos/Institut für Afrikastudien.

The economic crisis which has affected the southern European countries since 2008 has set in motion new migration trends. In the case of Portugal, post-crisis migration has taken two main di-

## Recent Book Publications



rections: First, northwards to the more prosperous European countries, and secondly, southwards to former Portuguese colonies in Africa, notably the oil-producing state of Angola. This book looks at Portuguese migration to Angola as a North-South migration and demonstrates theoretically as well as empirically how this migration is not only caused by economic crisis but that it can also be connected to historical, linguistic, cultural, and family connections that continue to dominate Portuguese and Angolan encounters. The book uses different theoretical frameworks to explain the dynamics involved in this migration. One specific feature is the concept of coloniality of power, which explains the ethnic capital that Portuguese migrants have in Angola based on past colonial encounters where being white and coming from Europe is still considered admirable. So, even in cases where Portuguese migrants are not necessarily skilled, they are considered skilled in an Angolan context. The book also challenges the dominant Eurocentric nature of migration studies that tends to conceptualise migration as a one-way street from Africa to Europe by demonstrating that in some cases migration can also be from Europe to Africa, albeit on a smaller scale.

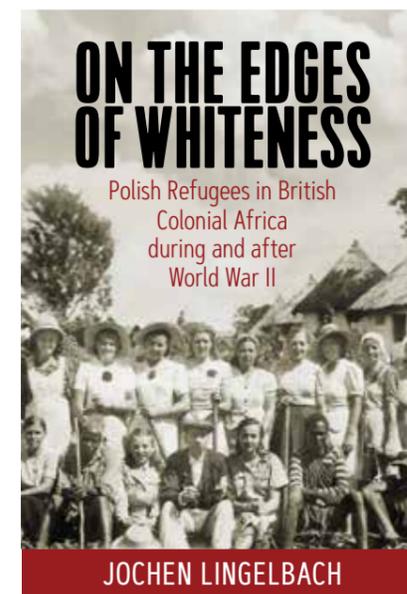


Cassandra Mark-Thiesen, Moritz Mihatsch, and Michelle M. Sikes (eds.), **The Politics of Historical Memory and Commemoration in Africa**, 2021, De Gruyter.

Against the backdrop of social media hashtags #RMF and #BLM, societies

across the globe are confronting the production of history and public memory in collective ways. As public arenas transform, at times becoming more diverse, how and why societies remember and forget, what should serve as symbols of collective memory, and whether space exists for multiple memory cultures are vigorously debated questions. This volume centres the African past and present in a discussion about pluralistic remembrance cultures. Its purpose is to approach this topic through a combination of methodological and thematic discussions, as well as within a broad range of geographic locations and chronology. Featured case studies explore memory and commemoration in Algeria, Liberia, Somalia, Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria, amongst others.

On the topic of knowledge production, contributions also highlight the instrumentalisation of “forgetting” and dialogical absences. For instance, in the epilogue, Ruramisai Charumbira discusses the silencing of an African past in Europe, insisting that, “The stump of [European] history seems embodied in black and brown bodies” (p. 199). Additional chapters explore power relations embedded in memory practices in African death cultures, politics, history writing, and official celebrations. Available open access!



Jochen Lingelbach, **On the Edges of Whiteness: Polish Refugees in British Colonial Africa during and after the Second World War**, 2020, Berghahn.

During World War II, thousands of European refugees escaped their war-ravaged continent in search of safety in Africa. One of the largest groups came from Poland and arrived after an extraordinary odyssey in the British colonies of East and Central Africa. How did the colonial administrators and settlers handle this heavy influx of poor whites? How did Africans view these destitute Europeans? And how did the refugees position themselves in the racist, hierarchical, colonial societies?

