



Newsletter of African Studies at Bayreuth University



Interview with Abdulkader Tayob, BIGSAS Heinrich Barth Professor	
Muslims and Islam in Africa	2
TGCL	
The Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law	8
BIGSAS	
BIGSAS statistics	7
18 months in the 'pursuit of excellence'	11
BIGSAS Colloquium: Advanced work in progress	13
Interview with Abraham Brahma, junior fellow	14
Exhibitions	
António Ole – Hidden Pages	16
PigaPicha	18
Guests	20
Personalia	23
Publications	26
Reports	32
In Brief	45
Alumni: Paulin Oloukpona-Yinon	46
Announcement	47
Editors' note	48

The first ten scholarship holders of the newly-established Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law (TGCL), a joint project of the Universities of Dar es Salaam and Bayreuth (article page 8).



Muslims and Islam in Africa

Franz Kogelmann: Your research is focused on Muslim public spheres in Africa and modern Islamic thought. How do these two important issues come together?

Abdulkader Tayob: They represent my two skills. In working on South Africa I was trying to get a more comparative approach to African Muslim societies. In that sense there is a lot to be said about Muslim publics in the 20th century, particularly post-colonial and post-cold war societies after the period of attempted liberalization.

The other skill is imperialism and colonialism and it doesn't have a pre-colonial history. I think that my own experience has been my observations of South Africa after the end of Apartheid in 1994. I began to see similar develop-

as well. At the moment they are separate streams but in the future I will combine them.

FK: You are a South African Muslim. Is there a South African Islam or is there even something like an African Islam?

AT: Islam in South Africa is very different to other regions in Africa because it emerged only in a context of European

ments elsewhere. One of the big issues is the representation of Muslims in a nation state. A lot of the conflicts in Africa take place because the state is not Islamic. Muslims have to agree on how they present themselves to the government. On those kinds of lines we began to see important similarities. The notion of African Islam is problematic. It has a political meaning. [It was] first used by

A lot of the conflicts in Africa take place because the state is not Islamic

imperialism and colonialism and it doesn't have a pre-colonial history. I think that my own experience has been my observations of South Africa after the end of Apartheid in 1994. I began to see similar develop-

the French (Islam noir) during the colonial times in order to speak about Islam in Africa that was very different from white Islam, the Islam of the Arabs. After 9-11 this idea has been picked up again: that Islam in

◀ Madrasat Manazil al-Abrar, Mamburi (Photo: Seesemann)

Africa means non-violent and non-militant Sufism. If you use "African Islam" one has to be careful because it is such a loaded political topic. African Islam is also being used by African nationalists. They use African Islam in order to speak in a nationalistic sense of Africa as being distinctive. That is also a political discourse in South Africa among indigenous African people. They speak about African Islam but they speak about it as distinct from Indian Islam.

FK: What do you mean by modernization?

AT: By modernization of Islam I mean basically a rationaliza-

FK: There is a long tradition of reform Islam in Northern Africa. Do you think that in sub-Saharan Africa you find comparable ideas – comparable African ideas?

AT: I don't think these developments are African, they are very much connected with global Islamic developments but at the same time also connected with modernization.

FK: That sounds very eclectic.

a very strong element coming from people who are studying the sciences. They are applying the logic of the natural sciences to the Islamic texts. I've described them as a modern Islamic paradigm. There is [a] shift from people who are studying in modern Islamic schools, sometimes with a rational understanding of Islam. Sometimes, with a very little knowledge about Islam, they just cut out a few things.

AT: It is very eclectic. I would say it is a result of globaliza-

an Interview with Abdulkader Tayob

FK: How about African Muslims?

AT: African Muslims might be a better term. African societies link up with cultural traditions. If you look at East Africa you have spirit possession. You cannot separate spirit possession rituals from Islam and unique Islamic symbols. It is linked up with the whole deep sense of African traditions as well as with Islamic symbols or Islamic ideas. The problem with it is that it assumes a common culture across Africa? I don't think so. Africa is too much an invention. It's too much of an imagination.

tion of Islam. With a kind of rational structure in the name of Islam what happens is that the importance of Sufism is undermined, the importance of a spiritual experience is actually replaced by an attention.

By modernization of Islam I mean basically a rationalization of Islam

tion to detailed behaviours. It becomes much more outward. The mystical linkages of such traditions are broken. You basically can go into the book: you open the Qur'an [and] you read it for yourself. Thirdly there is

rica from studying in Mecca, but also, importantly, not only from Mecca - also from local traditions, by which I mean modern schools. Once people are cut off from the traditional education you get a modern

form of Islamic reform. As I said, it includes ways of understanding texts – opposed to the Islamic scholars – but there is also a way in which Islam becomes very much part of your sense of identity.

FK: Doesn't that mean that it is a by-product of the colonization, a reaction against European imperialism?

are often quite weak methodologically. Modern education creates a much more rational understanding of Islam.

FK: The Islamic reform movement initiated by Muhammad Abdurrahman in Egypt at the end of the 19th century manifested that Islam is a rational religion.

AT: In one extreme you have

bally. The same ideas are being produced but there are local developments.

FK: How old are these ideas?

AT: Some of these ideas were already circulating among smaller groups of people between the two wars. When the major changes came I see them connected to the emergence

of Islam and also the reactions to the uncertainties created by lower economic growth, one-party states, no changes anymore and nothing is working. In Muslim societies people started to say Islam is the answer in the 1970s. The attraction for East [African] Muslims was that they blamed the problems on the fact that the state was controlled by Christians.

to establish an Islamic state. Power was central to Islamic ideology. The case of Senegal shows that the secular has been imposed by the colonial regime and Muslims want to find their own way i.e. an Islamic approach to an Islamic designed state.

FK: Why is this Islamic or Muslim way so attractive?

this desire for order to be able to come to the underlying forces. The utopia promises an ideal society. Utopia works because it is not realistic – you don't have to deal with the reality, the conflicts are too big because of the deep political and economic crises. Islamists and some established Islamic scholars argue that Islamic law – Sharia – solves all problems

Abdulkader Tayob

Abdulkader Tayob was the first BIGSAS Heinrich Barth Visiting Professor. He is professor of Religious Studies (Islam, African Publics and Religious Values) at the University of Cape Town and director of the Centre for Contemporary Islam. He has published extensively on Islam and Muslims in South Africa and on Muslim public spheres in Africa. Since 2008 he has held the Research Chair: Islam, African Publics and Religious Values. He is also the editor in chief of the Journal for Islamic Studies. Between November 2008 and January 2009 he was BIGSAS Heinrich Barth Visiting Professor.



▲ Abdulkader Tayob (Photo: Kogelmann)

AT: I don't think that it is so much a reaction as a product of it. It is a complex thing because each country has got different origins. The fact that you are going to a Muslim school where they are teaching Islamic subjects and so-called secular subjects, natural sciences, English or French, invariably what happens is that [there] is a very big difference between how you are looking at the world from the secular subjects – the natural sciences – and how you are being taught Islamic studies. In Islamic studies the traditions

Muhammad Abdurrahman who says we have to change the understanding of Islam so that it is compatible with modernization and modernity, and the other extreme is telling [you] that you have to change traditional thought because original Islam is already modern. If you ask them about the rights of women and of Non-Muslims they would give you a justification for it. They are not prepared to change anything. Coming back to your question I would say that Islamic reformism is sharing these ideas glo-

ally of two things. The one is the emergence of identity politics after the 1967 war in Arab countries. In South Africa it was the crisis of Apartheid in the 1970s. In East Africa in the 1970s it coincided with people saying Nyerere is not producing anything, he is busy building up his empire.

FK: Isn't it a reaction to uncertainty or a reaction to the moral bankruptcy of the leaders?

AT: Definitely. It was a reaction to the failed promises of nation-

BIGSAS Heinrich Barth Visiting Professorship

The BIGSAS Heinrich Barth Visiting Professors take an active part in the intellectual life of Bayreuth University and BIGSAS and engage in the following academic activities. They:

- Hold two public lectures during his or her stay on topics connected to the BIGSAS Research Areas.
- Offer a seminar for BIGSAS doctoral students and postgraduate students of the University of Bayreuth. The seminar qualifies as an official university course.
- Participate in a special workshop or colloquium with BIGSAS Principal Investigators and doctoral students. The workshop should provide a forum for research dialogue within one or more of the BIGSAS Research Areas (depending on the discipline of the visiting professor), in which the visiting professor, Principal Investigators and doctoral students report on and discuss work in progress.

Secularism was perceived as Christian. In East Africa Muslims have been marginalized partly because of the fact that they didn't have enough education so they are not in positions of power. In Nigeria [it] is slightly different, but it's a similar Christian-Muslim conflict.

FK: In Nigeria most of the military dictators were Muslims.

AT: Yes you are right. In Nigeria it seems that Islam was a way to gain power. Islamic reformers provided a model of how

AT: Well, it is so attractive to Africa because there is a utopia that comes with Islam.

FK: Does it mean an ideal Islamic society?

AT: I think most people, when they write about Islamism in Africa, are not yet analyzing sufficiently deeply what moves people, what are the underlying emotions and forces that are pushing people to Islam. You mentioned that desire for order. One has to think a little more about issues like

and offers all the answers. But the answers are so idealistic that everybody knows that nobody will be able to deal with these things. How are you going to deal with the relations between non-Muslims and Muslims? What does it mean to have a democratic state and to have the Sharia. The utopian ideal gives you a chance to avoid the step-by-step stages but gives you a vision. On the ground you work much more politically in a secular way. Getting support is calculated in a very secular way. The ide-

al is not something that you deal with.

