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# NAB

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## BIGSAS started

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According to the German Research Foundation (DFG), "graduate schools are an important factor in creating high-profile and internationally competitive centres of academic excellence in Germany. As a quality instrument for supporting young researchers, their aim is to train outstanding doctoral students within an excellent research environment." The decision of the Initiative for Excellence of the Federal Government and the Federal States on 19th October 2007 for the funding of the International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) meant a big leap forward for African Studies at the University of Bayreuth. *see page 6f* ►



◀ Ute Fendler, the Dean of BIGSAS, interviewed by Isaac Bazié, University of Québec (Photo: Roncador)

*Currently one of the busiest persons at Bayreuth University, Ute Fendler holds the Chair in Francophone and Comparative Literatures since October 2006. Besides her considerable workload as professor, she has also been Dean of BIGSAS since October 2007. Isaac Bazié seized the opportunity to interview her for our newsletter.*

## Interview with Ute Fendler, the Dean of BIGSAS

I.B.: Where did you teach before Bayreuth University offered you the Chair of Francophone and Comparative Literature, and how did you come to the field of African studies?

U.F.: In fact, I did my Ph.D. in Bayreuth with János Riesz in Romance Studies. So my interest in African Studies is something of a long-term relationship. After completion of my Ph.D., the German Academic Exchange Service funded my position as lecturer at the University of Ouagadougou for a period of five years, where I extended my research interests to film studies. Back in Germany, I taught at the University of Saarbrücken, mainly in media studies and intercul-

tural communication, with a focus on Francophone countries in Africa, the Caribbean, and Canada, while preparing my postdoctoral thesis on South American travelogues in the 18th century.

### African artistic creativity as the result of rich interactions and cross-fertilization

I.B.: Bayreuth University is famous for its African Studies. How would you describe your contribution to this tradition?

U.F.: I would like to maintain this long-established tradition of research on Francophone literatures in Africa. My aim in this field is threefold. First of all, I would like to continue

teaching Francophone literatures with a regional focus on Africa. Secondly, I would like to stimulate research in this field by organizing conferences with the side-effect of creating an academic network in col-

laboration with research centres such as Paris, Bordeaux, Montréal, Toronto etc. A good example of this kind of activity was the conference on “Children and Youth in Africa and Latin America” held in Bayreuth in February 2008. Besides these activities, I am also very eager to strengthen comparative approaches across

linguistic and media divides. I see these approaches as an important way to perceive African artistic creativity as the result of rich interactions and cross-fertilization. However, this approach means multidisciplinary, but Bayreuth University, due to its long and well-established tradition in research across various disciplines focused on Africa, is the right place to do it.

I.B.: You just mentioned this international conference “Children and Youth in Africa and Latin America” which you organised. What are the links between these regions according to you?

U.F.: To pursue African Studies doesn't imply that you narrow your notion of Africa down to a region – even if it is, in this case, a huge continent. This perception is too narrow and also too simplistic. This continent has always been part of a global system of mutual exchanges and influences, not only with Europe, but also with the Americas, Asia and the Arab world. Putting Africa into a larger context via crossing boundaries helps to deepen our understanding and knowledge of Africa. In our case, there already pre-exists some sort of common ground in historical and cultural perspectives, inviting us to use a

comparative approach. Structural conditions for phenomena become more obvious, which facilitates reflection on and the development of theoretical concepts.

I.B.: As a former student at Bayreuth University you are able to survey a long period of time. How have African Studies changed in the field of research and teaching at Bayreuth University during that time?

U.F.: I really appreciate the fact that intercultural phenomena have become a growing and main research focus at Bayreuth University. New networks such as AEGIS, promoting research in African Studies on an international level have been established. But I also observe that the focus has shifted considerably to the so-called Anglophone countries. International academic exchange using English as the main vernacular doesn't inevitably mean the restraint of research interests to exclusively Anglophone countries. But at the same time, there are a couple of projects at the University of Bayreuth on Lusophone countries, which open up new perspectives. So the potential of Bayreuth research resources could be developed to a real interdisciplinary work beyond linguistic and regional boundaries.

I.B.: What does BIGSAS stand for? For a tradition of research and teaching on Africa at Bayreuth University, a multi-disciplinary initiative to increase its profile in African studies or even a turning point in this field?

U.F.: One of the most important reasons why Bayreuth University has been successful in the scope of German's national



▲ Ute Fendler, the Dean of BIGSAS (Photo: Roncador)

“initiative of excellence” is our long-established tradition of outstanding research in African studies. This is simply a matter of record. Besides two Collaborative Research Centres funded by the German Research Foundation, there have already been post-graduate programmes on a smaller



scale. One of the main advantages of BIGSAS is our 22 principal investigators, coming from different academic disciplines but working closely together in common research areas. This atmosphere of mutual collaboration also manifests itself in the supervision of our doctoral candidates. To cut a long story short, BIGSAS is the result of previ-

▼ Isaac Bazié (Photo: Roncador)



ous experiences and expertise. The structure of our new programme offers, on the one hand, scientific research and, on the other, practical orientation. At the same time we set our priorities on the conciseness of the programme. The effects are obvious: We will improve the formation of our Junior Scholars and we will develop new research questions and methods in the field of African Studies.

I.B.: To reflect on Africa is one

of the most important tasks of scholars in African Studies. African junior scholars, and already-established scholars, should bear this burden in an atmosphere of mutuality and on an equal footing. This is also one of the mantras of African Studies. Besides declarations of intent, there is an urgent need for action to be taken. How will BIGSAS make a contribution to a constructive and long-term exchange?

## Isaac Bazié

Isaac Bazié has been professor of French literature at the University of Quebec, Montréal since 2001. He started his studies at the University of Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso at the Department of German Studies and finished his "Licence" in Germany at the University of Saarbrücken. From there, he moved to Bayreuth where he studied Francophone literature, German literature and African linguistics and obtained his Masters and Doctorate. The title of his doctoral thesis (supervised by János Riesz) was "Die kritischen Reaktionen der deutschsprachigen, französischen und englischen Presse auf den Literaturnobelpreis von 1984 bis 1994" (Critical reactions of the Germano-Franco and Anglophone press on the Nobel Prizes for Literature between 1984 and 1994) which was published in 1999. Besides his academic publications, he is also an author of fiction: a novel with the title "La traverse nocturne" was published in 2004. He spent last year as a Humboldt fellow at the University of Bayreuth.

U.F.: BIGSAS offers, besides the usual North-South, a South-South perspective by establishing a huge network of researchers and junior scholars in Europe, America and in Africa. We will empower this network via structures such as

AEGIS and our alumni network, but also by our BIGSAS partner universities in Morocco, Benin, Kenya, Mozambique and South Africa. Exchange programmes between BIGSAS and our partner universities guarantee a close collaboration in research and teaching. One of the intended side-effects will be a closer co-operation between our partner universities. Besides this privileged exchange under the umbrella

of BIGSAS, several research projects in various regions will further the exchange between Bayreuth University and our African counterparts. Future summer schools and workshops at our partner universities will also be a power-

ful means to enhance mutual collaboration. These activities quite often develop into common research projects.

I.B.: What is your most adventurous vision concerning African Studies at Bayreuth University in general, and in your department in particular?

U.F.: It is always somehow dangerous to talk about visions, although visions are necessary to initiate changes. But since you ask about my vision concerning my own field of research, I would say that a centre for film and media studies would be a fantastic project. It would take into account the most recent developments in most African countries, it would also allow the focus on the interaction between various discourses clustered in media and would reflect local as well as international ideas and tendencies. Besides this centre, the integration of the Lusophone countries into the African studies foci at Bayreuth University would allow the still-existing language-divide to be overcome. In this respect, the work on literatures and media in African languages should be widened, so that the work on phenomena in European languages will be completed.

I.B.: Thank you very much!

## Building Partnership

### Common agenda on higher education

From 2 to 5 July, 2008, representatives from our partner universities, Abomey-Calavi (Benin), Moi-University (Kenya), Mohammed V-Agdal (Morocco), Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (Mozambique), and

partnership. How can applications be facilitated? What are the administrative difficulties to be solved in order to support and train promising doctoral students in the field of African Studies? In the afternoon these

▼ A symbolic present: Delegates from Moi University, Kenya, presenting a plate to president H. Ruppert. From left to right: N. Shitemi, A. Nngulu and E. Kamaara. (Photo: Tylle)



KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa), convened at Bayreuth University. After a warm welcome reception by Helmut Ruppert, vice-chancellor of Bayreuth University, getting to know the partner's institutions was the aim of the first day. The delegates gave information about history, structure and academic activities of their universities. The second day was allocated to questions concerning the administrative side of the

questions were expanded to the aim of building partnership in the field of academic co-operation. Common research interests were identified; possible cooperation in organising joint conferences were discussed. Ute Fendler, dean of BIGSAS, assessed the results of the conference in the final session: One result will be a series of joint conferences with BIGSAS – hosted by our partner universities. (C. Scherer)

## BIGSAS started

*Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) started with a founding group of 31 doctoral students*

This will allow to institutionalize BIGSAS in the long term: with funding for a period of five years in the first instance, the training of young researchers – and especially young researchers from Africa – can be expanded and given a boost.

This boost is necessary, for doctoral students are expected to complete their degrees within three years – including the time spent on field research.

### Individual Research Training Plan

As a result of reorganization, these students are integrated in a current research context, without restricting their initiative as to choice of topic. They receive support in many ways during this time: By individually planning their training programme with their supervisors, particular needs can be articulated for additional courses or financial support for field research. The students will be responsible for organizing their own conferences, for participating in international conferences, and for publishing in academic

▲ The building at Geschwister-Scholl-Platz houses IAS, BIGSAS and DEVA.



journals, so that they will quickly become familiar with the world of international research. Their progress will be monitored by mentors at regular intervals, and they will have the opportunity to attend additional courses in order to obtain important skills that they will need for their future life and academic careers, whether inside or outside the university.

There are also plans for a range of unconventional measures for the advancement and support of female academics and academics with families. A programme for mentoring female researchers will be established, and workshops offered for project management, career and life-planning, as well as a group-coaching programme. Another point to make is that no young researcher will have to forego a trip or a conference for fam-

ily reasons, if it is possible to find a solution that will help her or him to continue the programme that was embarked on. The BIGSAS budget therefore includes special funds to meet the needs of doctoral students with families.

The graduate school encompasses a wide range of research fields, including basic and strategic research as well as applied research in and on Africa. Four fields are defined for a start. 1. Uncertainty, Innovation and the Quest for Order in Africa, 2. Culture, Concepts and Communication in Africa: Approaches through Language, Literature and Media, 3. Concepts and Conflicts in Development Co-operation with Africa, 4. Coping with Environmental Criticality and Disasters in Africa. Currently 22 researchers cover the areas of research in BIGSAS. Two postdocs complement the team currently.



▲ BIGSAS opening ceremony, from left: D. Ibrizimow, IAS executive director; H. Ruppert, president of Bayreuth University; U. Fendler, BIGSAS dean; P. J. Hountondji, Centre of Advanced Studies, Porto Novo, Benin; M. Hohl, mayor of Bayreuth.

A real novelty is that the Bayreuth BIGSAS offers wide-ranging support to excellent doctoral students, not only from Europe, Asia or America, but above all from Africa. Out of a total of 29 African universities with existing academic relations with Bayreuth University, five universities form the heart of the co-operation with BIGSAS.