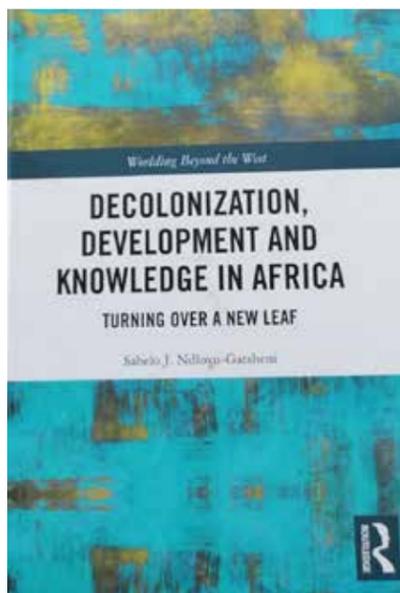
The recent book, *On the Edges of Whiteness: Polish Refugees in British Colonial Africa During and After the Second World War*, uncovers this fascinating history. The author argues that the white refugees were in a complex and ambivalent social position, privileged and marginalised at the same time. From their unlikely sojourn, we can learn two things: First, the social boundaries of race in colonial societies were contested, and it required the colonisers’ work to reproduce them constantly. Second, while people are always fleeing violence and misery, flight directions change over time. Today’s battlefield might be tomorrow’s safe haven.



Maria Ketzmerick, **State, Security, and Violence in Cameroon: Postcolonial Perspectives on the Decolonisation Process under French UN Trust Administration**, 2019, Transcript.

The Cameroonian internationalised

decolonisation process escalated violently despite the supervision of the United Nations (UN) Trusteeship system, which was meant to support a peaceful transition towards independence under the shared mandate of France and Britain. Central to the violence was the conflict between the anticolonial forces of the Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC) and the French administration. This book analyses the trajectories and long-term effects of the Cameroonian trusteeship period lasting from 1948 to 1960 by looking at the conflict around the monopoly of violence and the constructions of security, threats to public order, and articulations of insecurity induced by different actors. The study specifically follows the actors in conflict, the anticolonial party UPC, and the French administration that used their security visions to lobby for legitimacy and representation in the future state of Cameroon. To understand these conflictive dynamics, a postcolonial perspective on security is developed, which enables a deeper understanding of the marginalisation and sidelining of anticolonial actors, but also their say in the visions and imaginaries for the transition. Empirically, by analysing archival material and over 10,000 petitions, and triangulating this with data from interviews and other sources, four narratives can be identified that evolve around the contestations between the French UN administration, the anticolonial UPC, and other actors. The book contributes to a differentiated perspective of the UN Trusteeship system as a room to navigate independence and Cameroon's internationalised decolonisation by assembling research in critical security studies, international political sociology, and historical approaches to international relations. By confining the different visions of security that came into conflict, the book calls for a more inclusive and postcolonial perspective of security by following the security narratives from the decolonisation period to critical junctures in the independent state. Furthermore, it argues for historical perspectives on intervention and state-building to understand the historical trajectories of internationalised humanitarian interventions and the political and societal conflicts that are embedded within.

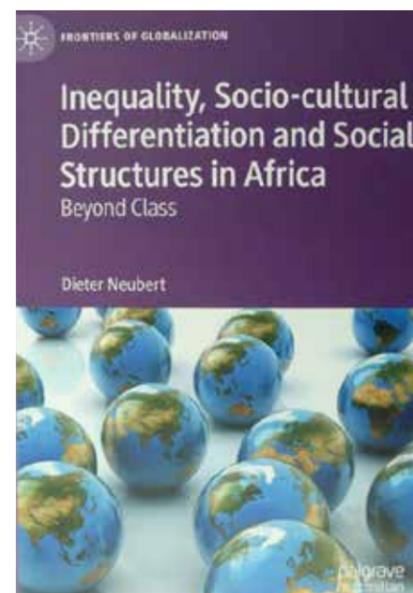


Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni: **Decolonization, Development and Knowledge in Africa: Turning Over A New Leaf**, 2020, Routledge.