FK: Thank you for mentioning Sharia. What does Sharia mean for Muslims in Africa?

AT: On one level Sharia means Muslim identity. In Kenya, particularly, it means Muslim identity. When in 2001 the process to review the constitution started, there was the suggestion that the Sharia should be removed from the constitution.

FK: In Kenya it wasn't the question of removing the Sharia but removing the Qadi's courts from the constitution.

AT: Well, the Qadi's courts represent for them the Sharia. Research has shown that the Qadi's courts force men, particularly, to conform to the Sharia. Women are going to the Qadi's courts to seek solutions to what the men are doing to them. The Qadi's courts are divorcing them, but they also help them to get maintenance. That's why some in Kenya call Qadi's courts, women's courts. When the issue came up on a political level, Muslims began to think that now we will be removed from the state. Sharia is a symbol of the representation of Islam and Muslims in the state. In my research I found a very big difference between the politicians and the Islamic



▲ Abdulkader Tayob lecturing on Islamic education. (Photo: BIGSAS)

scholars who are speaking in public and the people who are actually dealing with the day-to-day affairs of the Sharia. At the Qadi's courts they are dealing with social problems and social issues. Sharia means so many different things.

FK: What does it mean in the South African context?

AT: In South Africa there is a lot of public debate about where human rights can fit into the Sharia, or not, or can the Sharia be re-interpreted through a human rights perspective. Some say that the application of the Sharia in present day should not necessarily violate human rights. That's why you need to completely overhaul the tradition as such. For the majority of South Africans the Sharia means Islam. Sharia actually means the day-to-day practice as such, [that] you perform as a person.

FK: That means it affects everyday life and all aspects of personal law. Is the Sharia now part of the South African legal system?

AT: It is not law yet but it is justified in the constitution.

FK: What does that mean?

AT: That means that there is a clause in the constitution that says that the state is permitted to formulate a law in terms of cultural or religious traditions. Indeed the law that the state passes must be in conformity to the rest of the constitution. There is a law in terms of African customary law but there is no law yet about Muslim personal law. There is a bill in front of the Minister of Justice but the bill has been on his desk since 2003. He is not predicted to sign it because he knows that almost everybody is opposed to it. The gender commission in South Africa is not happy with it because they are saying that the law is going to disadvantage Muslim women. The Islamic scholars do not agree with it because they are saying that it's not in conformity with what they understand as Islamic law.

FK: In Kenya the Qadi's courts are called women's courts and in South Africa Islamic law seems to disadvantage women.

How does this come together?

AT: That's a good research question that one has to put forward and I think that's the way of beginning to look comparatively at Muslim societies in Africa. In South Africa, what you have are Muslim women who are much more demanding of their rights. They are going to the courts. There is a very strong women's rights tradition in South Africa coming out of the constitution. A lot of Muslim women are saying we want a much more fundamental change in the Sharia. What is happening in Kenya is that women are not even getting the one-eighth or one-quarter that they supposed to get in terms of the Sharia. So if the Qadi's court gives their share, they are at least moving from nothing. So there is a tradition in Tanzania that when a man dies then the rest of family comes in and takes possession of the house. Women are left with nothing when the husband dies; they get no inheritance. In that case Sharia provides entitlement. I think when you have a money economy where many women are working and contributing, then I think they may have more questions and then the Sharia answers are not sufficient.

FK: Thank you very much.

BIGSAS Statistics

The third call for applications, with its deadline of October 1, 2008, again showed that the interest in BIGSAS is continuously growing, and it seems that the concept of the graduate school matches the desire for regional studies focusing on Africa.

For the summer semester 2009, starting this April, no less than 76 full applications were registered, a number almost double that compared to the winter semester 2008/09. A particular aspect of these candidates was the diversity of their provenance, showing that interest in BIGSAS is particularly strong in the African continent.

After the initial formal screening, the call for applications resulted in 34 applications, which have entered the strict process of evaluation.

Of the 76, Africa had the lion's share, with 56 applications from all over the continent (Algeria, Benin, Cameroon, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe), Europe registered 19 applications sent from four different countries (Austria, England, France and Germany) and even Asia was represented with one application from Iran.

The selection process at the Bayreuth International Graduate School is divided into three phases. The selection process takes into consideration not only the formal requirements, but also the academic level of the PhD project proposals sent in by the applicants. After the formal screening, the academic evaluation and the interview are required parts of the selection process, which takes place in close co-operation with the partner universities: Mohammed V-Agdal, Morocco; Abomey-Calavi, Cotonou; Moi University, Eldoret and University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban. 15 applicants, whose academic profiles and PhD project proposals correspond to the research areas of BIGSAS, have been admitted into the International Graduate School. The new group, which joined the Graduate School in April 2009, is composed of six Europeans (all from Germany) and nine Africans, coming from all four parts of the continent (Algeria, Morocco, Sudan, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa).

The general outcome supports the gender-equality policies of BIGSAS: with a proportion of eight females out of 15 graduates admitted, the institute emphasizes once again its aim to promote women researchers. (M. Koto)

Newly established: The Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law (TGCL)

African Studies at Bayreuth University has been expanded recently through the foundation of the Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law (TGCL). The centre offers postgraduate study programmes at the Faculty of Law, University of Dar es Salaam, in close cooperation with the Institute of African Studies and the Faculty of Law, Business Administration and Economics, University of Bayreuth. TGCL is one among five centres established in Africa within the programme "African Excellence – Fachzentren zur Eliteförderung" which is funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and "Aktion Afrika" of the German Foreign Office.

Background

The establishment of centres of excellence for the training of future officials and managers in Africa is a pillar of the new programme for Africa of the DAAD and the German Foreign Office. Its goal is to further raise the quality and relevance of education in selected fields at African universities, to expand research capacity and to promote networking among African universities, research institutions and German partners. In this process, the promotion of future leaders in different fields of society plays a special role.

The other centres grouped together with the TGCL under this programme are the South African-German Centre for Development Research and Criminal Justice in Cape Town; the Namibian-German Centre for Logistics in Windhoek; the Ghanaian-German Centre for Development Studies and Health Research in Legon; and the Congolese-German Centre for Microfinance in Kinshasa.

Co-operation

The project arose out of the long-standing Tanzanian-German co-operation between the

The Faculty of Law, University of Dar es Salaam, accommodates the TGCL. (Photo: Wanitzek)

law faculties of the Universities of Dar es Salaam and Bayreuth. The TGCL project leader, Ulrike Wanitzek, was the first lawyer from Bayreuth University to visit the Faculty of Law in Dar es Salaam during her research in Tanzania in the early 1980s. This was the beginning of a multifaceted and lasting relationship between the two academic institutions and their members, including those now engaged in the running of the TGCL, resulting in mutual visits, common research projects and publications. Several members of the Faculty of Law in Dar es Salaam received their doctoral degrees from German universities, including the University of Bayreuth. It was on the basis of this mature and reliable Tanzanian-German relationship that the idea of common postgraduate study programmes in law was developed.

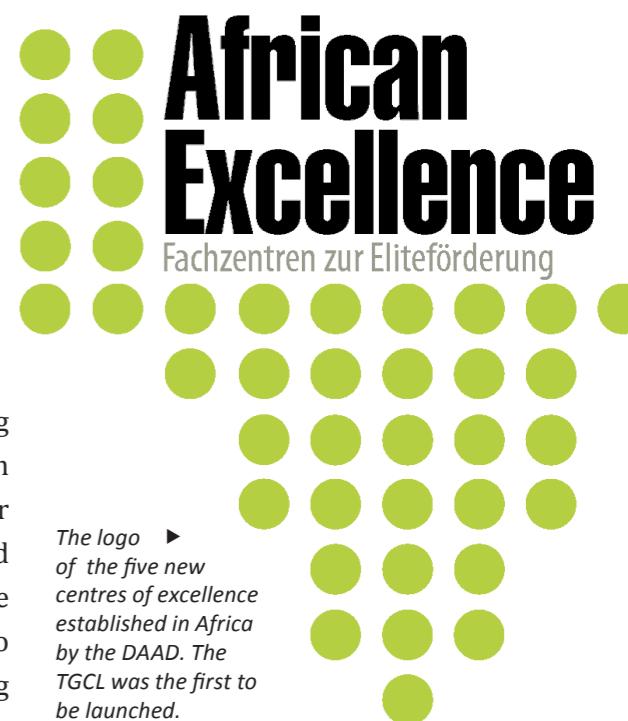
Programmes

The TGCL offers structured LLM and PhD programmes to aspiring lawyers and law students, with the objective of qualifying them for leading positions in East Africa. The programmes have regional and comparative perspectives, focusing on the East African Community and its member states Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. Whilst academic topics concentrate on human rights, constitutional law and comparative law, the programmes also contain a practical component. This envisages lawyers in leading positions in various fields holding lectures and discussions with the students and sharing their professional experience and wisdom. It also provides the opportunity for students to be advised on career planning and related matters. The curriculum further includes an introduction to German and European Union Law, research methodology, interdisciplinary approaches to law, writing skills, information technology and the German language. Students who excel will have the opportunity to participate in a summer academy in Bayreuth from 2010 onwards.