### Partner universities

These five universities, the Université Mohammed V-Agdal in Rabat, Morocco, Moi University in Eldoret, Kenya, the Université d'Abomey-Calavi (UAC) in Cotonou, Benin, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane in Maputo, Mozambique, and the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal in South Africa, were cho-

sen for various reasons: "The level of academic teaching is very high at all these universities", says Ute Fendler, Dean of BIGSAS. Furthermore, all universities are interested in intensifying academic exchange with Bayreuth University on various academic levels.

The choice of partner universities shows that BIGSAS, as with research relating to Africa in the University of Bayreuth generally, makes an enormous effort to cover the whole continent of Africa. Therefore it is one of the desiderata to ensure systematic mutual support and long-term co-operation agreements, joint research projects and joint dissertation supervision. Furthermore, the partner universities play an important role in the pre-selection of students from their region.

In addition to particular projects and cooperation agreements, great importance has already been attached in recent years to the training of young researchers from Africa within the SFB FK 560 cultural research school, 'Local Action in Africa in the Context of Global Influences'. Under a scholarship programme specially designed for African doctoral students, 17 students from African countries have been supported since the year 2000. While this in itself is a novelty within existing research funding systems, the plans for the international graduate school go much further: In BIGSAS up to 100 excellent postgraduate students will be trained in the next five years, about half of them from Africa. As stipends from BIGSAS are only available to a limited number, the school assists in forging links for doctoral students with specific funding institutions or supporting foundations in Germany.

### Up to 100 doctoral students

Back to Bayreuth: The co-ordinated research programmes in the past (SFB 214 from 1984 to 1997 and SFB FK 560 from 2000 to 2007, as well as a graduate research group from 1990 to 1999) have shown that it is



possible to focus a variety of disciplines on a common research topic, such as exists at the University of Bayreuth in the area of Africa-related research. BIGSAS builds on this experience. Starting with the summer semester 2008, the doctoral students will form a founding group of 31 persons. The applications for the next group starting in October 2008 are currently being evaluated by either the partner universities or BIGSAS. The doctoral students admitted then will be able to move into a university building of their own. Conditions on the campus are now too cramped for young researchers in African Studies. (*Christine Scherer & Ines Wimmer*)

## Open gates for BIGSAS delegates

One of the most important aspects of the establishment of BIGSAS in the first few months, between November 2007 and spring 2008, was the consolidation of partnership and co-operation with four of the five regional partner universities in Africa, namely the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, l'Université d'Abomey-Calavi in Cotonou, Benin, Université Mohammed V-Agdal in Rabat, Morocco, and Universidade Eduardo Mondlane in Maputo, Mozambique. A visit to Moi University at Eldoret, Kenya, had to be postponed and took place end of May.

Between two and five delegates from the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies visited the partners in order to negotiate mutual expectations concerning BIGSAS. The most important feature that the BIGSAS delegates to KwaZulu-Natal, Hilary Dannenberg (English Studies and Anglophone Literatures) Beate Lohnert (Development Studies) and Franz Kogelmann (Islamic Studies), learned, was of their desire to jointly supervise dissertation projects between Bayreuth and Kwa-Zulu Natal, which would foster further academic co-operation.

Erdmute Alber (Ethnosociology) and Ulrike Wanitzek (Law) summarized their trip to l'Université d'Abomey-Calavi as having been a great success and of gain for the long-existing partnership. Martina Drescher (Romance Linguistics), Dymitr Ibriszimow (African Linguistics), Franz Kogelmann (Islamic Studies), Herbert Popp (Urban Geography) and Christine Scherer (Manager of BIGSAS) were informed by their colleagues that l'Université Mohammed V-Agdal is implementing the Bologna Process and therefore is itself process-

ing an interdisciplinary graduate school, which will create further possibilities of cooperation and synergies.

Ute Fendler (Dean of BIGSAS, Romance Literature) and Elisio Macamo (Development Sociology) summarized their visit to the University Eduardo Mondlane in the following way: Common plans and ideas of further academic exchange between individual researchers and departments have been pushed forward in many directions.

Since the delegates were all received with great hospitality and professional interest, it became clear that all parties will profit from BIGSAS' structures during the coming years. In order to work jointly on future programmes in the academic fields of expertise beyond BIGSAS, research projects and academic exchange will be pushed further by all sides. So, in the end, it was widely appreciated that BIGSAS is a structural chance for everyone in three main aspects:

- Firstly, to promote academic and personal development in the field of African Studies of young academics worldwide, and particularly from Africa,

## Statistics

With 47 applications for the summer semester 2008, the start of BIGSAS has been very successful. After the demanding selection process, 31 excellent graduates received confirmation of admission. Seven of the candidates are enrolled in preparatory training, which involves language courses as well as courses concerning German academic organization, methodology and theory.

In many respects, BIGSAS is an equal opportunity graduate school. This becomes obvious when considering the gender ratio as well as the number of students coming from Africa and Europe. With 13 African students, BIGSAS is a truly international graduate school. The fact that 19 female students have been admitted into BIGSAS emphasizes the necessity for the BIGSAS supportive Gender Activity Plan, which helps female students to achieve a better work/life balance.

As funding is always one aspect of most concern to students, BIGSAS is financing four preparatory courses, as well as financing two students with an E13 position (50%) for the entire three year period. 16 BIGSAS students are receiving scholarships from a private or public institution. Students without appropriate funding will be supported by BIGSAS in finding donors. (*A. Friedrich*)

▼ From left: N. Gbaguidi; E. Alber; C. N. Awanou (Vice-Chancellor of University of Abomey-Calavi); U. Wanitzek; A. C. Medegan (Photo: Darboux)



in order to create a common network of partners and alumni with a positive attitude towards Bayreuth University as well as the German academic system.

- Secondly, to promote the internationality and appeal of all universities contributing to BIGSAS and to ensure that it is not only Bayreuth University that strengthens its profile as a leading destination for young academics in the field of African Studies.
- And thirdly, BIGSAS' partnerships will contribute to the promotion and strengthening of academic and scientific

quality in African and European countries by developing and co-ordinating research interests relevant for all partners involved.

In fact: The assistance of African partner universities in the pre-selection and therefore in ensuring quality in the selection process of doctoral students for the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies is a novelty. But not only this: It is also a chance for African Studies at Bayreuth University to intensify networks with and in Africa. (*C. Scherer*)



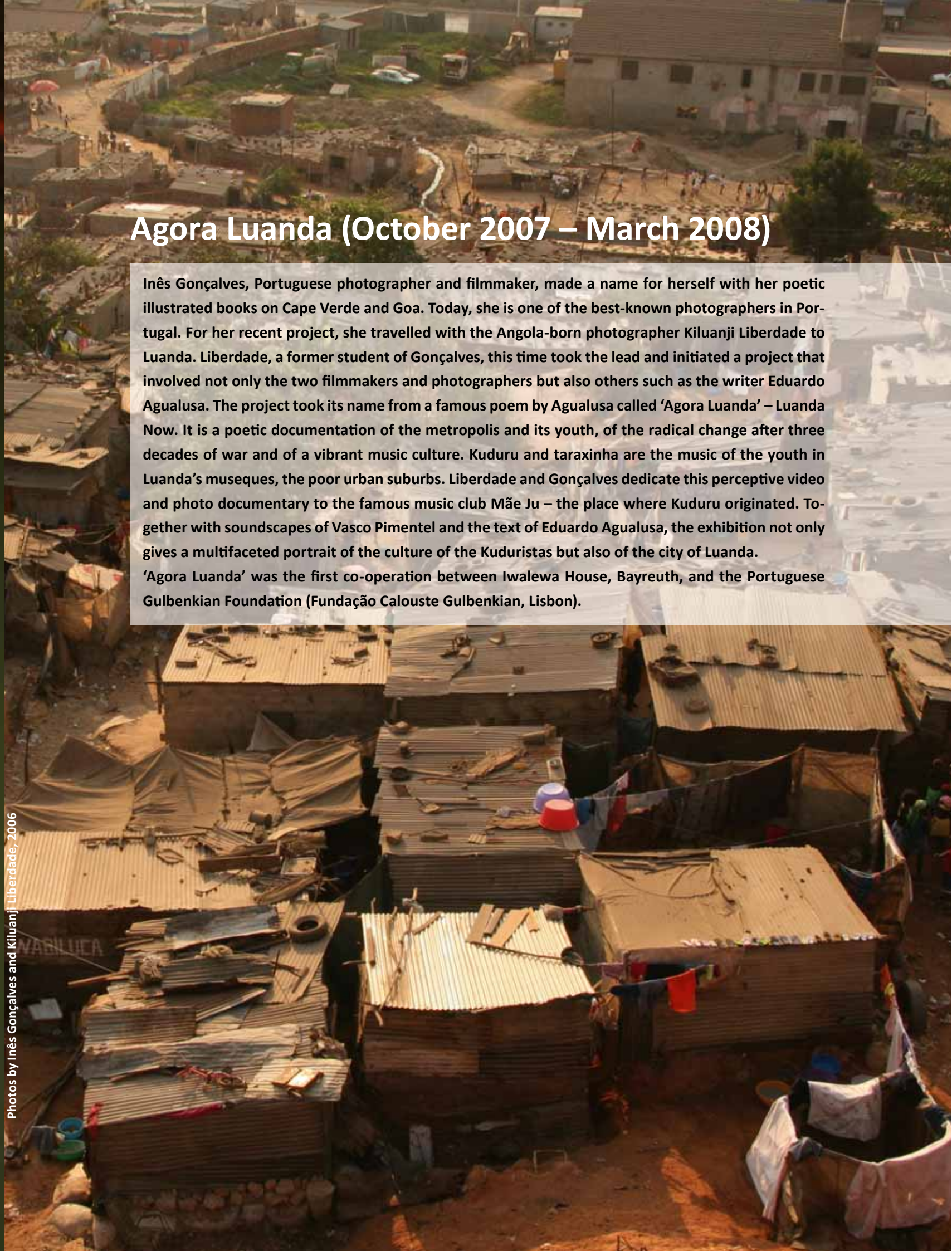


Photos by Inês Gonçalves and Kiluanji Liberdade, 2006

## Agora Luanda (October 2007 – March 2008)

Inês Gonçalves, Portuguese photographer and filmmaker, made a name for herself with her poetic illustrated books on Cape Verde and Goa. Today, she is one of the best-known photographers in Portugal. For her recent project, she travelled with the Angola-born photographer Kiluanji Liberdade to Luanda. Liberdade, a former student of Gonçalves, this time took the lead and initiated a project that involved not only the two filmmakers and photographers but also others such as the writer Eduardo Agualusa. The project took its name from a famous poem by Agualusa called 'Agora Luanda' – Luanda Now. It is a poetic documentation of the metropolis and its youth, of the radical change after three decades of war and of a vibrant music culture. Kuduru and taraxinha are the music of the youth in Luanda's museques, the poor urban suburbs. Liberdade and Gonçalves dedicate this perceptive video and photo documentary to the famous music club Mãe Ju – the place where Kuduru originated. Together with soundscapes of Vasco Pimentel and the text of Eduardo Agualusa, the exhibition not only gives a multifaceted portrait of the culture of the Kuduristas but also of the city of Luanda.

'Agora Luanda' was the first co-operation between Iwalewa House, Bayreuth, and the Portuguese Gulbenkian Foundation (Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon).







Photos by Inês Gonçalves and Kiluanji Liberdade, 2006





# Contemporary Architecture in South Africa

*Daimler Award 2007 (April - August 2008)*



Since 1999, Daimler AG (former DaimlerChrysler) has conferred the 'Award for South African Culture' on a different subject each year: contemporary art, jazz, sculpture, choreography, photography, poetry and, last year, for architecture. An international jury nominated eight architects and architecture offices from different South African provinces – the only condition: the nominee had to be younger than 40.