With a focus on Africa and its Diaspora, this book deploys decolonial theory and analysis to reflect on the meaning of decolonisation in relation to postcolonialism while advancing a decolonial turn for Africa; examines the broad subject of being Black in the modern world as an invented form of subjectivity/identity, in the process highlighting its external and internal constructions and reconstructions; it traces and articulates the genealogies of the Bandung spirit from the epic Haitian Revolution to the African renaissance initiatives; the book turns to the subject of African political economy and examines how African economic thought is entrapped in colonial matrices of power and conventional and classical economics that is often not relevant to Africa; and finally, it examines African humanities and their contributions to epistemic freedom.

The book is predicated on the insurgent and resurgent decolonisation of the 21st century known as decoloniality. It attempts to bridge the long-standing African decolonisation intellectual tradition represented by such leading lights as Cheikh Anta Diop, Walter Rodney, Samir Amin, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Claude Ake, Toyin Falola, Ifi Amadiume, Oyeronke Oyewumi, and many others with the Diaspora-generated Black radical tradition represented by such leading scholars as W. E. B. Dubois, C. L. R. James, Cedric

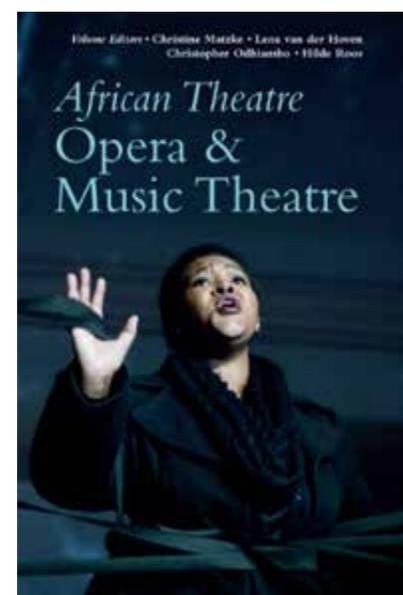
Robinson, Eric Williams, Angela Davis, Patricia Hill Collins, and many others, while at the same time bringing all this into creative engagement with the Latin American coloniality/decoloniality school advanced by such scholars as Enrique Dussel, Maria Lugones, Walter D. Mignolo, Catherine Walsh, Anibal Quijano, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Ramon Grosfoguel, and many others. The result is an expanded canvas of decolonial theory and thought that is transnational and transgenerational – enabling the articulation of what Frantz Fanon called for – moving beyond the European game and turning over a new leaf, so as to set afoot a new humanism.



Dieter Neubert, **Inequality, Socio-cultural Differentiation and Social Structures in Africa: Beyond Class**, 2019, Palgrave.

The sociological analysis of societies in Africa too often just reproduces European-based sociology. This ignores the fact that those concepts were developed with regard to the particular case of industrialisation in Europe in the 19th and early 20th centuries. This obstructs our view of the African social reality. From the 1960s onwards, empirical findings have repeatedly provided evidence that standard class concepts do not apply in Africa, yet these findings have mostly been ignored. For an analysis of the social structures and the persisting extreme inequality in African societies – and in other societies of the world – we need to consider the empirical realities and provincialise our conventional theories; we need to go beyond

class. The monograph pursues two aims. First, it revisits past and present research on African societies and provides a comprehensive overview and analysis of the state of the art of social science studies on African societies. This includes studies on poverty, class, socio-cultural differences such as ethnicity, neo-traditional authorities, patron-client relations, lifestyles, and research on gender, age, and disability, and finally on formal and informal social security systems. Second, it presents a more nuanced framework for the analyses of inequality and social structure in Africa. It is based on a multi-dimensional livelihood approach, intersectionality, and more recent open sociological concepts such as milieu and an empirical analysis of socio-economic positioning (social situation). The framework presented is not the end of the discussion: It offers a first contribution to rethinking social inequality and socio-cultural differentiation beyond the limitations of the conventional class concepts.