Both programmes start in September each year. Students pursue the LLM programme by coursework and dissertation over a maximum of 18 months. The three-year curriculum of the PhD programme includes a thesis and prescribed courses.

Scholarships

The TGCL will grant at least ten LLM scholarships each year



from 2008 to 2011, with a further five PhD scholarships being awarded in the years 2009 and 2010 respectively. Lawyers from all five member states of the East African Community are invited to apply. The scholarships will enable students to be financially independent while they complete their study programme. The first ten LLM students with a TGCL scholarship started their postgraduate studies in September 2008.

Organization

The TGCL is headed by an academic committee currently consisting of five members: Four academics represent the Universities of Dar es Salaam and Bayreuth in equal meas-

ure, i.e. the Dean of the Faculty of Law, *Sifuni E. Mchome* up to March 2009 and *Palamagamba J. Kabudi* from April 2009, and TGCL coordinator *Kennedy Gastorn*, all of the University of Dar es Salaam; TGCL project leader *Ulrike Wanitzek* and TGCL manager *Harald Sippel*, both of the University of Bayreuth. The present students' representative on the academic committee is *Francis Kamuzora*. The academic committee regularly verifies the progress of every student and takes the final decisions regarding the organization of the TGCL and the training programmes. The TGCL student advisor is Honourable Justice Dr *Steven Bwana*, Justice of Appeal at the Court of Appeal of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Inauguration

The TGCL was inaugurated on 4th September 2008 in Nkrumah Hall on the campus of the University of Dar es Salaam. The ceremony was attended by approximately 200 people from Tanzanian and German universities, the judiciary, ministries, government departments, the diplomatic

corps, NGOs, the private sector and the media. Several Tanzanian newspapers published articles on the ceremony and on the centre's programme. The whole ceremony was broadcast live on national radio, and the event was reported in the news on major TV stations in Tanzania. (*K. Gastorn, H. Sippel and U. Wanitzek*)

Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law (TGCL) at the Faculty of Law, University of Dar es Salaam, in cooperation with the University of Bayreuth
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▼ Representatives of the DAAD, of the East African Court of Justice, of the German Embassy in Tanzania and of the Universities of Dar es Salaam and Bayreuth assemble after the inauguration ceremony. (Photo: TGCL)



18 months' progress in the 'pursuit of excellence'

54 junior fellows are presently enrolled in the interdisciplinary Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies

In October 2007, a wind of enthusiasm was blowing through Bayreuth and particularly in the University of Bayreuth. The university's aspiration to excellence in the field of African Studies was matched by the German Research Foundation's Initiative for Excellence, which consequently decided to award its application in the second round. The Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) was officially inaugurated on December 13th, 2007. To en-

thusiasm, was added the hard work of the whole team: of the Dean, Prof. Ute Fendler, the Vice Dean, Prof. Kurt Beck, the members of the Academic Committee and the researchers of BIGSAS, as well as of the management team. And so, after one and a half years' of activity, the graduate school is host to 54 doctoral students, who make it a living reality. BIGSAS' greatest success to date is the interest it has generated among the growing academic elite in African Studies. BIGSAS registered 47 applications for the official start in the summer term of 2008, of whom 28 graduates matched the strict selection criteria and were ad-

mitted. During the winter term 2008/2009, this number has increased to 41 graduates due to the incorporation of 14 new junior fellows. The heterogeneous composition of this group is remarkable: among the 41 doctoral students, 25 are female and 16 are male; 24 are from Africa and 17 from Europe. This composition is in accordance with the aims of the graduate school to encourage gender equality through an active promotion of female researchers, and also the creation of a network that promotes academic co-operation, dialogue and cultural exchange between Africa and Europe.

The interest generated in the

▼ BIGSAS students and staff (Photo: BIGSAS)



programme is being fostered by improvements in the graduates' comfortable working atmosphere / comfort. In order to optimize their working environment, BIGSAS has moved from its former location with just 3 offices, to the second

students, it is hoped that during their three years of study they will feel supported in every way possible. BIGSAS also pays tribute to the city of Bayreuth and its international image. Wole Soyinka, Nobel-Prize Winner for Litera-

nationally well-known authors are organized in co-operation with partners in the town of Bayreuth.

Nevertheless, the main focus of BIGSAS is the creative and innovative PhD training of outstanding young scholars,



BIGSAS ►
Advisory Board:
Dymitr Ibriszimow, (former
director of IAS)
Ortwin Meyer
(Vice President
University of
Bayreuth) and
Wole Soyinka
(Photo: BIGSAS)

floor of Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 3, with 13 rooms. At the new location, working stations have been installed near to the administrative offices, so that it is possible to work in peace, but to seek assistance from the BIGSAS team whenever necessary. An innovative IT programme is being developed and Junior fellows will soon, through computer terminals, have access to their personal data from wherever they are. This data will be secured on a central server at Bayreuth University. With a carefully-designed study programme, shaped particularly for the needs of the doctoral

tute, visited Bayreuth in October 2008 in order to evaluate BIGSAS and he gave supportive advice for the next year. Particular lectures are publicly announced and thematically not only of benefit for its graduates. Lectures of particular interest are publicly announced and prove of interest to a wider audience than just the graduates. The conference 'Building Partnership' (July 2 – 5, 2008) brought to Bayreuth 15 representatives from the five African partner universities, from Morocco, Benin, Kenya, Mozambique and from South Africa. Guest lectures by inter-

while supporting them in their research. With the assistance of the partner universities in selection and training of doctoral students, the Bayreuth International Graduate School also contributes to a network of African universities: at least once a year it brings together established African and European scholars from a wide range of disciplines and areas of research, for thematic conferences. So, there is no resting on their laurels for members of BIGSAS! With this attitude, the Graduate School can look forward optimistically to a bright future. (M. Koto)

BIGSAS Colloquium

Advanced work in progress, 29-30 January, 2009

At the end of January 2009, the second BIGSAS colloquium took place. This colloquium profiled advanced work of the junior fellows, presenting data from their (field) researches. The colloquium was combined with two guest lectures and a concert, thus presenting (in more ways than one!) an interdisciplinary programme for its audiences' enjoyment. The colloquium started in the Iwalewa-House with the lively lecture of Gerhard Kubik from the University of Vienna. The public were entertained as he discussed backgrounds of transatlantic jazz with the help of a video, photographs, and a mini-concert with the Donald Kachamba's Kwela Heritage Jazz Band. The presentations that followed Gerhard Kubik's lecture were equally enthusiastically received. Clarissa Vierke and Germain Nyada both presented a literary topic, albeit from different perspectives: respectively, Kenyan epic poems and authors writing on their youth. Anthropologist Astrid Bochow, who defended her PhD last November at BIGSAS, gave an overview of her research on sexuality and intimacy in Ghana. Anthropologist Rose Jaji gave

an account of refugee management in Kenya. The evening concert, of which the band had already given a preview earlier that day, was intermingled with the band's explanations on their use of instruments from various countries. As Gerhard Kubik remarked: 'One is not imprisoned by culture!' The second day of the conference took place at the BIGSAS building, and opened with the first Heinrich Barth lecture. Abdulkader Tayob, professor of Islamic Studies from South Africa, is the first Heinrich-Barth professor and stayed at BIGSAS for three months. His lecture on Islamic education in South Africa demonstrated part of his work in relation to his country. Six PhD candidates' presentations followed, in which a great wealth of knowledge and insight on diverse topics was presented.

Ramzi ben Amara (Islamic Studies) and anthropologist Erika Dahlmanns both focused on unity: unity between Muslim groups in Nigeria, and performances of unity in post-war Rwanda. Anthropologists Christian Ungrue and Kristin Kastner focused on several aspects of migration and youth in Ghana, Nigeria, Morocco



▲ BIGSAS Colloquium in the Iwalewa-House (Photo: BIGSAS)

ers in Uganda, stressing their unique position in a male-dominated profession. In the general discussion propositions were made to focus further colloquia on specific themes like 'creativity' or 'marriage, youth and migration'. Ramzi ben Amara finally proposed another common theme to be discussed across disciplines: 'trust', as opposed (or in relation) to BIGSAS Research Area A's theme of 'uncertainty' because, as Ramzi said: 'There is not only uncertainty, there is also trust'. (Amber Gemmeke)

Interview with Abraham Brahma, Junior Fellow of BIGSAS

Abraham Brahma did his Maîtrise in Sociology of Science at the Université d'Abomey-Calavi (UAC), Cotonou, Benin. Within a 'programme of excellence' initiated by the co-operation of French-speaking Universities, he was fortunate in gaining a scholarship for one year which enabled him to study Philosophy at the University of Dakar in Senegal. Since the beginning of the summer semester 2008, he has been taking part in the preparatory course of the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS). Abraham Brahma is not only actively working at the academic level, but also gained practical experiences when working for the press agency "Proximités" which is a member of the international network Syfia.

Antje Friedrich: With your qualifications, I guess many opportunities were open to you. Why did you actually decide to do a PhD programme in Germany?

Abraham Brahma: Yes, you are right. I was about to apply for a scholarship program in the Netherlands, because I was working in English-speaking countries like Ghana and Nigeria. Hence I wanted to go and do my PhD in a country where people speak English or another language, because this is something I can add to my experience. You will have better chances in your professional life when it comes to competing for a job.