The exhibition, which is on display in Iwalewa House from April to August 2008, shows a selection of the material submitted for the contest, such as drafts, photos, films, animations and architectural models, by the award winner Heinrich Wolf and the other nominated architects: Archilab, Thorsten Deckler, Heather Dodd, Andrew Horn, Ndabo Langa, Henning Rasmus und Chris Wilkinson.

The spectrum covers a broad range of project definitions and architectural solutions: From social housing on the periphery of the Johannesburg city centre, the revival of the KwaZulu-Natal round hut architecture, luxurious villas in Cape Province and postmodern office buildings in urban business centres, to informal and temporary architecture in the context of neighbourhood projects. All the works on

display are characterized by their conceptual strength, the emphasis on space and light, the creation of new means of usage and surprising references to landscape and urban context.

The exhibition in Bayreuth is a co-operation between Mercedes Benz South Africa and Daimler AG Kunstbesitz/Corporate Art Department Stuttgart, the Dr. Ralf Seippel gallery and Iwalewa House.



## Sarah Vanagt – Kabila's Hankies & Power Cut (April - August 2008)

Iwalewa-House invited the video artist Sarah Vanagt to show a selection of her recent works in Bayreuth. Vanagt is primarily interested in the way in which children deal with history. Could the fantasy world of a child provide a secret passage into the past? This question is the starting point of Sarah Vanagt's research on the "historical imagination" of children. How do children deal with the past, or rather, how do they shape it in their imagination? After her studies of history at the universities of Antwerp, Sussex and Groningen, Sarah Vanagt (1976, Belgium) studied at the documentary department of the National Film and Television School in London. In her work she combines her interest in history with her love for film. Her graduation project 'After Years of Walking' (2003) deals with the rewriting of the Rwandese history after the genocide of 1994. The video installation 'Kabila's Hankies' (Les Mouchoirs de Kabila, 2005) is situated in the Congolese border town Goma and looks at the way children, through their games, deal with issues such as death, the recent war in their country and the current election fever. The second work shown in Bayreuth is the video installation 'Power Cut' (2007). It is a compilation of images made by children and soldiers during the current election in Congo.



▲ Video installation 'Kabila's Hankies' (Les Mouchoirs de Kabila) by Sarah Vanagt, 2005



## Children of Angola

The orphanage Lourenço Amadeu is located in Cabinda – a province of Angola which is still marked by trouble and conflicts; it's a place of arguing interests and old disagreements. As an exclave at the Atlantic Ocean, it is separated from the national territory of Angola, wedged between the Republic of Congo and Democratic Republic of Congo. Cabinda provides the maximum amount of Angola's offshore oil production, but is simultaneously disrupted by a separatistic movement having operated for thirty years.

Sérgio Baltasar, age 16, 6th grade, ►  
title: "Tchimbindi" (ghost)

Within a series of one hundred and fifty pictures the children of the orphanage tell the stories of their everyday life in the orphanage but they also narrate about their fears and losses, the troubles in war and its traumata, and also about hopes and wishes for a better world.

The exhibition was collected and arranged by Károly Koller, author and filmmaker from Munich, and shows a selection of forty large-sized and small-sized drawings accompanied by cinematic fragments reflecting daytime



rituals of washing, playing football and feeding pigs, but also the creepy nights, when dark-red reflections are flaming the sky, be caused by the fires at the nearby oil-platforms at the coast. We also learn about the very different backgrounds of the children and the deep friendships they developed in the orphanage.

The drawings can be regarded as a mosaic of a much more holistic view of the war in rural Angola – watched through the eyes of children. (U. Vierke)



## Angola Pop

*Angolan contemporary culture in Iwalewa-House  
November 9th to 18th 2007*

In November 2007 the Angolan photographer Kiluanji Kia Henda and the Portuguese scholar Marta Lança were guests at Iwalewa House for a two-week stay.

The visit of Kia Henda and Lança again emphasized the importance of a new focus at Bayreuth University on the Lusophone art world. Within the DFG-funded research project "Media art and the dynamics of contemporary art worlds in Johannesburg and Luanda", which started last year, Ulf Vierke and Nadine Siegert not only did research in Luanda and Lisbon but also organized a series of events at Iwalewa House. The visit of Kia Henda and Lança, which was a further outcome of this initiative, was meant to enhance the network of artists and scholars that connects Bayreuth, Luanda and Lisbon.

◀ Born in 1979, Kiluanji lives and works in Luanda. His photographs have been exhibited at the 1 Trienal of Luanda, 2005 and at 52nd Edition of Venice Biennial, Africa Pavillion „Check List Luanda Pop“, 2007. Not only a photographer, Kiluanji has also been involved in theatre and music productions. He just visited Cape Town for three months artists residence. (Still from „Flash Cultural, TPA und Trienal de Angola“)

► The Angolan photographer Kiluanji Kia Henda and the Portuguese scholar Marta Lança in Bayreuth (Photo: Siegert)



Kiluanji Kia Henda is one of the most-profiled of the young generation of Angolan artists. His triptych "Ngola Bar" was the central artwork at the first African pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale, which took place in 2007. Kia Henda's artistic biography covers a variety of artistic fields, including theatre and music. In photography, his experimental, distanced or even distorted style represents his hometown Luanda in a complex multitude of perspectives. Since the Angolan war ceased in 2003, Kia Henda has also travelled through many Angolan provinces and European cities exploring the landscapes and episodes of daily life. In Bayreuth he presented his project "The magic of (ir)real space" which turns the monument of Augustino Neto's mausoleum into the base of a surreal space-tourism feature.

The second part of the resi-

dency was a guest lecture by Marta Lança on Lusophone Hip Hop and literature, being accompanied by a seminar on the same topic. Lança discussed these two areas of Portuguese-speaking African culture. In a tour through contemporary African literature in the Portuguese language, she exposed lines of ironic discourse about social life from independence (in 1975) to the present day. The legacy of irony and laughter is also retained in contemporary youth culture as a way of underlining the absurdity of governing without any agenda. Lança not only contributed to Bayreuth's newly-established focus on Lusophonia but also added to research on popular culture. One of the results of the stay will be a joint exhibition project between Iwalewa House, the Goethe Institute, Nairobi, and the artist Kiluanji Kia Henda. (N. Siegert, U. Vierke)





## Shifting centres

*Crossing borders in contemporary African dance*  
*Photo-Exhibition in collaboration with the festival "Grenzüberschreitungen 2007"*  
*and with Zentrum Bayreuth, November– December 2007*

From November 13th to December 20th, Iwalewa-House presented an exhibition on Contemporary African Dance Photography in the foyer of the cultural centre "Zentrum" in Bayreuth. The exhibition displayed photography by the Nairobi-based artist Justus Kyalo who besides being a photographer also does video art and painting. The exhibition was inaugurated with a thematic opening on Contemporary African Dance including a lecture by Nadine Siegert and a selection of documentary films on the topic.

In Contemporary African Dance there is a strong emphasis on mutual exchange along the lines of south-south networks and collaborations. On the institutional side, the installation of schools, festivals and local cultural institutions is part of that process, as well as – on the stylistic side – an increasing crossing of genres. Old borders between the traditional and the (post)modern crumble and a new generation of dancers and choreographers try to find their own voice in a dance language that is coined by their individual

biography. Crossing borders of artistic repertoires and forms of expression the Contemporary Dance scenes in two African urban settings, Nairobi and Luanda, proved to match the focus of the Bayreuthian "Crossing borders", a festival that has already become an institution in the cultural life of the city. The ongoing observation of these processes is part of Iwalewa-House's research interest on contemporary art-worlds in Africa which manifests itself in various genres. (N. Siegert)

▲ Photos by Justus Kyalo

## Guests

During his one-week visit to Bayreuth in July 2007, *Afe Adogame*, lecturer in World Christianity at the School of Divinity at the Edinburgh University, Scotland, presented a paper entitled 'I am married to Jesus: The feminization of African immigrant religiosity'.

*Osman Mohamed Osman Ali*, Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, University of Khartoum, Sudan, has been invited by the Institute of African Studies. During his stay in May and June he gave a course on "Models of anthropological study of Muslim diversity". At the conference "Local Islam under Global Influences – Sharia Debates in Selected African Countries" (4th – 5th June 2007) he presented a pa-

per entitled "Debates on the Construction of an Islamic State: Perspectives by Muslim Groups in Sudan".

*Koffi Anyinefa*, chair of the department of French at Haverford College, USA, visited Bayreuth in June and July 2007 at the invitation of Ute Fendler (Romance and Comparative Literature).

*Rotimi Badejo*, professor at the department of languages and linguistics of the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria, visited Bayreuth in May 2007, in order to discuss the cognitive aspects of language shifts in Nigerian Christianity with Dymitr Ibriszimow (African Linguistics II).

*Mohamed Bakhit*, student at the University of Khartoum,

Sudan, Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, spent three months at Bayreuth University. He held a DAAD scholarship to prepare his master's thesis.

*Isaac Bazié*, professor of literary studies at the University of Québec in Montréal, Canada, was staying for one year (June 2007 – June 2008) at the University of Bayreuth, where he taught a class on "Violences postcoloniales en scènes en Afrique et en Amérique latine (Littérature et cinéma)" together with Ute Fendler (Romance and Comparative Literature).

For six weeks in spring 2007, *Crispin Maalu Bungi* from the University of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo,





◀ Osman Mohamed Osman Ali (Photo Kogelmann)



◀ Rotimi Badejo



◀ John Chesworth (Photo Kogelmann)



◀ Albert Djemetio



◀ Katharina Hofer (Photo Kogelmann)

shared his expertise on oral literature and literature in Congolese languages with the members of the Institute of African Studies (Manfred von Roncador).

SFB/FK 560 “Local Action in Africa in the Context of Global Influences” funded the stay of *John Chesworth*, St. Paul’s University, Limuru, Kenya, at Bayreuth University in May and June 2007. He participated in the Swahili Colloquium and has been a discussant at the conference “Local Islam under Global Influences – Sharia Debates in Selected African Countries” (4th – 5th June 2007). The Volkswagen Foundation project “Sharia debates and their perception by Christians and Muslims in selected African countries” also invited him to give lectures and to supervise Junior Scholars in July 2007.

Hosted by Kurt Beck (Anthropology), *Dave Dargie*, University of Fort Hare, South Africa, spent two weeks in Bayreuth in May 2007. During his stay he taught a class on the ‘Introduction to African music’.

*Albert Djemetio*, associate professor of linguistics at the University of Douala, Cameroon, and member of the Cameroon Research Centre on Endangered Languages (CARCEL), pursued his sociolinguistic re-

search on ‘Measuring Language Maintenance and Ethnicity in a Multilingual Context: In Search of a Comprehensive Methodology’ from May – July 2007 at the University of Bayreuth as a Humboldt-fellow. Invited by Dymitr Ibrizimow (African Linguistics II), he also presented a paper entitled ‘Vernacular Education Experience in Cameroon: Implications for Language Planning, Education Policy and Sociolinguistics’.

Hosted by SFB/FK 560 *Sati Fwatshak*, senior lecturer and head of Department, history department, University of Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria, spent ten days at Bayreuth University in June 2007. At the conference “Local Islam under Global Influences – Sharia Debates in Selected African Countries” (4th – 5th June 2007) he has been discussant.