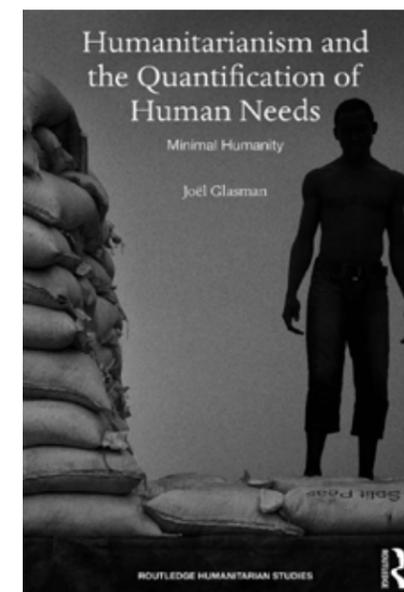


Christine Matzke, Lena van der Hoven, Christopher Odhiambo and Hilde Roos (eds.), **African Theatre 19: Opera and Music Theatre**, 2020, James Currey.

Music is often cited as a central artistic mode in African and African Diasporic theatre and performance practices. Yet, little attention has been paid to music theatre in general, and to opera in particular, with the exceptions of a few noted West African forms and the emerging research on opera culture in South Africa. The last, and final, volume

of the African Theatre series highlights the diversity of the genre across the continent and beyond, with examples ranging from Egypt to South Africa, from Uganda to West Africa, and the USA. What the book does, above all, is to raise questions and encourage debate: What does 'opera' mean in African and African Diasporic contexts? What are its practices and legacies – colonial, postcolonial, and decolonial; what is its relation to the intersectionalities of race and class? How do opera and music theatre reflect, change, or obscure social, political, and economic realities? How are they connected to educational and cultural institutions, and non-profit organisations? And why is opera contradictorily, at various times, perceived as both 'grand' and 'elitist', 'folk' and 'quodidian', 'Eurocentric' and 'indigenous'?

Issues addressed include the porousness of genre boundaries, aesthetic transformation processes, media, questions of historiography, composition practices and identity strategies, and the role of space and place. Contributors hail from musicology, composition, dance, film, theatre and performance, anthropology, international relations, and postcolonial studies, and their disciplinary diversity is also reflected in their multiple methodologies and varieties of style. The first book of its kind to go beyond a single national or regional context, African Theatre 19 helps broaden the scope of current definitions and breaks ground for a more inclusive understanding of opera and music theatre studies worldwide.



Joël Glasman, **Humanitarianism and the Quantification of Human Needs: Minimal Humanity**, 2020, Routledge.

The humanitarian governance of Africa relies heavily on numbers: refugee statistics, mortality rates, the prevalence of malnutrition, etc. For mainstream scholarship, statistics are a proof of the modernisation and rationalisation of aid. The United Nations is calling for a "data revolution" and "statistical evidence-based" humanitarian aid. For critical scholars on the other hand, datafication is the consequence of a neoliberalisation of the world. For Béatrice Hibou, however, the use of numbers in humanitarian aid is a sign of the importation of market rationality into aid practices. NGOs tend to adopt tools developed by the corporate world – such as accounting, management, or benchmarking.

Both perspectives are interesting. There is a process of specialisation underway. Neoliberal ideas do influence humanitarian agencies. However, these perspectives underplay the specificities of the humanitarian field. Humanitarian organisations have a certain autonomy and their own agenda. This book therefore gives a fresh look at humanitarian governance: the core argument is that humanitarian organisations have themselves taken strategic decisions that ultimately tend to overestimate the objectivity of numbers and downplay qualitative data and silence local voices. Thus, humanitarian concepts of "basic needs" are flawed, for these rely too heavily on universal indicators and a scientist's vision of humans. This book explores archival material from several agencies and non-governmental organisations (Doctors without Borders, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, The Sphere Project, etc.) and draws on fieldwork in Eastern Cameroon in order to grasp this history. It ultimately shows that the calculation of "people in need" is determined as much by the internal power struggles between humanitarian organisations as it is by the requests of populations.