It was my professor Mr. Houn-tondji, a guest professor of BIGSAS at that time, who told me about this scholarship programme, because he knew that I was looking for a programme like this.

A.F.: BIGSAS is an international graduate school. How do you

perceive this? Is there an international atmosphere resulting from the cultural exchange with the other students?

A.B.: For Africans it is really important to be with people and to speak with people, because we have it through our education. Being alone, working on my PhD, is really important nevertheless, because that is what I am here for. I keep it in my mind and every morning I tell it to myself in order not to be diverted by being with people and going out. BIGSAS tries to bring together people from different cultural backgrounds. Especially in our small group of people coming from Africa and who take part in the preparatory course of the programme, there is equilibrium. I don't know if the people from BIGSAS thought about it, but there is a geographical, linguistic and gender balance. Hence even in this small group there is diversification. This is important, because then people are open-minded due to

the fact that they have to interact with people coming from different countries. For me the international atmosphere is very useful, because I have to speak English a lot. On the cultural level it is also very helpful. I know Central Africa and West Africa, but I did not know much about East African countries like Tanzania, Uganda or Kenya. Through the BIGSAS students I have come to know these countries a bit.

There are also students from Africa who were here before and there are the German students. Interaction with all of them is enrichment and I noticed that students are the same everywhere. They react in the same way. They have the same way of joking. There is exchange on the cultural level as well as on the academic level. We help each other by exchanging experiences or tools, books and articles that are helpful for the individual's PhD project.

A.F.: Is there only exchange on

the academic level or do you also spend your free time together?

A.B.: Of course we also spend our free time together. I have easy contact with people and there are so many around here, who for example want to learn French. Since I want to learn German and they want to learn French, it is a good start for a twin project. We also exchange music. I introduce them to African music and I get to know about German music, because I have no knowledge about it at all.

A.F.: What is especially attractive about BIGSAS which in the end made you apply?

A.B.: I wanted to do my PhD in an English-speaking environment and since English is the official language of BIGSAS, this was one of the first aspects that aroused my interest. Although English is spoken within BIGSAS, I knew that I will also learn German and this combination is perfect for my education. I learned German at the secondary school and also by myself, but without contact with native speakers, German is difficult to learn. When I checked the website, I saw the four Research Areas BIG-

► Abraham Brahma works on challenges in intercultural communication in Jacques Derrida and Kwasi Wiredu. (Photo: BIGSAS)

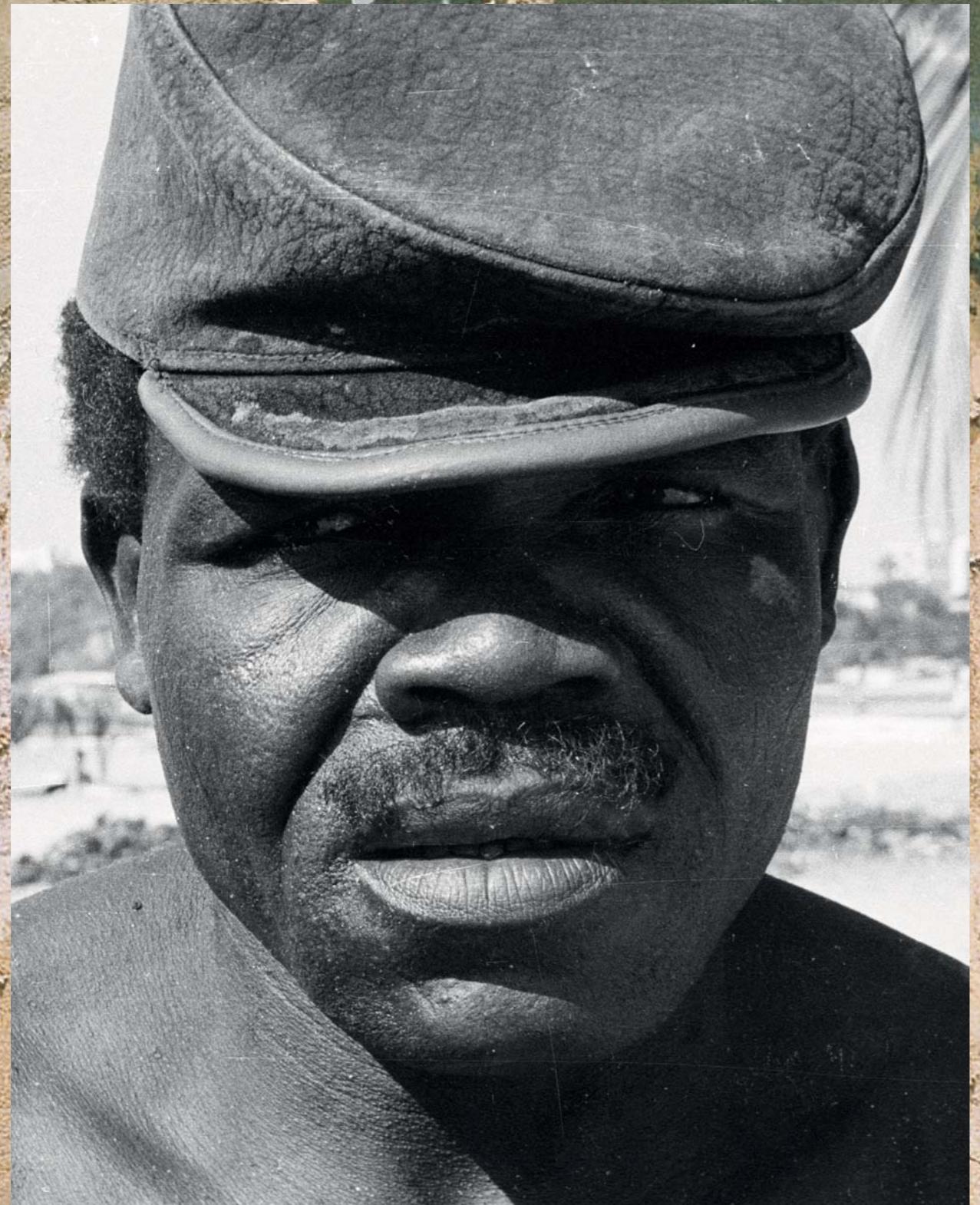


SAS offers and I came across Research Area 1 which is called "Culture, Concepts and Communication in Africa: Approaches through Language, Literature and Media". As my PhD project is concerned with intercultural communication and BIGSAS says on its website that it wants to bring students having different cultural background together, I decided to come here.

A.F.: What is your impression of BIGSAS now that you are an active member?

A.B.: I find this programme very interesting for African students, because the framework is very open. Due to the use of the internet, it is easy for African students to apply. There are a lot of bright people in Africa, but often they cannot get a scholarship because of administrative barriers.

Moreover the working conditions are excellent; for example at the beginning BIGSAS provided us with a laptop to get our academic work started. This is not to say that everything is perfect, because BIGSAS is at the beginning of its existence. and there are certain things which should be improved, but BIGSAS is on the right track and people [are] doing their best to make life easier for us. On the academic level, the way it is organised and structured is good for students. BIGSAS schedules assessment dates which test your progress. They make sure that you have a plan for work. So you cannot get lost and waste time. You also have close contact with your supervisor to whom you also have to present your work, but the pressure helps to improve your work. (A. Friedrich)



António Ole – Hidden Pages

Installations, Photography, Video.

Exhibition at Iwalewa-Haus (30th April - 6th of September)

António Ole is one of the most successful artists of Angola. His oeuvre includes photography, graphic works, colourful pop-art paintings, collages, assemblages and multi-media installations as well as documentary films which are among the most important of Angolan film history. His sculptures are presented at central places in Angola's capital Luanda and his installations attract worldwide attention at the Biennials of São Paulo and Venice.

For this exhibition, Iwalewa-House' main floor is dedicated to the work of António Ole (*1951) and continues its focus on Lusophone Africa. The central work is the expansive installation *Hidden Pages Stolen Bodies* dealing with Angola's history of slavery and forced labour. In other works, Ole analyses marginal spaces and border zones of urban life by means of found objects which he gathers locally, thus also in Bayreuth. This archaeological search for traces confronts the audience with – sometimes painful – fragments of memory and makes unwritten history visible and tangible.

The exhibition is supplemented by works from four decades, among them black and white portraits from the 1970s, thus before independence. Colonial repression still weighed heavily on the people in the suburbs of Luanda, but the cry for independence was already unmistakable. His recent wall-photos are more conceptual and focussed with their symmetrical conception and minimal aesthetic. The series *sal* tells about the extraction of sea salt and the bitter wounds that the salt causes to the earth. A further highlight of the exhibition is the documentary *O Ritmo do Ngola Ritmos* which he produced shortly after independence. He tells the story of the music group of the same name, which was one of the most important thrusts in the fight for independence and conveyed to the fighters courage and hope for a better future.

António Ole stayed at Iwalewa-House for several weeks as artist in residence and guest professor of the IAS. In a seminar accompanying Ole's project in Bayreuth, students documented the process of "art production", including visits at local junk yards, welding and installing the exhibition. Furthermore different views on the exhibition will be accessible on a website (www.hiddenpages.uni-bayreuth.de).