*Noël Ahonagnon Gbaguidi*, professor for civil law at the University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin, visited Bayreuth in August and September 2007 at the invitation of Ulrike Wanitzek (Institute of African Studies).

Invited by Said Khamis (African Literary Studies), *Mikhail D. Gromov*, United States International University Nairobi, Kenya, who stayed at the University of Bayreuth in May and June 2007, delivered a paper

on ‘Swahili literature in the beginning of the new century’.

During his three-month stay from October to December 2007 with Erdmute Alber (Social Anthropology), the historian *Anselme Guezo* of the University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin, taught a class on the Atlantic slave trade, and presented a paper entitled ‘Men and Means: Reflection on the State in Nineteenth-Century Dahomey’ at the Anthropological Colloquium.

*Mohamed Ait Hamza*, professor at the University Mohammad V in Rabat, Morocco, visited Herbert Popp (Urban and Rural Geography) in September and October 2007.

As a guest of Jonathan Owens (Arabic Linguistics), *Jidda Hassan*, of the department of Languages and Linguistics, Maiduguri University, Nigeria, spent March and April 2007 in Bayreuth.

*Katharina Hofer*, political scientist, Berlin, has been invited by the Volkswagen Foundation project “Sharia debates and their perception by Christians and Muslims in selected African countries” to supervise Junior Scholars in June 2007. She has also been discussant at the conference “Local Islam under Global Influences

– Sharia Debates in Selected African Countries” (4th – 5th June 2007).

In fall 2007, the African philosopher *Paulin Hountondji*, director of the Centre Africain des Hautes Études and professor of philosophy at the Université d’Abomey-Calavi, Benin, spent three months at the University of Bayreuth as a visiting professor of the Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation. Invited by Erdmute Alber (Social Anthropology), Prof. Hountondji opened BIGSAS with a talk on ‘Ethnophilosophy as Cultural Relativism’, and delivered three public lectures on ‘Philosophy and Anthropology in Africa today’, ‘What is Ethnophilosophy?’ and ‘Cultural relativism and the challenge of universality’.

*Kazuaki Inoue*, professor of African Politics at Keio University, Japan, visited Bayreuth for a couple of days in February 2008 at the invitation of Ulrich Berner (Religious Studies I).

*Abdelfettah Kassah*, from the University of Sfax, Tunisia, visited Bayreuth for six weeks in the fall of 2007 as the guest of Herbert Popp (Urban and Rural Geography).

*Wotsuna Khamalwa*, professor in Social Anthropology and Religious Studies at Makerere

University, Uganda, spent six weeks in Bayreuth in May and June 2007 as a guest of the SFB/FK 560 (Ulrich Berner).

*Selome Igbekele Kuponu* (Lagos State University, Nigeria), who had been research fellow at the SFB/FK 560 from 2004 to 2006, visited Bayreuth from April until July 2007. On July 20th he successfully defended his thesis ‘The Living Faith Church (Winners Chapel), Nigeria. Pentecostalism, Prosperity Gospel and Social Change in Nigeria’, and received his PhD in Religious Studies from the University of Bayreuth (Ulrich Berner, Religious Studies I).

*Roman Loimeier*, since January 2008 Assistant Professor at the Centre for African Studies, University of Florida, Gainesville, has been invited by the Volkswagen Foundation Project “Sharia debates and their perception by Christians and Muslims in selected African countries”. As part of the lecture series “Local Action in Africa” of the former SFB/FK 560 he presented on 5th July a joint lecture with Rüdiger Seesemann on “Multiple Time Structures in Islamic Contexts: Developments and Debates in East Africa”.

*Pierre Malgoubri*, lecturer at the University of Ouaga-





◀ Pierre Malgoubri (Photo: Roncador)



◀ Philip Ostien (Photo Kogelmann)



◀ Chris Maina Peter (Photo: Döveling)



◀ Asonzeh Ukah

dougou, was staying from April to June 2008 as a visiting professor at the Chair of African Linguistics I invited by the Institute of African Studies (Manfred von Roncador). He has been a member of the sub-project A1 "The Effects of Globalisation Processes on the Vitality of Languages in West African Cities" of the Humanities Collaborative Research Centre (SFB/FK 560) in 2006 and 2007. His main research area is Mooré dialectology. He contributed to a seminar on Mooré structure together with Manfred von Roncador.

*Pepetual Mforbe*, from the University of Yaoundé, Cameroon, is staying at Bayreuth University as a DAAD fellow from April 2007 to August 2008, where she completes her dissertation on Cameroon theatre.

*Robert Wilton Oduori*, from the University of Eldoret in Kenya, delivered a paper on 'Contextualizing Discourse (English in Kenya): A Critical Analysis' during his two-month stay at Bayreuth in April and May 2007 as a guest of Said Khamis (African Literary Studies).

*Chukwuma Okoye*, from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, worked in Bayreuth on a monograph on masquerades and theatre as a Humboldt fellow until September 2007.

At the invitation of Dieter Neubert (Development Sociology), *Oshita O. Oshita*, the director of the department of Research and Policy Analysis at the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution in Abuja, Nigeria, spent six months at Bayreuth University (April-September 2007).

*Philip Ostien*, senior lecturer at the Faculty of Law at the University of Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria, has been invited by SFB/FK 560 "Local Action in Africa in the Context of Global Influences". During his stay at Bayreuth University (24th May till 5th June) he gave a presentation on current developments of Islamic law in Northern Nigeria at the conference "Local Islam under Global Influences – Sharia Debates in Selected African Countries" (4th – 5th June).

*Chris Maina Peter* from the Faculty of Law at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, visited the Institute of African Studies (Ulrike Wanitzek) as a Humboldt fellow from October to December 2007.

*Wumi Raji*, professor at the Department of Dramatic Arts at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria, visited Bayreuth in May 2007 as the guest of Hilary Dannenberg (English Literary Studies and Anglophone Literatures). During his stay he delivered a paper entitled

"Not a Girl to Meet Everyday": Ama Ata Aidoo's Anowa and a Re-presentation of Feminine Difference'.

*Rüdiger Seesemann*, Assistant Professor at the Department of Religious Studies, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, has been invited by the Volkswagen Foundation Project "Sharia debates and their perception by Christians and Muslims in selected African countries". During his stay in Bayreuth he gave two public lectures. The first was a joint lecture together with Roman Loimeier in the scope of the lecture series "Local Action in Africa" (former SFB/FK 560) under the title "Multiple Time Structures in Islamic Contexts: Developments and Debates in East Africa" on 5th July. The second – "Apostasy in Islam" – was part of the Summer Academy in June 2007.

*Asonzeh Ukah*, who had worked as a research fellow in the projects B1 and B6 of the SFB/FK 560 from September 2005 until June 2007, served as a visiting professor at the IAS from July until December 2007. Since January 2008 he is part of the DFG financed project 'Tradition and Innovation. Old and new churches in the religious market of South Africa' (Ulrich Berner, Religious Studies I).

## Sharia Debates...

... in selected African countries.

A workshop at the University of Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria

Between 5th and 10th April 2008, Bayreuth University and the University of Jos jointly organized a workshop, with international participation. As part of the research project "Sharia Debates in Selected African Countries", funded by Volkswagen Foundation, ten African junior scholars presented their latest findings and results. (F. Kogelmann)



▲ Workshop in Nigeria (Photo: Kogelmann)

## Summer Academy

Religion and Order in Africa

Bayreuth University welcomes ten African students in July 2008. These African junior scholars will participate for the first time in the Summer Academy 2008 "Religion and Order in Africa". The German Academic Exchange Service accepted the application of Franz Kogelmann to fund an annual Summer Academy focused on fundamental African issues. These Summer Academies will supplement BIGSAS in an ideal way. Within four weeks, African junior scholars will be integrated into courses

S.G. Tyoden, ▶  
vice-chancellor  
University of Jos,  
Plateau State,  
Nigeria



within the departments of religious studies, social anthropology and sociology. Besides academic training, the participants will take part in the academic life of Bayreuth University and participate in excursions to Berlin and Munich. (F. Kogelmann)



## Personalia

Since 2005, the German Research Foundation (DFG) has offered outstanding researchers a Heisenberg professorship. Now, in 2008, the first Heisenberg professorship in humanities has been awarded to the social anthropologist *Erdmute Alber*. Before she became the fourth female Heisenberg professor, she was junior professor for ethno-sociology at Bayreuth University.



◀ *Erdmute Alber* got the Heisenberg professorship (Photo: Darboux)

The anthropologist *Thorolf Lipp* has joined the DFG-funded project "Media art and the dynamics of contemporary art worlds in Johannesburg and Luanda" under the direction of Iwalewa-House. He replaces *Anna Schrade* who left the project. Lipp's research will focus on South African media art.



◀ *Thorolf Lipp* will focus his research on South African media art

The engagement of the art historian *Sigrid Horsch-Albert* in December 2007 marked the start of the DFG-funded African Studies archive DEVA. She was followed by *Margrit Prusatz* (former head of the photo archive at the Deutsches Museum in Munich) who joined the project in April 2008.



◀ *Sigrid Horsch-Albert* marked the start of DEVA

In October 2007, *Achim von Oppen* was appointed Professor of History with special emphasis on the History of Africa. After his studies at the Universities of Düsseldorf and Berlin, he spent many years as Deputy Director at the Centre for Modern Oriental Studies (ZMO) in Berlin. His research focuses regionally on South-Central and East Africa (Zambia, Angola, Tanzania) and Sudano-Sahelian West Africa (Mali) and thematically on, amongst others, social and cultural history in rural and urban contexts, religion in history, production and transformation of space, and history of mobilities



◀ *Achim von Oppen* was appointed Professor of History with special emphasis on the History of Africa (Photo: Tylle)

## BIGSAS Management Team

*Martina Schuberth-Adam* joined the management team of BIGSAS in June 2008. Trained as multi-lingual secretary with particular expertise in English and French, she shares the responsibility for the day-to-day administration with *Ines Wimmer* who organised the administration of the complex structures of the BIGSAS-office during the first six months. The management-team is furthermore assisted by *Dag Schumann* (junior fellow consultant) *Antje Friedrich* (public relations), and *Marc Koto* (administrative support) as well as the IT-Manager *Mathias Endres*.

*Christine Scherer* studied jurisprudence and administrative science at the University of Konstanz before she was trained as print media journalist. She graduated in social-anthropology at Bayreuth University in 1996. After working as free-lance broadcasting journalist she joined the humanities collaborative research centre 'Local Agency in Africa in the Context of Global Influences' (SFB/FK 560) between 2000 and 2003 for research and exhibition projects about the contemporary art world in Zimbabwe. After submitting her Ph.D. thesis 'Art-making in



▲ *Martina Schuberth-Adam* is responsible for the administration of the BIGSAS office in collaboration with *Ines Wimmer*.

Zimbabwe' in 2006, she coordinated the final phase of SFB-FK 560. Since 15th November 2007 she is administrative director of BIGSAS.



▲ *The Management Team of BIGSAS in April 2008 (from left to right): Ines Wimmer (Management Assistant), Dag Schumann and Antje Friedrich (Graduate Assistants), Andreas Weber (IT), Christine Scherer (Manager), Mathias Endres (IT-Manager) (Photo: Kolb)*



## Tradition and Innovation

### *Old and new churches in the religious market of South Africa.*

This new research project, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), started in January 2008. By drawing upon the metaphor of the 'religious market', the project aims to analyze the competition among Christian churches in South Africa. During the apartheid era, the South African state regulated every aspect of society and coercively managed change, and deployed religious ideologies in support of state machinery and management. Within the new, post-apartheid South Africa, the religious field was deregulated, and competition over customers increased between the religious suppliers. Within a rapidly changing society, struggling to transform political institutions, to accommodate the economically disadvantaged masses, and to face the disruptive challenges of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, individual actors and institutions in the religious sector have to continuously adapt to volatile circumstances. The central goal of our project is to investigate the innovative and traditionalizing strategies employed by the old and new churches.