For a complete list of publications that emerged out of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence please visit:



# The International Fellowship scheme in 2021

Text ROBERT DEBUSMANN

**In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic still had a significant impact on the Fellowship Programme. While at the beginning of the winter semester 2020/2021 hopes had been high that it would be possible to return to normal operations, the "second wave" created a new situation.**

The accompanying lockdown forced the Cluster and the University as a whole to restrict face-to-face meetings again. A small number of Fellows had already come to Bayreuth, but the restrictions imposed meant that face-to-face interaction was abandoned and the Fellow programme, like the entire Cluster programme, moved back to Zoom. Many Fellows wanted to postpone their residency plans again, but the Cluster direction set a deadline until the end of the summer semester. The Fellows finally accepted the offer to practice online fellowships, i.e., to attend all meetings via

Zoom. Thus, mandatory attendance in Bayreuth was replaced by mandatory participation in certain meetings.

A total of 32 Fellows had announced their intention to participate in the programme during 2021. Most of them did so from their home locations, but others were in Bayreuth, often working next door in the Bayreuth Academy building without actually meeting each other. Only in the course of the summer semester did it become possible again to cautiously meet outside or masked in rooms that were only one-third used. The most attractive seminar location became the garden of the Bayreuth Academy in Hugo-Rüdel-Straße 10, where open-air roundtables were happily combined with barbecue afternoons. The pandemic, with its unforeseeable changes of restriction and relaxation in Germany and in the Fellows' countries of origin, with the uncertainty in international travel, and with the associated health risks, made any forward planning

difficult in 2021. Under the conditions of isolation and uncertainty, however, the persons involved were pleased that the Fellow Programme could continue through virtual meetings and academic exchange via screens. The international Fellows have taken up this offer with great commitment and enriched the Cluster with their lively contributions. 🌍

Fellows 2020/21:  
<https://www.bayreuth-academy.uni-bayreuth.de/en/Fellows/Fellows-2020>



Fellows 2021/22:  
<https://www.bayreuth-academy.uni-bayreuth.de/en/Fellows/Fellows-2021>



Fellow Lectures:  
[https://www.bayreuth-academy.uni-bayreuth.de/en/News\\_Activities/Fellows\\_lectures/](https://www.bayreuth-academy.uni-bayreuth.de/en/News_Activities/Fellows_lectures/)




The fellows that arrived at UBT at the beginning of the winter term 2021/22 at one of the first meetings with team „Research“ and members of the Junior Research Group „African Knowledges“.