This student project will be continued at the second venue at the Goethe-Institute Nairobi, where the exhibition will be shown from 6th October 2009. (N. Siegert and U. Vierke)

PigaPicha

A Century of Studio Photography in Nairobi, Part I



(Photos: K. Greven)



Star Studio, Grogan Road, Nairobi, 1951

An exhibition at Goethe-Institute, Kenya, in co-operation with Iwalewa-House and DEVA, University of Bayreuth, 21.11.2008-10.12.2008.

The exhibition and research project PigaPicha sets out to document the history and unique visual culture of studio photography in Nairobi. Studio portraits were purchased and exchanged by almost every family and thus played an important role in the daily life of Nairobi. In 1905 Pop Binks

opened the first studio; a century later digital photography entered the stage. At first sight, it seems to herald the doom of studio portraits, but in effect, we can witness stunning shifts in the mode of operation of the photographers and a fantastic new style of portraiture. PigaPicha presents the portrait

photography of famous photo studios like Ramogi, Maridadi, Neela and Studio One. PigaPicha showcases a selection of recent works from 15 studios together with a documentary about the studios at work by the photographers Morris Keyonzo and Katharina Greven. The re-

sulting images capture a wide range of techniques, styles and aesthetics of these studios. In 2009, PigaPicha will continue with the second part, dedicated to one century of studio photography as handed down in almost every family in Nairobi. (U. Vierke/M. Prussat)
<http://www.goethe.de/ins/ke/nai/acv/bku/2008/en3848286.htm>



◀ Christoffel
Rudolph Botha

Guests

Christoffel Rudolph Botha, Director of the *School of Humanities* at the *University of Fort Hare*, spent two months in Bayreuth, from May to July 2008, at the Chair of Cultural Anthropology (Prof. Kurt Beck) as a guest professor of the Institute of African Studies (IAS).

Rudolph Botha grew up in the Eastern Cape Province of the Republic of South Africa. Thanks to his intimate contact with the Xhosa-speaking people of the region, he was able to master the Xhosa language at an early age. In 1974, he was appointed as a lecturer in African Languages at the University of Stellenbosch. In 1986 he accepted a post as Professor and Head of the Department of African Languages at the University of Fort Hare in the Eastern Cape. From 1999 to 2000, he served as Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University. Rudolph Botha is a member of various senior University committees. He is the author of the Language Policy of the University as well as of the University Standing Orders. During his career, he has completed a number of comprehensive translation projects (from English to Xhosa), including the translation of the Laws of

Rugby for the International Rugby Board. He has recently been commissioned to translate a set of teaching manuals on behalf of UNESCO.

Kennedy Gastorn LLB, LLM (Dar es Salaam), Dr jur. (Bayreuth), lecturer at the Faculty of Law, University of Dar es Salaam, and co-ordinator of the recently founded Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law (TGCL), visited Bayreuth in January 2009. Together with Harald Sippel and Ulrike Wanitzek, he attended the first DAAD network meeting in Bonn under the programme "African Excellence – Fachzentren zur Eliteförderung", of which the TGCL is a member.

Laré Kantchoa, lecturer of linguistics at the University of Kara, Togo, stayed from February to April 2008 as a DAAD fellow at the Chair of African Linguistics I (invited by Manfred von Roncador). During his stay he delivered a paper on the decline of the noun class system in Moba, a Gur language of the Gurma group. Currently, he is working on Miyobe, a language in Togo whose affiliation is debated, and he is trying to shed

some light on its classification through comparison of its vocabulary with Gur languages. His stay is linked to the Gur research activities of "Afrikanistik I".

André Motingea Mangulu, Professor of African Linguistics and head of *Département des Lettres et Civilisations Africaines* at the *Université Pédagogique Nationale* of Kinshasa, will be staying from May to June 2009 at the Chair of African Linguistics I as a visiting professor, invited by the Institute of African Studies (Manfred von Roncador). He will give a paper on the question of the Bantu expansion and the Congo basin at the occasion of the 3rd European Conference on African Studies (Leipzig 04 – 07 June 2009) in the panel "African waters – waters in Africa" organized by Manfred von Roncador.

Ibrahim Maina Waziri, Professor of History at the *University of Maiduguri* (Nigeria), returned to Germany for a further period of research, from May to July 2008, at Chair Afrikanistik II (Dymitr Ibriszimow), sponsored by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. The focus of his work was on

traditional titles of the Bole people in Northern Nigeria in the context of Borno as well as Hausa social structures. Ibrahim Waziri's stay was not his first in Bayreuth – from 2004-2005 he was sponsored by the Georg-Forster-Programme to work on the pre-colonial history of the Chadic-speaking peoples at the western and south-western fringe of Lake Chad.

Philip Jaggar, Professor of West African Linguistics at the *School of Oriental and African Studies* (SOAS), University of London, and a world authority on Hausa, was the first guest professor of the *Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies* (BIGSAS). He spent two months in Bayreuth teaching Hausa, Chadic, Afroasiatic and African linguistics. Prof. Jaggar delivered a guest lecture on "Hausa and the Chadic (Afroasiatic) language family: the German/Austrian linguistic contribution (ca. 1850-present)".

After taking an MPhil in social anthropology at SOAS, Phil Jaggar turned to linguistics and gained an MA and PhD at the University of California in 1985. For many years he has taught Hausa language and lin-

guistics first at Bayero University College in Kano, Nigeria, then in Hamburg University, Germany, and UCLA, USA and, since 1983, at SOAS, England.

Naomi Luchera Shitemi from *Moi University* in Eldoret, Kenya, spent six months from June 2008 at the Chair Afrikanistik II (Dymitr Ibriszimow) as a guest professor of the Institute of African Studies (IAS).

Prof. Shitemi teaches in the *Department of Kiswahili & Other African Languages* of the School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS) of Moi University. A specialist in linguistics and literature, she has been involved in gender and language-related researches from the dimensions of policy and planning, identities and communication. She has published in the areas of Swahili language and literature, language planning and policy, translation and gender.

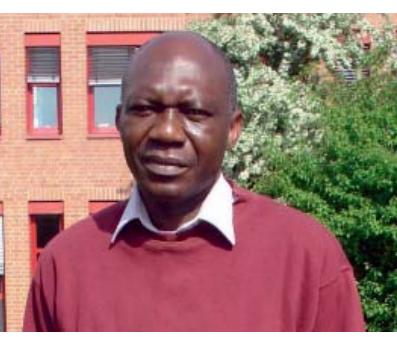
Naomi Shitemi has served in several administrative positions, including being Chair, Department of Kiswahili & Other African Languages, and Dean, School of Arts and Social Sciences, (SASS). On various occasions, while serving as Dean, she acted as Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research &



◀ Kennedy
Gastorn (Photo:
TGCL)



◀ Laré Kant-
choa (Photo: von
Roncador)



◀ André Mo-
tingea Mangulu
(Photo: von
Roncador)



◀ Ibrahim
Maina Waziri



◀ Philip Jaggar (Photo: IAS)



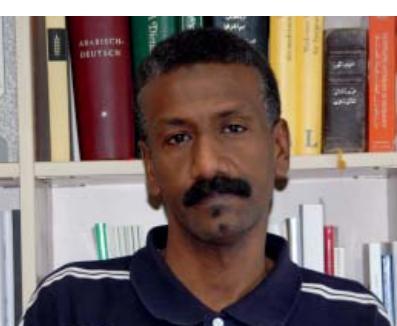
◀ Naomi Luchera Shitemi (Photo IAS)



◀ Bole Butake (Photo: IAS)



◀ Wondimagegne Chekol



◀ Elsamawal Khalil Makki

Extension. In addition to memberships of National Kiswahili Associations and the Eastern Africa Scientific Committee of the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN), she is one of the assessors of the Commission for Higher Education (CHE) in Kenya, and a member of the executive committee of the Association of African Universities (AAU).

tre director and scholar, with numerous articles published in national and international journals. Titles of his work include "Lake God", "The Survivors", "And Palmwine Will Flow", "Shoes and Four Men in Arms" (translated into German as 'Vier Mann in Uniform und ein Berg Schuhe' and broadcast over Westdeutscher Rundfunk, Köln), "Zintgraff and the Battle of Mankon".

Bole Butake has been a regular visitor during the last fifteen years to the Institute of African Studies of the University of Bayreuth, as a DAAD scholar, a participant in conferences and as a visiting scholar. For one month in 2008 he was a guest professor here.

As well as being professor of Performing Arts and African Literature, Head of the *Department of Arts and Archaeology*, and Vice Dean in charge of Programming and Academic Affairs in the Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences of the *University of Yaounde I* in Cameroon, Prof. Butake is a renowned playwright, thea-

Wondimagegne Chekol, of the Ethiopian Institute for Agricultural Research in Addis Ababa, is visiting the chair of social geography from May until July 2009, to take part in a joint research project on water distribution and conflicts in the Afar region in Ethiopia.

Elsamawal Khalil Makki, of Ahfad University in Khartoum, Sudan, is visiting the chair of social geography from May 6th until May 29th, 2009 for a joint German-French-Sudanese research project on water distribution and management in Khartoum.