In order to address the dynamics of the religious field, it is necessary to take account of its history. Therefore, our project combines historical, anthropological and sociological approaches. For the historical part of the project, Berner will examine the formative period of Christianity in South Africa in colonial times, when African Initiated Churches (AICs) challenged the hegemony of the Mission churches. His focus will be on a neglected part of the history of the religious field, namely, cases of failed religious innovation. In order to analyze the role of innovating and traditionalizing practices in the production of the structure of the religious field, it is not enough to consider the successful establishment of AICs, but also to systematically compare the unsuccessful strategies, as, e.g., the

fatal strategy of the Israelite Church to violently confront the colonial state, or Colenso's failed reforms of the Anglican Church in the late 19th century, which nevertheless had a wide impact on the emergence of Zulu nationalism and Zulu-initiated Christian churches in the early 20th century. The anthropological and sociological parts of the project will be concerned with the religious field in post-apartheid South Africa. Echtler will focus on how one of the largest African Initiated Churches, the Nazareth Baptist Church, employs tradition and innovation in order to succeed within the contemporary religious market, especially in the face of new players like Nigerian Pentecostal Churches. Ukah will analyze the impact of two of these churches, namely the Christ Embassy Church

and the Redeemed Christian Church of God, whose role in the South African context has so far been neglected. A common frame will be the focus on the strategic use of rituals, media technology, and practices of healing. We will analyze how everyday rituals, both domestic and within the church communities, as well as the great ritualized events like the annual festivals of the Nazareth Baptist Church and the crusades or religious camps of the Pentecostal Churches, invent and reproduce traditions. Religious healing as a ritualized practice played a major role in the establishment of the Nazareth Baptist Church vis-à-vis the Mission churches, and is likewise utilized by the Christ Embassy Church in the form of a healing ministry called the 'Healing School' in South Africa. New media offer opportunities for innovative practices to the suppliers' side of the religious market, but the technical promise of global connections is countered by practical disconnections: while many of the new Pentecostal Churches feature state-of-the-art internet pages, most of the AICs do not, but whether this inequality is of importance for the segments of the market served by the AICs is one of the questions we intend to answer. (*U. Berner, A. Ukah and M. Echtler*)

## Risk and Africa

### **Conceptualizing risk in the context of contemporary Africa**

*International Symposium 27-29.11.2008, Bayreuth, Germany*

The relationship between risk and modernity has stimulated controversial debates about the changing nature of risk and the dynamics of contemporary society. While it is acknowledged that modern society, through technological development, has been successful in using risk to improve livelihoods, there is also widespread consensus over the costs of such improvements in the form of ecological degradation, industrial hazards and exaggerated societal expectations. Therefore, even though the general assumption is that modern society has been largely successful in dealing with risk it is still felt that the future of modern societies depends on their ability to identify and adopt suitable approaches to manage risk, deal with uncertainty and develop pathways towards sustainability. However, it is important to note that the current debate on the concepts of risk and "risk society" is heavily skewed in favour of European historical experience.

By distinguishing between concepts of risk in modern to late-modern societies and those in the rest of the world the debate drives a perhaps unintended and possibly unwarranted epistemological wedge between North and South. In other words, the debate would seem to suggest that the concept of risk refers to fundamentally different empirical and epistemological objects: "Here" we talk about manufactured technological risks, environmental awareness and the social construction of risk as symptoms of reflexive modernity. "There" the focus is on vulnerability, natural hazards and coping strategies in the context of state failure, disintegrating markets and (more or less) pre-modern societies. In exploring new ways of conceptualising risk in Africa the symposium will seek to address the challenge of making theoretical and methodological advances in risk research relevant to an understanding of processes of social change in the continent.

The symposium is organized by ZENEB, Centre for Natural Risks and Development on behalf of BIGSAS, Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies.

Further information and application:

[lana.bloemertz@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:lana.bloemertz@uni-bayreuth.de)

(*L. Bloemertz, M. Doeverspeck, E. Macamo, D. Müller-Mahn*)



## Media Art...

*... and the Dynamics of Contemporary Art Worlds in Johannesburg and Luanda*

A new research project of Iwalewa House was approved by the DFG (German research foundation) in August 2007. The project continues and

bi- and triennials art festivals both cities have evolved – next to Cairo and Dakar – as the new and powerful hubs of the growing network of contempo-

versions of “ready-mades” or “objets trouvés” and is increasingly used to question the legacy of the cultural (and particularly the colonial) archive. By re-arranging found footage and other mass-mediated images from the past into new



▲ Detail from Installation „The best of the best“ by Yonamine/Angola (Venice Biennale 2007).

◀ Video art work „Urban Sox“ by Ihosvanny/Angola (Biennale 2007)

deepens earlier research on African contemporary art, which had been the main focus of Iwalewa House within the scope of the Collaborative Research Centre SFB 560, “Local Action in Africa in the Context of Global Developments” (2000 – 2007), at Bayreuth University.

The new project includes two case studies on the cities of Johannesburg, South Africa, and Luanda, Angola. Since the creation of their international

rary art in Africa. The thematic focus of the project is media arts, their recent development and their current impact, including artistic interaction and discourse. Media-artists work within an expanding pool of floating media-images and engage in exploring new forms of artistic presentations. Central issues of their works are often the media themselves, as well as a critical inquiry of the images and narrations generated and transmitted by the media.

The working hypothesis of the research project is that in the context of media-art, “found footage” has replaced earlier

narrations and contexts, artists negotiate alternative readings of history and add new layers of meaning to the official memory of their respective countries. The research is based on an in-depth analysis of a comprehensive corpus of recent media art works and includes interviews with artists and other media practitioners.

The project is co-ordinated by Tobias Wendl and Ulf Vierke and has created two additional research posts at Iwalewa House: Thorolf Lipp for the South African, and Nadine Siegert for the Angolan case study. (U. Vierke)



## New German-French cooperation

*Parallel to the success of the Bayreuth Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) in the national Excellence Initiative, networking with European partner institutions within African studies is also being intensified.*

Recently, a promising grouping of interlinked projects was achieved, particularly in the context of cooperation between the universities of Bayreuth and Bordeaux. On the French and the German side, these connections are mainly sustained by geographers, but recently also by other disciplines such as History of Africa, Literatures in African Languages and African Linguistics.

Cooperation within geography was developed over the last two years by a mutual exchange of lecturers, several research-oriented workshops and a common publication in the context of the PROCOPE-project “Water related risks in Africa: scientific knowledge, perception, management”, financed by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and its French counterpart. On this basis a common research project, “Water Management in Khartoum International Research Project” (WAMAKHAIR) was conceived, and has approved by the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the Agence Na-

tional de la Recherche (ANR). The applicants were Detlef Müller-Mahn and Martin Doeverspeck, both of Bayreuth University, Olivier Graefe, University Fribourg, Switzerland, and David Blanchon, University Paris X.

Various scientists from Bordeaux, Paris and the French research centre CEDEJ in Khartoum, Sudan are also involved in this project. For his research in the Congolese-Rwandan borderland, Martin Doeverspeck also co-operates with the “Risk in Africa”-Project co-ordinated by Simon Pomel, University of Bordeaux.

Recently, another international project, named “C.R.E.A.T.I.N.G.”, started. In the context of the 7th EU framework programme for research, it is the first Africa project in the social sciences and humanities ever to be approved. Alongside the universities and institutions in Nairobi, Brussels, Dublin and Stockholm, again the Universities of Bayreuth and Bordeaux are involved. The project will promote young scientists from East Africa, and network

the universities of the region, as well as the partners in Europe. The work package “migration and identity” is co-ordinated by Achim van Oppen, Bayreuth University.

Finally, “Dimensions de l’objet swahili: textes et terrains” is the name of another large research project that is co-ordinated by the University of Bordeaux and involves geographers, linguists and literary studies from East Africa, France and other European countries. Alain Ricard, LLACAN, Paris, François Bart, ADES, University of Bordeaux 3, and Bernard Calas, Institut Français, Nairobi, prepared the project on the textual and geographical dimensions of Swahili and its many varieties in East Africa, that was recently approved by the ANR. As well as the university in Dar es-Salaam, SOAS in London and the University of Vienna, the Chair of African Linguistics I and the professorship in Literatures in African Languages of Bayreuth University, Said Khamis, play a crucial role as research partners. (A. von Oppen)





## The Timing of Djembe Rhythms

Bayreuth-based ethnomusicologist Rainer Polak recently completed a 24-months' research project funded by the German Research Council. Entitled "The Timing of Djembe Rhythms", the project dealt with microrhythmic structures and meter in West African percussion music. Its basic assumption was that a limited number of specific "feels" accounts for the "groove" of djembe music. Groove is the rhythmic appeal that makes people move. The topic thus is a central element in the music theory of any Black dance music style.

What is a "feel" (or "feeling" or "swing")? Adopted from Jazz musician's jargon, rhythm researchers use the term to designate specific ways to subdivide the musical beat. The beat is a pulsation that drives dancers to synchronize their basic steps. In Black dance music, it is mainly two, three or four faster notes that further divide the beat. The mainstream of Africanist music theory postulates that a so-called elementary pulsation (or "density referent") of fast isochronous rhythmic events serves as a mental raster which allows for only more-or-less equidis-

tant sub-divisions of the beat. By contrast, empirical rhythm research has proven that fast pulsations of dance music styles are not equidistant, but unevenly structured. This unevenness is markedly structured. A "feel" in this sense designates a certain pattern of uneven pulsation structure.

What role does feel play in the composition of djembe music? Polak made systematically-sampled multi-track recordings of djembe rhythms in Mali. Computerized analysis verified that djembe music is decidedly and consistently swung by each individual player in all situations in all tempi. At least four feel patterns can be proven; each rhythm is as-

sociated with one of these. Moreover, basic macro-rhythmic structures of djembe music can be shown to depend on micro-rhythmic feel structures. The latter thus emerge as part of its metric system. Feelings sometimes are thought of as optional, expressive and individualized surface ornaments. This is wrong in the case of djembe music.

What status should be attributed to feeling in the theory of djembe music? Disregarding feels in music theory is disregarding the meaning of dance music. An explicit theory of feeling is particularly needed with respect to its application in the practices of writing and teaching music. The now



global appropriation of, for instance, traditional djembe music in the modern contexts of pedagogy, music notation and music software unfortunately is accompanied by a dramatic and systematic loss of rhythmic sophistication. Polak's future projects will therefore aim at the transfer of ethnomusicological knowledge into the practice of the pedagogical appropriation of African music in the "West". A pioneering event in this direction was his conceptualizing and direction of the first summer school for the professional development of djembe teachers hosted by the University of the Professional Arts, Rotterdam (NL) in 2006. (R. Polak)

◀ Analytical recording session in Bamako/Mali: 70-year-old djembe master Sega Cisse performs for the microphone. Foto: Polak 2007. See [www.djembe.uni-bayreuth.de](http://www.djembe.uni-bayreuth.de) for a couple of video samples.