## Fellows in 2021 (International Fellows, Internal Fellows, Artists in Residence)



**Noah Salomon**  
01.01. – 31.03.21



**Memory Biwa:**  
15.01.– 30.06.21



**Artist in Residence  
Btihal Remli:**  
01.02. – 31.07.21



**Fábio Baqueiro  
Figueiredo:**  
01.02. – 31.07.21



**Saheed Adesumbo  
Bello:**  
01.02.– 31.07.21



**Hassan Juma Ndzovu:**  
01.02.– 31.07.21



**Jonas do Nascimento:**  
01.02.– 31.07.21



**Nadine N. Machikou:**  
15.02.–15.06.21



**B Camminga:**  
01.03.– 30.04.21



**Abisoye Eleshin:**  
01.03. – 30.06.21



**Abel Ugba:**  
01.03.– 31.07.21



**Weeraya  
Donsomsakulkij:**  
15.03.–31.07.21



**Billian K. Otundo:**  
01.04.– 31.07.21



**Artist in Residence  
Zainab A. Omaki:**  
01.04.–31.07.21



**Stephen M. Magu:**  
01.04.–31.07.21



**Carla Lever:**  
01.04.–31.07.21



**Ann A. Laudati:**  
01.04.–31.07.21



**Boubacar Sissoko:**  
01.04.– 31.07.21



**Ester Botta Somparé:**  
15.04.–15.07.21



**Andrew J. Eisenberg:**  
01.05.–31.07.21



**Daiana Nascimento dos Santos:**  
01.05.–01.07.21



**Karim Nchare:**  
24.05.– 26.07.21



**Annmarie Drury:**  
27.05.–18.07.21



**Jon D. Holtzman:**  
01.06.–31.07.21



**Wendy Wilson-Fall:**  
01.06.–13.07.21



**Zoly Rakotoniera:**  
01.06.–30.06.21



**Pedro Sobral Pombo:**  
07.06.–09.07.21



**Henriette Gunkel:**  
01.10.21–31.07.22



**Viviane de Freitas:**  
01.10.21–31.07.22



**Babacar Mbaye Diop:**  
01.10.21–28.02.22



**Internal fellow  
Susanne Lachenicht:**  
01.10.21–31.03.22



**Sharon Adetutu Omotoso:**  
11.10.21–07.01.22



# Events and Guests

## January 2021

**07.01.21 - Lecture Series:**  
**Intersectionality and Critical Diversity Literacy**  
*Intersectionality in Diaspora*

**07.01.21 - Knowledge Lab Methodology Forum:**  
*Emancipatory Methodologies:  
Transdisciplinarity and Dialogues*

*See report on page 31.*

**14.01.21 - New Year Lecture 2021:**  
*Polyrhythmic gestures: Relational Perspectives on/from verbal, audio/visual and performative arts across the African continent*

*See report on page 30.*

**14.01.21 - Lecture Series:**  
**Intersectionality and Critical Diversity Literacy**  
*Exclusions, Unite! Why It Is Crucial to Think Inclusion with an Intersectional Lens*

*See report on page 34.*

**14.01.21 - Knowledge Lab Lecture:**  
*Reflexive African Studies Forum: How to conceptualize 'the field' in reflexive African Studies?*

*See report on page 31.*

**14.01.21 - Fellows' Lectures:**  
*Romance and Chick lit in and out of Togo. A chapter of the project: Generic innovations, intermedial aesthetics and the circulation of African literatures: Togo in a comparative perspective by Susanne Gehrmann*

*See report on page 104.*

**14.01.21 - Sprint lecture:**  
*Invisible Intellectuals. African Academic Mobility in Question with Nadine Machikou*

**19.01.-24.02.2021 - International Conference:**  
*Africa Knows!*

**21.01.21 - Fellows' Lectures:**  
*Canvas Adrift: Vamona Navelcar and the Unframed Ocean by Rodney Benedetto Ferrao*

*See report on page 104.*

**21.01.21 - Lecture Series:**  
**Intersectionality and Critical Diversity Literacy**  
*Medieval Europe and the Challenge of (religious) Diversity*  
*See report on page 34.*

**21.01.21 - Fellows' Lectures:**  
*Class in relation: Modalities of socio-economic relating in the context of transnational (forced) migration by Tabea Scharrer*

*See report on page 104.*

**21.01.21 - Knowledge Lab Lecture:**  
*Fluid Ontologies - Dissolving the Known?*

*See report on page 31.*

**21.01.21 - Knowledge Lab Lecture:**  
*Reflexive African Studies Forum: Reconfiguring African Studies III - Clashing Theories*

*See report on page 31.*

**22.01.21 - BIGSAS Colloquium II**

**28.01.21 - Fellows' Lectures:**  
*Generation, Power, and Inheritance: Intergenerational Dialogue at the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in South African migration by Eleanor Tiplady Higgs*

*See report on page 104.*

**28.01.21 - Lecture Series:**  
**Intersectionality and Critical Diversity Literacy**  
*Are you disabled? - Understanding 'Disability' and Ableism*  
*See report on page 34.*

**28.01.21 - Sprint Lecture:**  
*COVID-19 and the politics of (im)mobility in Uganda by Martin Doevenspeck & Paddy Kinyera*

**28.01.21 - Knowledge Lab Lecture Discussion:**  
*Theory Forum (Modalities): A Quest for the Origin of Media: From Instruments to Containers*

*See report on page 31.*

## February 2021

**04.02.21 - Lecture Series:**  
**Intersectionality and Critical Diversity Literacy**  
*Childism: A Minor Dimension of Major Significance*  
See report on page 34

**11.02.21 - Sprint Lecture:**  
*Im/mobilities and their research methods* by Larissa Schindler

**04.02.21 - Knowledge Lab Lecture:**  
*Theory Forum (Modalities): Debt, Dominance and Conflict Realism in the Global Funnel Economy*  
See report on page 31.