Personalia



Klaudia ▶ Dombrowsky-Hahn was appointed lecturer for Bambara at the University of Bayreuth

Klaudia Dombrowsky-Hahn was appointed lecturer for Bambara at the University of Bayreuth in December 2008. She studied Bambara in Cologne and Paris. Since completing her PhD in African Linguistics on contact phenomena of Mande and Gur languages, she has worked in different research projects and has taught Bambara, and courses in linguistics, at the University of Bayreuth.



Gabriele ▶ Sommer was appointed professor of African Languages (Photo: Abel/Pressestelle)

In November 2008, *Gabriele Sommer* was appointed professor of African Languages with special focus on the Niger-Congo phylum (Lehrstuhl Afrikanistik I). Besides working in research projects at the Universities of Cologne and Frankfurt upon Main, Gabriele Sommer did her dissertation on language shift among the Bantu-speaking Yei in Botswana within the framework of a Ph.D. programme on "Intercultural relations" at Bayreuth University in 1994. Although she also worked on language contacts in north-eastern Africa from a diachronic perspective (habilitation in 2003), she is now concentrating on the role of languages in society with a regional focus on Bantu- and Khoisan-speaking southern Africa.



Clarissa ▶ Vierke took over responsibilities as assistant professor at the Chair of African Linguistics I

In January 2009, *Clarissa Vierke* took over responsibilities as assistant professor at the Chair of African Linguistics I (Afrikanistik I). With her major research focus on Swahili, she is currently preparing her Ph.D. thesis within the programme of BIGSAS on classical Swahili poetry. She is also involved in a French ANR-project "Dimensions de l'objet swahili: textes et terrains" and is one of the editors of the peer-reviewed online-journal "Swahili Forum".

The part-time position of IAS co-ordinator was assumed by *Christina Ahr*. Her professional experience in West Africa as a graduate social anthropologist comprises extended field research as well as co-ordination tasks in a bilateral development co-operation project. She can build on the experience gained in her prior employment in the co-ordination office of the International Ph.D. Programme "Cultural Encounters". In October 2008, the position of secretary in the co-ordination team was filled by Kathrin Burger, who competently carries out her role. Trained as an assistant in wholesale and foreign trade, as well as being a multilingual secretary, she is responsible for the day-to-day business in the IAS office and for responding to the needs of our visiting professors.

The IAS welcomed *Kathrin Burger* in October 2008. As secretary, she is responsible for the day-to-day administration and, as such, is the key person in the IAS office. She is trained as an assistant in wholesale and foreign trade as well as being a multilingual secretary with particular expertise in English and French.

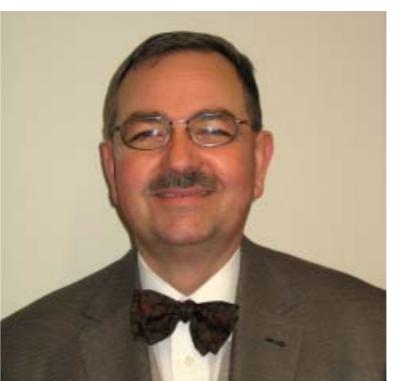
Dymitr Ibriszimow, professor in African languages, ended his term as director of the Institute of African Studies (IAS) in December 2008. During his time as director of the IAS (2007-2008), he was the driving force for the foundation of the Bayreuth Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS). In addition, during his term the IAS successfully applied for the Project for the digitalization, electronic editing and open access of data in African studies (DEVA) and for the Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law. We are grateful for his commitment.



◀ *Christina Ahr, IAS co-ordinator* (Photo: IAS)



◀ *Kathrin Burger, IAS secretary* (Photo: IAS)



◀ *Dymitr Ibriszimow ended his term as director of the IAS* (Photo: IAS)



▶ *Dieter Neubert, IAS director* (Photo: IAS)



▶ *Harald Sippel, manager of the TGCL* (Photo: TGCL)



▶ *Stefanie Jost joined the management team of BIGSAS* (Photo: BIGSAS)



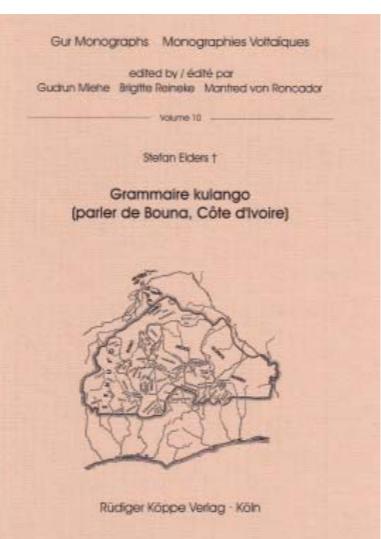
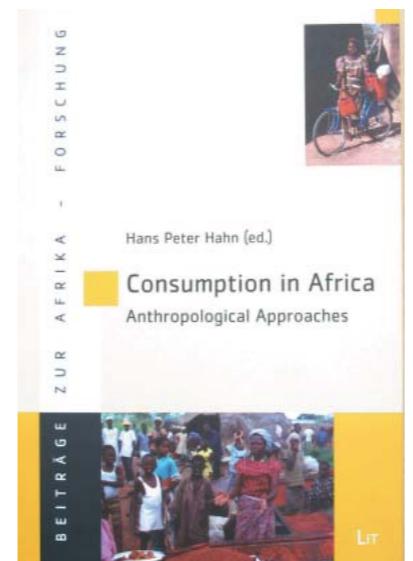
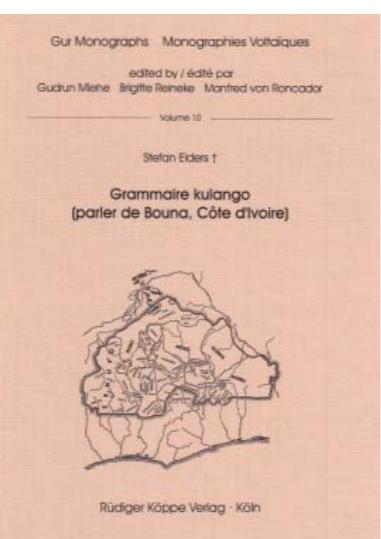
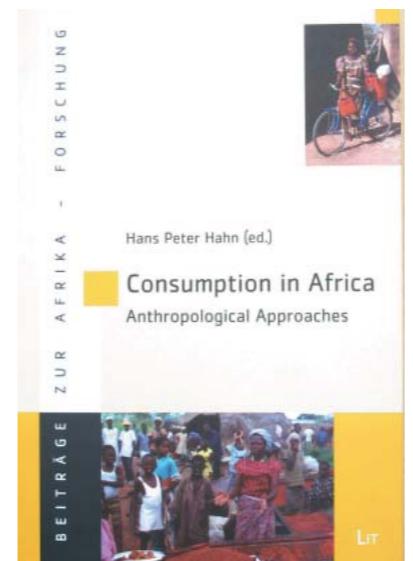
◀ *Achim von Oppen, vice director of the IAS* (Photo: IAS)

Dieter Neubert, professor of Sociology of Development, and *Achim von Oppen*, professor of History of Africa, started their one year term as director and vice director of the Institute of African Studies in January 2009

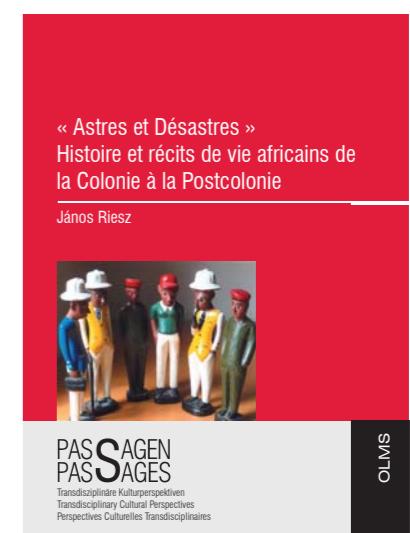
Harald Sippel has taken over the post of manager of the Tanzanian-German Centre for Post-graduate Studies in Law (TGCL), a joint project of the University of Bayreuth (Institute of African Studies and Faculty of Law, Business Administration and Economics) and the University of Dar es Salaam (Faculty of Law), under the "African Excellence – Fachzentren zur Elite-förderung" programme of the DAAD and the German Foreign Office (2008-2013).

Stefanie Jost joined the management team of BIGSAS in January 2009. Together with Martina Schubert-Adam, she shares the responsibility for the day-to-day administration. She is trained as an industrial business management assistant. After working for several years in the real estate division of a medium-sized enterprise in the field of contract management, Stefanie studied Applied Linguistics and Cultural Studies at the University of Mainz, Germersheim. In July 2008 she graduated as a translator in English and Portuguese, and also works as a freelance translator.

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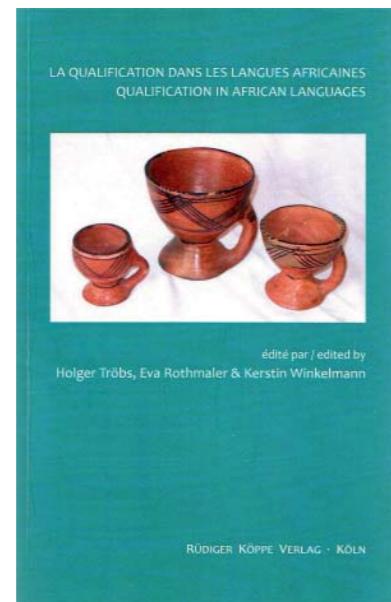
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Steady growth and new departures

*Recent developments at the Institute of African Studies (IAS)
- A report by the Managing Directorate*

Since starting in 1974, Bayreuth University has gradually included some 40 disciplines related to African studies, with a current academic staff of about 60 members. Through this unique concentration and variety of research and teaching, Bayreuth has become a specialist site of African studies in Germany. It has also turned into reality the remarkable potential for interdisciplinary cooperation in academic work on the African continent, which is so close to Europe and yet still so underrated here.