Research ▶ in rural Togo: Tabea Häberlein with „the old“ Dikpeng and assistant Essoham Solitoke. (Photo: Alber)

## Power and Loneliness

*What about the elders in West Africa?*

German Research Foundation (DFG) funds a new research project on intra-family resource flows and intergenerational relationships in West Africa at Bayreuth University. Intergenerational relationships and, particularly, the changes of role and status of elderly people in North Eastern Togo (Kabye) and North Eastern Benin (Baatombu) are the centre of interest of this research project. It is under the direction of the social anthropologists Erdmute Alber and Tabea Häberlein. The research focus is on resource flows between the generations in general and on those ensuring the supply of resources for the elderly in particular. The research on intergenerational relationship in Africa is accompanied by various discourses on the power, status and prestige of old people. In order to analyse clichés assumed theo-

ries on intergenerational family resource flows, the research project is running quantitative surveys in two rural locations for a period of one year. This comparative study will give insight on intergenerational family resource-supply at national and regional levels. Return flows from towns or from other communities of the diaspora, back to rural areas, will also be considered. Qualitative research methods are also part of the research methodology. The qualitative part of the research will focus on the social construction of age and intergenerational relationships, the changing roles of the elders as well as their power and status within the families. The project investigates the material substance of intergenerational relationships in two differently-structured societies in West Africa. (T. Häberlein)





## Indigenous Trees in Ethiopia

*Coexistence of different functional types of indigenous trees in the Munessa Forest, Ethiopia: Carbon, water and nutrient relations*

The German Research Foundation is funding a new project on the coexistence of indigenous trees in Munessa Forest, Ethiopia, for a period of three years. Principal investigators of this collaborative research project are Erwin Beck, emeritus professor at Bayreuth University, and Masresha Fetene, professor at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. In addition, the soil scientists Wolfgang Zech, emeritus professor at Bayreuth University, Bruno Glaser, Bayreuth University and Georg Guggenberger, University of Halle, together with researchers from the Forestry Department of Technische Universität München, and a specialist team for tree growth analysis from Erlangen University are collaborating extensively with the plant ecophysiologists from Bayreuth and Addis Ababa.

The Munessa Forest represents one of the largest forest areas in Ethiopia. Located close to three great lakes, it covers

part of the eastern escarpment of the Rift Valley at an altitude between 1800 and 3400m. While the major part is extensively-utilized natural forest the lower part encompasses big plantations of exotic trees like Eucalyptus, Pinus and Cupressus, which are managed by a state company. German and Ethiopian researchers have collaborated for 7 years in the investigation of ecological and social aspects of the Munessa forest. A research station has already been established with the financial support of the German Research Foundation. The ongoing project aims to assess the impacts of the exotic tree plantations on the ecosystem and at the practical and economic chances of regeneration of a semi-natural forest. In contrast to the prevailing opinion, plantations of Eucalyptus and Pinus favour the re-growth of indigenous tree species, an unexpected effect which is now being studied in detail. (E. Beck)

◀ Natural forest dominated by *Podocarpus falcatus*, Kuke, Ethiopia (Photo: Glaser)

## DEVA-Bayreuth

Photographs and audiovisual material, field notes and rough data, rare sound recordings, unpublished written documents, grey literature and many other forms of documents from diverse regions and time periods: a wide range of data will be made available for scientific inquiry by DEVA-Bayreuth. After its initial phase, the project will now continue full-speed ahead to digitalize and edit the vast corpus of data on African Studies in Bayreuth.

Funded by German Research Foundation (DFG), DEVA is one branch of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Bayreuth. The aim of the project is to offer innovative documentation solutions for the heterogeneous scientific data produced by various university disciplines which carry out research relating to Africa. The University of Bayreuth takes on responsibility not only for saving the results of the intense research in African Studies of the last twenty years, but also for providing open access to scientific results and culturally important documents and artefacts, to a world-wide audience. The material that will be incorporated stems from the fields of

The music collection at the Iwalewa-House consists of over seven hundred LPs, Singles, MCs, CDs and audio tapes, currently being restored and digitalized.



Arts, Anthropology, Language Studies, Islamic Studies, Geography, Economics, and many more. Special subjects of international significance will be selected and in-depth documentation will be offered. One highlight in this field will be a special collection of letters and papers on the works of Wole Soyinka, Nigerian author and Nobel Prize Laureate in Literature in 1986, and Honorary Doctor of the Faculty of Linguistics and Literature at Bayreuth University. Differing levels of accessibility to specific sections of the database will secure exclusive use of data, for example within research groups. Other parts of the database will be made available to the public from the beginning. Thus, in co-operation with national and international partner institutions, DEVA will become a

central information platform for a diversified database on African Studies.

The future architecture of DEVA is built on three columns:

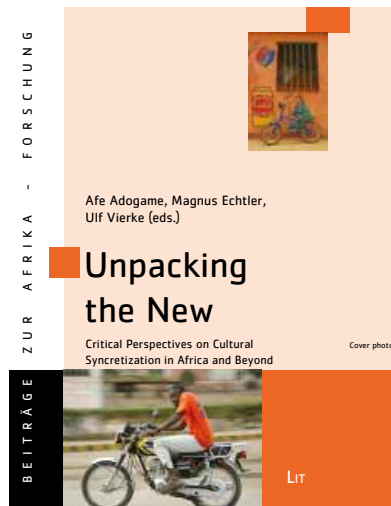
**Archiv-zaK:** The development, digitalisation and editing of an archive in the special area of contemporary art and popular culture in Africa.

**InfoSys-IAS:** An Information system for recording all data from the Bayreuth Institute of African Studies (IAS).

**InfoSys-Afrika:** The design and development of a comprehensive information system for research relating to Africa. The material of these three main units will be worked on in parallel and single units of data will be published online as soon as possible. For further information see [www.deva.uni-bayreuth.de](http://www.deva.uni-bayreuth.de) (M. Prussat)



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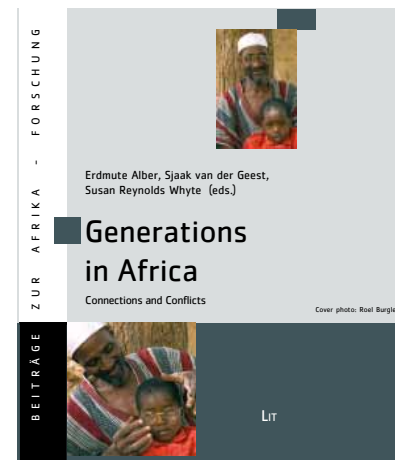
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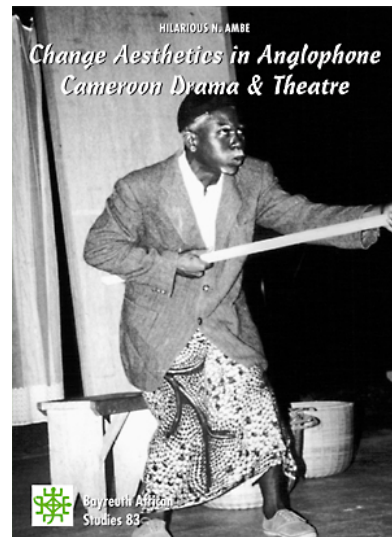
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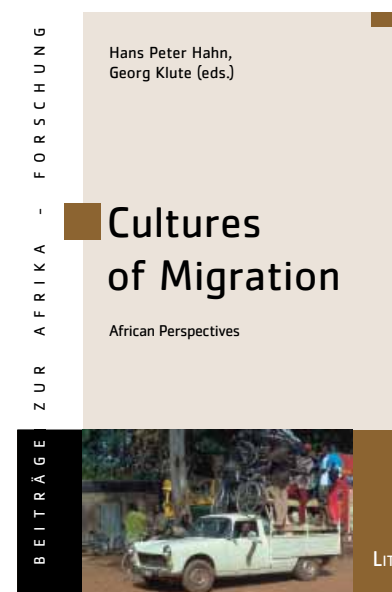
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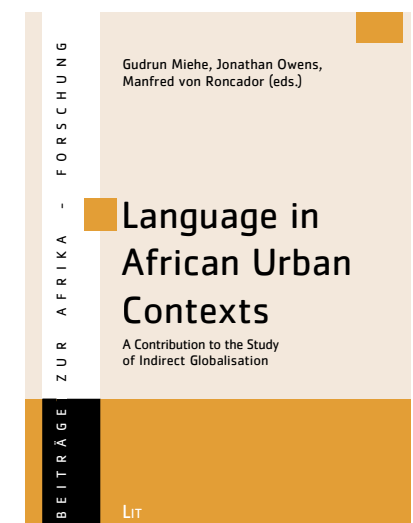
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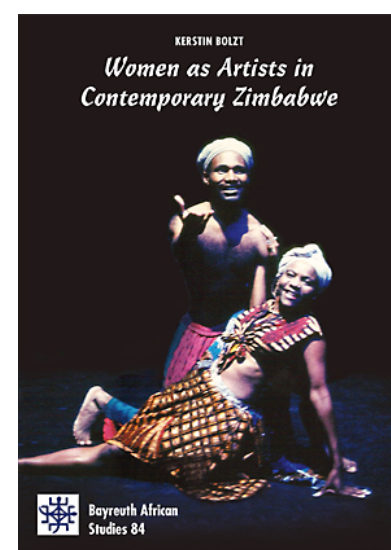
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## Excursion to Ouagadougou/Burkina Faso

*From the 9th to 24th of February 2008, Ute Fendler, Ricarda Hanck (Chair of Romance Literatures and Comparative Studies), and 14 students of the faculty of philosophy travelled to Ouagadougou/Burkina Faso.*



▲ German and Burkinabe students in the studio of the Burkinabe radio station „Pulsar“ students from Bayreuth University accompanied by Ricarda Hanck took part in a radio transmission. They talked with Burkinabe student Eric Segueda about their stay in Burkina Faso and answered to questions asked by the listeners. (Photo: Hanck)

This excursion was financially supported by the DAAD and Bayreuth University. Its aim was to learn about the media (public and private radio and television, publishing houses, advertising agencies etc.) and the cultural scene (museums, arts and crafts exhibitions, French Cultural Institute etc.), and to meet local students. In addition, some of the German students rehearsed and performed the play “La grande harmonie”, by the author and stage director A.S. Zinsou, during the “Festival International du Théâtre pour le Développement”. Since starting in 1988, the festival has taken place in Ouagadougou every two years, welcoming actors from all over the world. As a preliminary to the trip, all the Bayreuth students took part in a two-day workshop at “Iwalewa-Haus” in October 2007, during which Festival director and founder Prof. Dr. Prosper Kompaoré informed the students about theatre and society in Western Africa. An exhibition showing some impressions of the field trip will be organised by the students during the summer term. (R. Hanck)



## 4<sup>th</sup> Biennial Colloquium on the Chadic Languages

The Biennial International Colloquium on the Chadic Languages unites two discontinued linguistic colloquium traditions focusing on languages spoken in the Lake Chad region: The series of Chadic language colloquiums in Leiden 1976, Hamburg 1981, Boulder 1987 and the Franco-German meetings in Paris (1980-1997) of the Groupe d'Etudes tchadiques. It is devoted to all aspects of Chadic linguistics, in particular:

- Descriptive linguistics of individual Chadic languages
- Comparative linguistics of Chadic languages
- Typology of Chadic languages

- Hausa linguistics
- The position of Chadic within Afroasiatic languages
- Chadic languages in contact with non-Chadic languages

The Permanent Committee of the International Colloquium on the Chadic Languages, presently represented by D. Ibriszimow (Lehrstuhl Afrikanistik II, University of Bayreuth), H. Tourneux (LLA-CAN-CNRS / INALCO / Paris 7 - Villejuif / Paris), and E. Wolff (Institut für Afrikanistik, University of Leipzig), agreed on the Biennial International Colloquium on the Chadic Languages 2007 being held in Bayreuth, after the venues of

Leipzig (2001), Prague (2003) and Paris (2005).