**17.02.21 - PI Lecture at ACC Lagos:**  
*Reclaiming the self through a re-reading of African Human Relationship*

**11.02.21 - Lecture Series:**  
**Intersectionality and Critical Diversity Literacy**  
*Centre et Périphérie: Intersectionality and Francophone African Literature*  
See report on page 34.

**18.02.21 - Lecture Series:**  
**Intersectionality and Critical Diversity Literacy**  
*Who Needs Feminism? Who Needs Intersectionality?*  
See report on page 34.

**11.02.21 - Fellows' Lectures:**  
*What Lies Beneath the Sands: History and Religion in Revolutionary Sudan* by Noah Salomon  
See report on page 104.

**25.02.21 - ASCL Seminar:**  
*Reflexive African Studies Forum: Reconfiguring African Studies III - Clashing Theories*

## March 2021

**16.03.21 - Talk at Moi-ACC:**  
*Moralities and Identities of Africa's Urban Centres* by Jesse N. K. Mugambi  
See report on page 58.

**31.03.21 - Reading:**  
*RecAf Spring School 2021: A reading by Zainab A. Omaki*

**17.03.21 - Lecture at ACC Lagos:**  
by Obadele Kambon  
See report on page 58.



14.01.21



31.03.21



19.04.21

## April 2021

**19.04.21 - AfriKaleidoskop:**  
*Afro Deutschland* with Jana Pareigis  
See report on page 39

**26.04.-13.07.2021 - Lecture Series:**  
*Globalization and Nationalisms*

## May 2021

**04.05.-17.06.2021 - XXI Factory of Ideas - Advanced Doctoral School of Ethnic and African Studies:**  
*PANDEMICS AND UTOPIAS: durable inequalities and authoritarianism*  
See report on page 66.

**20.05.21 - Sprint Lecture by Dr. Fredrick Okaka:**  
*Emerging (im)mobility trends along the LAPSSET corridor*

**06.05.21 - Exhibition and Celebration:**  
*"Not yet" - Iwalewaha celebrates its 40th anniversary*  
See report on page 46.

**21.05.21 - Workshop:**  
*Fielding the field*

**13.05.-16.05.2021 - 33rd Swahili Colloquium:**  
*COnline Workshop "Critical Swahili Studies"*  
See report on page 32.

**26.05.21 - AfriKaleidoskop:**  
*Roots Germania - Mo Asumang*  
See report on page 39.

**14.05.21 - ICDL Symposium:**  
*Intersectional Interrogations of Reproductive Health for Women from Africa and ist Diasporas*  
See report on page 34.

## Guests of the Institute of African Studies in Bayreuth (IAS)

Name	From	Institution	Visit
Lamine Doumbia	Mali	Deutsches Historisches Institut Paris (DHIP), France	10.06.-10.07.2021
Talya Lubinsky	Berlin	Artist	15.06.-04.09.2021
Kwaku Darko-Mensah Jr.	Ghana/Canada	Artist	07.07.-16.07.2021
Emeka Alams	USA	Artist	08.07.-08.08.2021
Mimboabe Bakpa	Togo	Université de Kara, Togo	29.08.-29.09.2021



13.-16.05.21



26.05.21



03.-06.06.21

## June 2021

**03.06.-06.06.2021 - Model African Union 2021:**  
*Made in Africa. Innovations, Concepts and Solutions for the Challenges of our Time*  
See report on page 74.

**21.06.21 - AfriKaleidoskop:**  
*Mariannes Noires - Mame-Fatou Niang and Kaytie Nielsen*  
See report on page 39.

## July 2021

**02.07.21 - Screening:**  
Documentary: *My Utopia* by Onejoon Che

**14.-17.07.2021 - International Cluster Conference:**  
*Africa\*n Relations: Modalities Reflected*

See report on page 28.