Since 1990, the Institute of African Studies (IAS) has been the supporting and co-ordinating unit for this process. Under its umbrella organisation, a series of connected projects and perspectives have been developed which contribute considerably to Bayreuth's high international reputation in African Studies.

In recent years, the interest in area studies has grown in Germany and beyond. This reflects the increasing global connectedness of processes of change, as well as the recognition that their study and com-



▲ IAS-staff: Ulrike Wanitzek, Dieter Neubert (executive director), Manfred von Roncador, Christina Ahr, Kathrin Burger, Achim von Oppen (deputy director), Dymitr Ibriszimow (director of the IAS from 2007-2008). (Photo: IAS)

prehension needs to be based on sound regional expertise. The renewed interest of science, politics and the general public in area studies has also provided fresh stimuli for African Studies at the University of Bayreuth.

The IAS has advanced considerably on its way from being a co-ordinating institution for one or two major programmes at a time (e.g. SFB 214, SFB 560), to becoming the hub of the activities in a range of different fields, forming the head of Africa-related institutions

and initiatives at Bayreuth University.

The IAS already comprises a number of more specific scientific institutions, such as the renowned Iwalewa House for contemporary African culture (founded in 1981), as well as co-operating with others, such as ZENEb (the Centre for Natural Risks and Development, since 2001).

Recently, there have been remarkable developments, resulting in several important new establishments. The most outstanding among these is

undoubtedly the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies, the "BIGSAS" School of Excellence, launched in October 2007. Other new offshoots of IAS deserve attention as well: the central ar-

Franz Kogelmann and funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), took place in Bayreuth for the first time. Perfectly complementing the BIGSAS programme, it involved ten African junior

Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law took off at the University of Dar es Salaam

chive and database system of African Studies at the University of Bayreuth DEVA, the International Summer Academy "Religion and Order in Africa", and the Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law.

DEVA, Bayreuth's project for digitalization, electronic editing and open access to data in African Studies, started in December 2007 with the support of the German Research Foundation (DFG). It aims to provide scientists with access to the large variety of scientific data, field research documents and collections of artefacts generated by three generations of researchers and doctoral students in disciplines such as Modern Art and Media, Anthropology, History, Sociology, Law, Economics, Linguistics, Literature, Islamic Studies, Religious Studies, Geography, Biology and Ecology. In 2008, the International Summer Academy "Religion and Order in Africa", directed by

scholars participating in an intense trans-disciplinary four-weeks'-course. It is hoped that this Summer School will be enabled to continue on a regular basis in the future. Also in 2008, the Tanzanian-German

Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law took off at the University of Dar es Salaam as part of a special DAAD programme promoting Centres of Excellence for Teaching and Research in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is the very first EU-funded programme in the social sciences or humanities related to Africa.

Meanwhile, new developments have also taken place at the IAS management level, to match the increasing demands on the administrative capacities of IAS. In November 2007, the long-requested establishment of a staffed IAS co-ordination office was granted by the university until 2010, to support the managing directors and the executive committee of the IAS.

Moreover, two other initiatives of the co-ordination unit need to be mentioned. Firstly, under the highly-committed directorship of Dymitr Ibriszimow, it has produced an attractive brochure, presenting the dynamics of Bayreuth African Studies as well as identifying future perspectives of the IAS. It has been forwarded to scientific partners, government



▲ Discussing DEVA: Ulf Vierke, Christina Ahr and Achim von Oppen (Photo: IAS)

institutions, development agencies, political parties, foundations and the media and has met with an encouraging number of reactions and enquiries; as a consequence of this, representatives of Bayreuth African Studies are increasingly invited not only for scientific, but also for general public events related to Africa, global and development issues. Secondly, an international, interdisciplinary network of African Studies Alumni is currently being built up, which, it is hoped, will enable closer and more continuous co-operation among those who have stud-

ied, done research and taught in Bayreuth. Besides these, a range of continuing activities also required considerable effort, and produced steady growth in both research and teaching. Since

A unique collection of some 155,000 Africa-related books and media

2001, for instance, no less than seventeen new Bachelor and Master's Courses have been developed in various fields of African Studies, which are now all in full swing. In order to serve teaching and research,

and to underpin further developments in this field, the University of Bayreuth has built up a unique collection of some 155,000 Africa-related books and media, making it the second largest library of its kind in

Germany. However, maintaining the standard of this library and its current rate of expansion requires particular effort. The IAS also continues its own four series of publications, two of them online; the series "Bei-

träge zur Afrikaforschung", for instance, presents inter alia the results of the Humanities Collaborative Research Centre SFB/FK 560 "Local Action in Africa in the Context of Global

Conflicts and Visits to assess these activities. The extent to which this co-operation with Africa involves students and junior scholars is attested, for instance, by the fact that

Over 300 guests from Africa

Influences" (latest issue: vol. 37 on "Consumption in Africa. Anthropological approaches"). The continuous presence of visiting scholars from Africa, invited by the IAS, forms another field of support in research, cooperation and teaching activities in African Studies. In the last 25 years, about half of the 640 invited visiting African Studies scholars came from universities in Africa.

In 2008, guests from 7 African countries were welcomed at the IAS, for stays of between one and six months. International cooperation, notably

with African institutions, is particularly important on the IASagenda. Bayreuth University currently has close contacts and exchanges with as many as 31 universities in 24 African states – partly on the basis of partnership agreements. This academic co-operation includes mutual supervision, mutual invitations for teaching, assistance in curriculum development, establishment of joint research and training activities, and invitations to con-

ferences and visits to assess these activities. The extent to which this co-operation with Africa involves students and junior scholars is attested, for instance, by the fact that

among the 90 PhD students currently doing research on Africa-related topics, 47 % are African scholars, most of them on scholarships.

Of course, international co-operation is also extended to partners in Europe and other continents. Recently, for instance, IAS has considerably stepped up its involvement in the AEGIS network of African Studies Centres, which promotes co-operation and knowledge-transfer between Europe and Africa, and now involves 19 partners in 12 European countries.

Many more current activities could be mentioned here - we just single-out the active role of IAS-members in public and cultural relationships with the municipality of Bayreuth. This has yielded a variety of events such as, for instance, the Afro-Karibik-Festival or the "Cinema Africa 2008" series (initiated by Ute Fendler) where the films were not only presented but discussed afterwards with their African film-makers. To sum up, it can be said that

much has been achieved, but more needs to be done, in order to further strengthen this emerging network of Africa-related institutions and projects in Bayreuth. Currently, special efforts are being directed towards building a more strictly interdisciplinary research network, across the divide between cultural and natural sciences, between the regional and the so-called "systematic" disciplines. Joint work on a new, overarching research theme is envisaged, such as the one recently submitted in a major proposal to the German Federal Ministry of Science and Technology (BMBF). Future efforts will be directed towards transferring knowledge between academic expertise and "applied" work, and hence at also developing more systematic competences with regard to media requests and to publications on topical issues for the wider public. This overview should not end, however, without warm thanks to Dymitr Ibriszimow, who left the position of Executive Director of IAS after two years of indefatigable and very successful commitment to the rapidly expanding affairs of IAS. He was succeeded in January 2009 by Dieter Neubert, who moved up from his previous position as deputy, and by Achim von Oppen, the new deputy director.

International Conference in Bissau

Violence and Non-State Local Conflict Management in West Africa and Beyond

International Conference in Bissau from 1st to 5th December 2008

The conference "Violence and Non-State Local Conflict Management in West Africa and Beyond" was conceptualised as a forum for the discussion of theoretical concepts on social order, statehood, and forms of conflict resolution. It was jointly organized by INEP (National Institute for Research and Study of Guinea-Bissau) and Bayreuth University (Anthropology of Africa). Since 2006, both institutions have directed a collaborative research project on *Local Strategies of Conflict Management in Guinea-Bissau*, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and involving a dozen researchers.