More than thirty linguists from Austria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Nigeria, Russia and the United States participated in the **Fourth Biennial International Colloquium on the Chadic Languages**. It took place from 30th - 31st October 2007 at Iwalewa House. The conference organized by Prof. D. Ibriszimow and Dr. E. Rothmaler (both of Lehrstuhl Afrikanistik II, Bayreuth University) was a complete success with interesting papers, a lot of discussion and an evening programme with guitar and songs. (*E. Rothmaler*)



◀ Participants of the Chadic Colloquium

## Africa Discussion Forum

*A series of discussions in African studies*

The Africa Discussion Forum, founded in spring 2005 in order to provide an opportunity for the interdisciplinary discussion of themes of topical interest at the Bayreuth Institute of African Studies, continues to take place regularly three to four times a semester. Our semester theme in the winter 2007/08 was "Coming to terms with violent conflicts in Africa". In view of persisting conflicts and chronicle war structures on the African continent, new strategies of dealing with conflicts in Africa which result from new global governance structures were critically analysed. Apart from current conceptual approaches towards conflict research we discussed, inter alia, the relevance of the International Criminal Court and International Criminal Tribunals.

In the summer semester 2008, we dealt with "Media in Africa – Africa in the Media". We approached this topic from two sides: (i) How are media in Africa used and appropriated, and (ii) how are images of Africa produced in the media, especially in western media. This leads to further questions, such as how do medial

representations of Africa look like? What are the effects of the new variety of media on the African continent? How can Western media report on African cultural forms of expression, on conditions of life and topical events, in an adequate manner, without reproducing stereotypes? How does the journalistic production of knowledge regarding current developments on the African continent take place? These and similar questions were discussed together with invited experts: Africa in non-fictional films, with Thorolf Lipp (Bayreuth); the role of television in Africa, with Ute Fendler (Bayreuth); Africa in

the press, with Dominic Johnson (Berlin); Africa and the internet, with Alain Kiyindou (Strasbourg).

Responsible for content and organisation:

Lena Bloemertz (Social Geography)

Martin Doevenspeck (Social Geography)

Jeannett Martin (Social Anthropology)

Ulrike Wanitzek (Law)

More information on [www.ias.uni-bayreuth.de](http://www.ias.uni-bayreuth.de), News. (*U. Wanitzek, J. Martin*)

▼ Bookstall in Cotonou, Benin  
(Photo: Doevenspeck)





## African film festival



▲ The Cameroonian filmmaker and producer Jean-Pierre Békolo (Photo: Hanck)

A film festival in Bayreuth: In November 2007, four new African movies were shown in the "Cineplex" cinema: "Les saignantes" by Jean-Pierre Békolo (Cameroon, 2006),

"Making off..." by Nouri Bouzid (Tunisia, 2007), "Moolaadé" by Ousmane Sembène (Senegal, 2005) and "No time to die" by King Ampaw (Ghana, 2007). The series started with the film "Les saignantes" ("The bleeding") by the Cameroonian director Jean-Pierre Békolo who was also present at the screening. The film won the second prize at the international film festival in Ouagadougou/Burkina Faso (FESPACO). It begins with a voice-over "We are in the year 2025 and nothing has changed", referring to the situation in Africa. The film has elements of political satire, thriller and science fiction movie, criticizing current conditions in Africa. In November, Jean-Pierre Békolo also offered a two-day work-

shop in "Iwalewa-Haus", within the framework of the film seminar by Ute Fendler and Tobias Wendl. The Tunisian movie "Making off..." won the Tanit d'or award during the Carthage Film Festival in 2006 for treating the difficult subject of how Muslim fanatics try to win over young people. The most recent film of Ousmane Sembène - considered the "father" of African cinema - "Moolaadé" concerns the topic of female genital mutilation. After the screening, representatives of "Terre des femmes" provided background information about this relevant subject. The series ended with a film from Ghana: "No time to die" (2007) by King Ampaw. (R. Hanck)

## 21<sup>st</sup> Swahili Colloquium, 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> May 2008

The Swahili-Colloquium has become an established forum at Bayreuth University, which every year attracts many Swahili scholars from within and outside of Germany. This year's Swahili Colloquium, organized by the professorship of Literatures in African Languages, took place from

2nd to 4th of May 2008 at Iwalewa House. Scholars, authors, teachers and cultural practitioners in the area of Swahili studies participated and presented papers on Swahili linguistics, the historical and sociological aspects of the language, its oral and written literature(s), and Swahili cul-

ture in general. The forum is open to anyone interested in the topics mentioned above.

For further information visit our website at [www.uni-bayreuth.de/departments/afrikanistik/swacoll/index.html](http://www.uni-bayreuth.de/departments/afrikanistik/swacoll/index.html) or send an email to [swahili@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:swahili@uni-bayreuth.de). (C. Vierke)

## Fosterage and Adoption in West Africa

"Fosterage and Adoption in West Africa reviewed: New theoretical approaches on the basis of empirical research", was the title of an international workshop held in Thurnau from 21st to 23rd May, 2007. It was supported by the SFB/FK 560, and organized by Erdmute Alber, in collaboration with Jeannett Martin (University of Bayreuth) and Catrien Notermans (University of Nijmegen). Child fosterage is a common and widely accepted social practice in West Africa. From the 1970s onwards, it became

an object of anthropological enquiry and, since then, a good number of ethnographic contributions on different forms of social parenthood, and on attached rules, norms and functions of this practice have been made. The workshop aimed to discuss the meaning of classical theoretical approaches against the background of newer theoretical concepts (known as "new kinship studies") and in the light of the results of the participants' own empirical researches. Among the participants from six countries (Cameroon, France, Ger-

many, Netherlands, Norway and U.S.A.) was Suzanne Lallemant, to whom we owe the most important contribution influenced by the French alliance theory. The participants' contributions and discussions revealed how variable, complex and flexible foster arrangements in West Africa are. They also showed the potentials and limits of different theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of kinship. A publication of the workshop results is planned and is presently under-way. (J. Martin)



◀ 21st Swahili colloquium, from left: Assibi Amidu, University of Trondheim, David Massamba, Institute of Swahili Research, University of Dar es Salaam, Euphrase Kezilahabi, Botswana University (Photo: Rettová)



## Conflicts in Guinea-Bissau

### *Reflections from legal anthropology*

The Invited Workshop on the “Analysis of conflict cases and local conflict resolution at the Upper Guinean Coast and its hinterland” took place in Bissau from the 13th to the 15th of November 2007; the workshop was organized within the framework of the collaborative research project “Local Strategies of Conflict Management”, funded by Volkswagen Foundation and carried out jointly by Bayreuth University and Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisa (INEP) from Bissau. The workshop provided space for discussion about theoretical issues, methodological approaches and preliminary research results within the domain of legal anthropology. Researchers from Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Senegal, The Gambia,

Niger, Portugal and Germany debated questions such as the following:

- How can we describe the capacity of social orders to deal with conflicts?
- Can we identify social or political orders parallel to or beside the state?
- How do (local) non-state institutions and agents deal with and react to conflicts?
- Can people involved choose freely between various legal systems in order to pursue their claims, as the concept of *legal pluralism* implies?

Participant researchers engaging in legal anthropology from different scientific perspectives were Abdoul Aziz Sow (Université Gaston Berger, Saint Louis, Senegal), Aghali Abdelkader (LASDEL, Niam-

ey, Niger), Dr. Bakary Camara (Point Sud, Bamako, Mali), Bakary Sidibeh (Serrekunda, The Gambia), Dr. Clara Carvalho (ISCTE, Lisbon, Portugal), Dr. Jordi Tomàs (ISCTE, Lisbon, Portugal) and Dr. Mohamadou Abdoul (enda diapol, Dakar, Senegal). In addition, all members of the above-mentioned collaborative research project took part: Prof. Georg Klute, Dr. Birgit Embaló, Dr. A. Idrissa Embaló, Mamadu Jao, Anne-Kristin Borszik, Raul Fernandes, Augusto Bock, Fodé Abulai Mané, Caterina Viegas, Paulina Mendes and Samba T. Camará. Representatives of NGOs such as Acção para o Desenvolvimento (AD), Tiniguena and Weltfriedensdienst participated in the discussions, evoking conflict-related issues that they are confronted with in their development work, and members of Bissau's State University, 'Amílcar Cabral', brought up issues related to conflict relevant in their sociology, anthropology and history teaching.

The *articulation of state and non-state legal systems* and the

◀ *Conceptual opening of the workshop at INEP: Georg Klute during the presentation of theoretical features and first results of the hosting scholars' research project „Local Strategies of Conflict Management in Guinea-Bissau“. (Photo: Borszik)*



## Sharia Debates in Africa

entanglement of local and global actors were evident in all studies carried out in Guinea-Bissau. Researchers observed cases of violent vigilante justice in various regions of the country that they characterized as symptomatic of ‘weak’ state and non-state institutions of conflict resolution. In other regions, local actors seem to re-evaluate local traditions and local history in response to new global challenges which are reinforced by the physical presence of various ‘global players’.

The participants' animated discussions on the central questions of the workshop bore witness to their strong scientific interest and commitment. Closer institutional cooperation was initiated, and some of the guests will return to Bissau in December 2008 on the occasion of the thematically-related *International Conference* on “Political violence in heterarchical state settings and non-state local conflict management in West Africa and beyond”, where we shall discuss fresh research material and evaluate the theoretical, methodological and empirical advancement of the project “Local Strategies of Conflict Management in Guinea-Bissau”. (A. Borszik)

After the success of 2006, Franz Kogelmann organised a second international and multidisciplinary Summer Academy at Bayreuth University in 2007. It formed part of the project “Sharia Debates and Their Perception by Christians and Mus-

2006 – whose main focus was on an intensive introduction to contemporary methodology in social sciences – the Junior Scholars had to present and discuss their preliminary research results. Hence the elaboration and revision of their



▲ *Participants of the second international and multidisciplinary Summer Academy at Bayreuth University (Photo: Kogelmann)*

lims in Selected African Countries” funded by Volkswagen Foundation which started in 2006. Beside these two Summer Academies at Bayreuth University the project has already organised a series of workshops, one regional one in East Africa, one for all members in Sudan, and a third one on the verge of a status symposium arranged by Volkswagen Foundation in Mali. Eleven Junior Scholars from Tunisia, Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania and Nigeria enjoyed the outstanding research facilities of Bayreuth University to work on their individual projects. In contrast to the Summer Academy of

already accomplished research work was the main objective of 2007. During their two months stay at Bayreuth University the Junior Scholars were endorsed and encouraged by their country coordinators Osman Mohamed Osman, University of Khartoum, Sudan, John Chesworth, St. Paul's University, Limuru, Kenya, Sati Fwatshak, University of Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria and by Ulrich Berner and Asonzeh Ukah, both Religious Studies, Kurt Beck, Social Anthropology, Franz Kogelmann, Islamic Studies, and the Sociologist Gabriele Cappai, all from Bayreuth University. (F. Kogelmann)



## Agency and Changing World Views in Africa

*An international conference in Bayreuth, 26th-28th April 2007*

In April 2007 the humanities collaborative research centre on "Local action in Africa in the context of global influences" organized the last conference of a trilogy that dealt with processes of globalisation in Africa from a local perspective. As in the former conferences, the focus was on cultural and social influences and reactions on globalisation at a micro-level, underlining the agency of the people.