**02.07.-03.07.2021 - Workshop:**  
*Multifaceted Relations: Africa-Asia*

See report on page 43.

**15.07.21 - The Okwui Enwezor Distinguished Lecture:**  
*The Postcolonial Museum*

See report on page 28.

**05.07.21 - Screening:**  
Documentary: *A letter to my cousin* by Henion Han

**19.07.-25.07.2021 - Workshop:**  
*The search for coherence in Africa's plural legal systems*

**08.07.21 - Workshop:**  
*The Economic History of Poverty in Africa*

**21.07.21 - Meet & Greet the Artist with Btihal Remli and opening of exhibition:**  
*The Migration of Djinn*

See report on page 46.

**08.07.-11.07.2021 - Workshop:**  
*Undisciplining and methodologies of care Rethinking the Politics of Knowledge in Postcolonial Landscapes*

**27.07.21 - Workshop**  
*Security Challenges in West Africa: Multiforms & Perspectives*

**12.07.21 - AfriKaleidoskop:**  
*Brazilian film session*

See report on page 39.

**28.07.21 - Conversation:**  
*Journeys and Memories: writing the past and righting the present - with Elnathan John*



02.07.21



14.-17.07.21



15.07.21

## August 2021

**05.08.21 - Workshop:**  
*PAR Salvador*

## September 2021

**16.09.21 - Workshop:**  
*PAR Cartagena*

**23.09.21 - Roundtable:**  
*Development beyond Aid: Labour, Livelihoods and Development*

## October 2021

**07.10.2021 - Workshop:**  
*Advice in African Multilingual Contexts*

**21.10.21 - Iwalewa Art Award Ceremony**  
See report on page 46.

**14.10.21 - Workshop:**  
*Participatory Action Research: The Persistence of Utopias*

**25.10.21 - Conversation:**  
*La Primera Línea: An Emerging Social Movement in Colombia*  
See report on page 84.

**19.10.2021 - Conversation:**  
*Re-Existence of African Spirituality in Colombia*  
See report on page 84.

**25.10.21 - AfriKaleidoskop:**  
*Raizes*  
See report on page 39.

## November 2021

**09.11.-10.11.2021 - Conference:**  
*Interrogating African Contexts and Conceptualizations of Development*

**14.11.-17.11.21 - Cinema Africa:**  
*A journey to the Indian Ocean*  
See report on page 38.

**13.11.21 - Photo Exhibition:**  
*Goa/Mozambique - Crossed Glances - Sérgio Santimano*  
See report on page 42.

**15.11.21 - Leso Design Workshop by Mshai Mwangola:**  
See report on page 43.

**13.11.2021 - Workshop:**  
*Intermedial Indian Ocean*  
See report on page 41.

**22.11.21 - AfriKaleidoskop:**  
*Egum*  
See report on page 39.



19.10.21



13.11.21



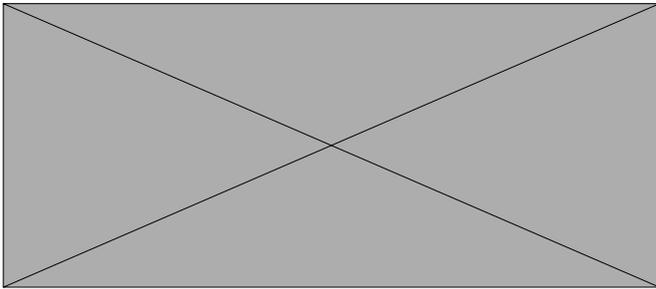
08.12.21

## December 2021

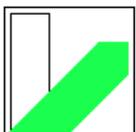
**03.12.2021 - Debate:**  
*Why Economists get it (Really) Wrong*

**13.12.21 - AfriKaleidoskop:**  
*Chico Rei Entre Nós*  
See report on page 39.

**08.12.21 - Lecture Musicale by Raharimanana:**  
*Les îles témoins et les mémoires tissées*  
See report on page 44.



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BAYREUTH

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