The topic of changing world views in the 2007 conference highlighted the fact that globalisation does not only influence Africa via economic processes, the presence of new consumer goods or the exertion of political influence by the world powers. When we understand globalisation as an historical process, we have to consider that African people are confronted with different world views, which have influenced and still influence everyday life in Africa. World views in this sense are interpretive frameworks as religious, economic, political, social and scientific notions about the nature of reality. These frameworks are produced by agency, but also provide contexts within which agency unfolds. Com-

ing to terms with the process of globalisation includes the challenge to react to these world views.

This is most obvious in the realm of law (U. Wanitzek/H. Sippel). For example, international conventions for the protection of children (child labour) or principles like "the best interest of the child" contradict local notions of children as a work-force and family asset (S. Howell; E. Alber/A. Bochow). A similar tension can be seen between different notions of solidarity in the case of local health insurance systems (A. Wolf). However, there are cases of a creative syncretism between different systems such as in the case of Islamic endowments under British rule in Zanzibar (N. Oberauer). Christianity is an example of a successful African appropriation of a formerly new religion, which now starts to affect Christianity in Europe (J. Olupona; A. Adogame; J. Draper).

Art, popular culture, media and communication are fields where changing world views are most obvious. New juvenile identities are expressed in particular forms, style and popular culture (B. Weiss). African languages represent this

change either in new dialects - e.g. used by the youth - or by a newly-established hierarchy between African languages (R. Kiesling; P. Maigoubri). African intellectuals reflecting on world views make use of Western forms of expression in art, either of written literature or of the notion of "Gesamtkunstwerk" (all-embracing art form) (C. Maalu-Bungi; U. Vierke). However, they do it in their own way. Mobile phones offer the opportunity for new forms of long-distance communication (H.-P. Hahn); and African cultures become trans-local, crossing cultural and political borders and linking Africa with regions outside old North-South relations, like the Indian Ocean or Cuba (A. v. Oppen; D. Müller-Mahn/J. Pfaff; H. Dorsch).

The biggest challenge for scholarly thinking is still the conceptualisation of changing world views and agency. At first, agency also has, for scholars, a political meaning of reconquering political and social space (F. Nymnjoh). However, there is also a plea to reconnect the concept of agency to its sociological roots in sociology, of knowledge and every-day life. This offers the chance to use agency as an

analytical category and not so much as a normative imperative (P. Chabal; D. Goetze). In doing so, we have to admit that in Africa a different notion of agency is present in every-day life that may attribute agency to entities like stones, which are "things" in Western terms, and may follow a different understanding of time (W. v. Beek; L. Nijzink). These different world views still compete for the hegemony of interpretation (E. Macamo/D. Neubert). (D. Neubert)

▼ Jonathan Draper (KwaZulu-Natal) gave his lecture on „George Khambule and Zulu Zionism“. (Photo: Scholl)



## Childhood and Youth

Under the title "Enfances? Nostalgie, perte et instrumentalisation. Témoignages médiatiques sur l'enfance et la jeunesse en Afrique francophone et en Amérique Latine" (Childhood? Nostalgia, deprivation and instrumentalisation. Evidence in the media on childhood and youth in Francophone Africa and Latin America) Bayreuth University hosted an international conference from 28th February to 1st March. More than 30 social scientists,

most of them from Africa and South America, accepted the invitation of the Chair of the Department of Roman Literatures to come to Bayreuth to begin an unusual and urgent dialogue on the topic of childhood in both continents. The aim of this conference, organized by Ute Fendler and Liliana Feierstein, was to discuss differences and similarities between the two continents from an interdisciplinary perspective (literature, educational sciences, ethnology, linguistics, media, law and philosophy). Representations in the media of both continents (cinema, television, radio, literature), but also the real situation concerning such topics as poverty, child soldiers or sexual abuse were the main points of discussion in many presentations. The meeting started with a talk by the ambassador of UNICEF in Bayreuth, Mrs. Müller-Feierstein. The keynote conference speech by the famous writer of children's books, Véronique Tadjo from Côte d'Ivoire, provided the basic tone of this conference: a difficult and painful topic that nonetheless may provide some hope for the future of these children. (L. Feierstein)



## Local Action in lecture series to end SFB / FK 560

Within a series of public lectures organized by Erdmute Alber in the summer term 2007, members of the Collaborative Research Centre 'Local Action in Africa in the Context of Global Influences' (SFB/FK 560) summarized seven years of intensive work and presented their findings to colleagues, students, and the general public of Bayreuth.

The lecture series was opened by the president of the University, Helmut Ruppert, and it started with a lecture by Gerd Spittler, the founding director of the Collaborative

Research Centre. Together with Hans-Peter Hahn, the co-director of the research project "Local consumption in a global context", Spittler discussed the question "How many things do people need?" by comparing households and their consumption patterns in Niger, Burkina Faso and Germany. The lecture series was continued by the vice-director of the SFB Gudrun Mieke, who explained the term "Indirect Globalisation", a crucial finding and result of her project on changing languages in West Africa.

Among the speakers were

some former members of the Collaborative Research Centre who are now teaching in other universities, such as Rüdiger Seesemann and Roman Loimeier, who were invited from the United States. They spoke about "Time-orders in East African Muslim societies". In a cross-disciplinary presentation, Erdmute Alber and Ulrike Wanitzek talked about "Childhood in Africa – juristic and anthropological perspectives". In the last session, Dieter Neubert, the director of the SFB, provided an evaluation of "Seven years of SFB – what next?" (E. Alber)

## Uschi Drolc – In Memoriam

In January 2008, Uschi Drolc abandoned us after a long and severe illness. Her years at the University of Munich, studying general linguistics, phonetics and social anthropology, laid the foundation of her passion for African languages and for Africa itself, a passion which lasted until the end of her short life. She graduated in African linguistics at Bayreuth University in 1991. Her Master's thesis "The perfect in Swahili. Theo-

retical foundations and corpus analysis", under the supervision of Franz Rottland, earned not only the award of the city of Bayreuth for outstanding theses but was also the basis of her first academic publications.

During the years that followed, she committed herself to her doctoral studies on "Swahili as an interlanguage". Supported by a scholarship, she was able to publish parts of her research findings on the Maa language

and the influence of Swahili as interlanguage on Maa-speakers. In presenting the latest results of her research, she participated actively in academic conferences. To earn her living after the expiration of her scholarship, she was a graduate assistant, and later a research fellow, at the Chair of African Linguistics II (Franz Rottland) at Bayreuth University. Her PhD thesis "Swahili among the Maasai. On the Interlanguage

Swahili of Maa Speakers" was published in 1999, followed by the study "A Linguistic Bibliography of Uganda" in the same year – co-authored by Uschi Drolc, Caroline Franke and Franz Rottland.

The so-far under-researched Cangin languages, which are a group of Atlantic languages – a subgroup of the Niger-Congo

logne. The German Research Foundation (DFG) funded her project on "Cangin Languages: Divergence and Convergence". New insights in morphophonological processes of Atlantic languages and a diachronical analysis of the effects of contacts with other languages were results of her research. Gerrit Dimmendaal, also of the

thoroughness combined with intensive field studies. Colleagues and friends organised an international workshop in September 2007 for her, but her ill health was already such as to prevent her participation in person.

Her personality was full of zest for life, and her intellectual curiosity, directed at far-off places,



◀ In Gabun:  
Uschi Drolc on  
her last journey  
to Africa (Photo:  
Mbondobari-  
Hartleb)

language family – acted as her next field of research, from 1998. This new challenge was closely connected with extended field research in Senegal. She started her new research with the support of a Postdoctoral grant from Bayreuth University. However, Bayreuth was unable to offer her promising academic perspectives, so she continued her research under the auspices of Bernd Heine at the University of Co-

University of Cologne, boosted her interest in the field of a historic-cum-comparative study of Cangin languages. With the results of her fascinating study, she earned her postdoctoral lecture qualification in African linguistics in 2005.

The short remainder of her life was academically dedicated to a study on verb valency in the Laala language – again at the University of Cologne – which she completed with her usual

was legendary. Also legendary was her courage; her prevailing mood was characterised by never losing hope, even in the darkest hours of her life. In spite of her hard fate and the pitfalls of academia from which she suffered, she left behind her the impression that she lived her life in a self-determined and happy way. Together with her two children and husband, we are mourning the passing of Uschi Drolc. (F. Kogelmann)



## Editors' note

NAB, the Newsletter of African Studies at the University of Bayreuth, was originally initiated in order to offer a public forum for African Studies within the scope of the Humanities Collaborative Research Centre's SFB/FK 560 "Local Action in Africa in the Context of Global Influences". This Centre was a project under the umbrella of Bayreuth's Institute of African Studies (IAS). Since the first issue in 2002, NAB has regularly supplied information about projects, events, persons and publications concerning African Studies at Bayreuth University and its co-operation with Africa. With the ending of the SFB, the Institute of African Studies has continued to publish the Newsletter under its own direct responsibility. The major event for African studies at the University of Bayreuth in 2007 has been the funding of our Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) by the German Research Foundation (DFG) within the initiative for academic excellence launched by the German federal and regional governments. The presentation of BIGSAS therefore occupies a prominent space within this issue, in the form of an interview with the dean of BIGSAS, Ute Fendler, articles about the aims and structures of BIGSAS and pictures. In addition, you will find information on African Studies at the University of Bayreuth within the customary categories. You will also find beautiful pictures of the photo exhibition "Agora Luanda" in this NAB issue. We plan to add a "feedback" category in future issues for the responses of our readers and ask you therefore to let us know your reaction to NAB.

For more up-to-date information we would like to draw your attention to our web sites:

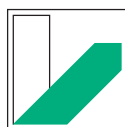
<http://www.ias.uni-bayreuth.de/de/index.html> and

<http://www.bigsas.uni-bayreuth.de>

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All correspondence to:  
[NAB@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:NAB@uni-bayreuth.de)

### *Editorial Board*

Manfred von Roncador  
(editor-in-chief)  
[manfred.vonroncador@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:manfred.vonroncador@uni-bayreuth.de)

Christine Scherer  
[christine.scherer@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:christine.scherer@uni-bayreuth.de)

Martin Doevenspeck  
[doevenspeck@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:doevenspeck@uni-bayreuth.de)

Magnus Echtler  
[magnus.echtler@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:magnus.echtler@uni-bayreuth.de)

Franz Kogelmann  
[franz.kogelmann@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:franz.kogelmann@uni-bayreuth.de)

Ulf Vierke  
[ulf.vierke@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:ulf.vierke@uni-bayreuth.de)

Ulrike Wanitzek  
[ulrike.wanitzek@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:ulrike.wanitzek@uni-bayreuth.de)

### *Layout*

Yannick Tylle  
[tylle@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:tylle@uni-bayreuth.de)

### *Photographs by*

Erdmute Alber, Anne-Kristin Borszik, Raphaël Darboux, Martin Doevenspeck, Johannes Döveling, Bruno Glaser, Anne Graupner, Ricarda Hanck, Peter Kolb, Franz Kogelmann, Katharina Mbondobari-Hartleb, Ale-na Rettová, Manfred von Roncador, D. Scholl, Rüdiger Seesemann, Nadine Siegert, Yannick Tylle (Titel)

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