How do societies deal with social and political violence when they are confronted with state fragility, formalized and informal privatisation of state prerogatives and sovereign rights and the absence of significant state structures? This problem pervaded presentations and discussions in Bissau. In view of the general weakness of the post-colonial African state, the emergence of hierarchical, i.e. multi-hierarchical, political orders (Bellagamba, Klute 2008)

must be considered – e.g. *para-statehood*, *warlord*- and *neo-segmentary orders* or *islands of order* (Dieter Neubert) – where competing political actors and decision-makers are intertwined on the local, national and regional level. We assume regular modes of conflict resolution to be the prerequisite for durable social orders confronted with violence. For analyzing these modes, theoretical concepts like legal pluralism, conflict, justice and law (e.g. 'person-bounded law', 'individual law', 'law as process' and 'neo-traditional' legal norms vs. 'traditional customs') must be appraised. Forty scholars from more than a dozen African and European countries responded to our invitation and presented their own findings, case studies from 14 African countries, against the background of the above mentioned reflections. All contributions dealt – explicitly or implicitly – with 'hierarchical settings', ranging from less marked forms as in South-Africa (Reinhart Kößler, Arnold Bergsträsser Institute Freiburg) to competing para-states in the DR Congo (Christiane Kayser, EED, Bonn

& Pole Institute, Goma, DRC). Many participants believe that this concept appropriately describes central characteristics of political order in contemporary Africa. Various modes and institutions of conflict resolution were discussed, ranging from violent to pacific, religious modes and, from institutions like the International Court of Justice, to non-state institutions and civic communities (cf. the presentations of INEP researchers) where local modes of conflict resolution prevail. Findings from Guinea-Bissau (A. Idrissa Embaló, INEP, Bissau) and Nigeria (Franz Kogelmann, Bayreuth University) highlighted Islamic modes of conflict resolution, which are morally more binding than imposed state law. Abdoulaye Diallo (PROCAS/GTZ, Ziguinchor, Senegal) and Jordi Tomàs (ISCTE, Lisbon, Portugal) presented research results from the Casamance region and pointed out that in transnational and transborder conflicts, non-state political actors and organisations – parallel or in opposition to state order and its legal conceptions – contribute to peace agreements and stability. All

presentations referred to *legal pluralism*, a concept that helps overcome the dualistic approach – the juxtaposition of formal and informal legal systems – in legal and political anthropology and sociology. In this sense, Birgit Embaló (INEP, Bissau) emphasized the hybrid mixture of world visions and values in the urban environment of Bissau, reflected in the diversification of local strategies of conflict management, while Raul Fernandes (INEP, Bissau) applied, in his analysis of conflict resolution on the Bijagós islands, the concept of *customary pluralism*.

In the final discussion the participants reflected on how to cope with conflicts and violence in hierarchical settings. Do we need to bring the State back in? Cecil Magbaily Fyle (Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone) claimed to recognise first and foremost the historical dimension of the African state which came as an octroi from the outside. Before thinking about a global state, there is a need to build up an equitable international order as a 'hierarchical' bundle of sovereign states. (G. Klute, B. Embaló, I. Embaló, M. Jao)

International Atelier Theatre

International Atelier Theatre Bayreuth (IATB) meet practitioners



▲ The group of Actors and Musicians (Photo: Jackowski)

On February 6th-8th, 2009 the interested public witnessed the second theatre production of the well-known Togo play writer and director Senouvo Agbota Zinsou with students of the BA programme "African Languages, Literatures and Arts". This time the young actors prepared and performed Zinsou's three-act play *Die Ungeheuerfrau/La Femme-monstre*, in which a beautiful woman appears ultimately to be a demon practising voodoo.

In the end the demon is defeated and the question of the nature of love between man and woman is raised. The production combined music, dance and acting that consisted of short text passages in German and twenty songs in French and Ewe/Mina. The actors were supported by a small but excellent student orchestra composed of a guitar, a cello and a saxophone, which the director himself joined with his djembé. (E. Rothmaler)

International Symposium on Risk and Africa



▲ ZENE-B-Symposium on conceptualising risk in the context of contemporary Africa. (Photo: Tylle)

From November 27th to 29th, 2008 a symposium on conceptualising risk in the context of contemporary Africa was organised by the Bayreuth-based Centre for Natural Risks and Development (ZENE-B), on behalf of the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS). In order to broaden the – as hypothesised - European centred debate on risk and “risk society”, around 60 participants from Kenya, Ethiopia, Benin, South Africa, Cameroon and Europe discussed different notions of risk and their role for under-

standing processes of social change in Africa. The papers showed how different actors perceived and represented risks differently; e.g. the humanitarian apparatus, scientists, official bodies, media and literature. Risk concepts were further shown to change with the use they are put to: e.g. instrumental definitions of risk that build the prelude for intervention. It became clear during the discussions that there are also various references of risk such as extreme events (natural hazards, technological failure), threats,

fears or precarious livelihoods (famine, joblessness, ill health). Methodologically the presentations showed that there is a wide gap between local and external concepts of risk which leads to problems of interpretation, of inference and of compatibility of concepts (resilience, system, function, risk). Selected papers will be published soon to show the theoretical and methodological advances in risk research demonstrated during the conference. (*L. Bloemertz, M. Doevenspeck, E. Macamo, D. Müller-Mahn*)

Facilitating peace and democracy



▲ Workshop about chances and limits of peacebuilding and the promotion of democracy

A symposium on “Making peace – but with which weapons? – A strategic discussion on peace-building and democracy facilitation” was held at the University of Bayreuth on 6th February, 2009. It was initiated by Dr. Ron Herrmann, who taught a seminar on the same topic in the winter term of 2008/09 within the department of development sociology. His students organised the well-attended symposium which was introduced and chaired by two of them, namely Alina Becker and Stefanie Werdemann.

A number of experts were invited: Mrs. Kammer, from the NGO *peace brigades international*,

spoke about its support for local NGOs in Latin America, and Markus Grohmann, a Bayreuth student who carried out research in Ruanda, reflected on the challenges of post-genocide reconciliation. Other experts were Mrs. Schulz, from the GTZ, who focused on the peace architecture of the African Union and, in this way, gave an alternative view on international peace and democracy facilitation, and Mrs Schmidt-Rossiwal, from the *forum ziviler Friedensdienst*, who showed a documentary on trauma-coping among Serbian and Croatian war veterans. Finally, Ron Herrmann drew at-

tention to the tension between idealistic motives and ideological polarization tendencies and, in this way, questioned the international peace and democracy facilitation. During the closing panel-discussion, speakers agreed that support for peace and democracy building is only possible within a limited framework, and is dependent on acceptance by the people and governments concerned. Existing successful projects are unknown to the broad public because they prevent violence in advance and, in any case, when it comes to Africa “good news is no news”. (*N. Schiffmann*)

Celebrating Bwana Zahidi Mngumi

Africanists bring Swahili manuscripts to the Lamu Museum

In 2006, Gudrun Miehe and Clarissa Vierke (Afrikanistik I) took a biographic exhibition on the Lamuan Poet Muhamadi Kijuma to the Lamu Museum (NAB VI/I Fall 2006, Spring 2007) on Lamu Island (Kenya). Two years later, in 2008, another project brought Gudrun Miehe and Clarissa Vierke back to Lamu: again in cooperation with the German Embassy and the National Museums of Kenya, Gudrun Miehe and Clarissa Vierke organised a workshop on the life and works of Bwana Zahidi Mngumi, an important statesman and poet from Lamu. The workshop brought together local scholars from Lamu and people from the Na-

tional Museums of Kenya, as well as scholars from universities in Nairobi, such as Prof. Mohamed H. Abdulaziz, Prof. Kitula King'ei and Prof. Kithaka wa Mberia. In a ceremony that was part of the 8th Lamu Cultural Festival, the German Ambassador handed over facsimiles of Mngumi's poems to the Lamu Museum.

Bwana Zahidi Mngumi was a powerful political leader in the city state of Lamu at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries and led the island into a time of economic prosperity. His fame grew legendary when his army unexpectedly defeated the seemingly-invincible alliance of Pate and

Mombasa in the battle of Shela – an historical event which is still much commemorated on Lamu. The constant struggle between Lamu and its rivals also manifested itself in verbal duels, in which Zahidi Mngumi proved his rhetorical skill in poems which were later also written down. At the beginning of the 20th century, European scholars took a number of these manuscripts to Europe. These are today among the only surviving documents of his verbal art. Taking up a request brought by a Lamu elder, Gudrun Miehe and Clarissa Vierke traced the manuscripts in German libraries to make them accessible on Lamu again. (C. Vierke)



◀ The Director General of the National Museums of Kenya, Dr. Idle Farah during the hand-over ceremony of the Mngumi manuscripts. First row: Clarissa Vierke (Bayreuth), Gudrun Miehe (Bayreuth), Walter Lindner (German Ambassador to Kenya), Isa Timamy (National Museums of Kenya). (Photo: Okoko)

Excursion and fieldtrip to Benin

From the 9th to 28th of February, Martin Doevenspeck (Department of Geography), and 16 students of the BA African Development Studies in Geography course and the BSc Geography travelled to Benin. Financially supported by the DAAD and Bayreuth University, the excursion had a two-fold aim: to learn about potentials and constraints for social and economic development in the West African country and, together with local students, to apply in practice various research methods and gain some first experiences in empirical research.

During the first two weeks of the excursion, the group travelled from Cotonou in the South, via Bohicon and Parakou, to Natitingou in the North West. On this journey discussions were organised with Beninese scholars, local politicians, farmers and traders, and with traditional leaders as well as with representatives of the international development cooperation, political foundations and embassies, thereby giving the students the opportunity to actively engage with development issues from different angles and perspectives. During the last week, in

cooperation with the GTZ and Dr. Nassirou Bakor-Arifari from the University of Abomey-Calavi, the students carried out a small research project on land tenure and conflicts around the Pendjari National Park, whose management is supported by the German development co-operation. Together with Beninese students, they conducted interviews, and mapped and presented the results to the project leaders. A presentation of some impressions and results of the excursion/fieldtrip will be organised by the students during the summer term. (M. Doevenspeck)



► German and Beninese students during the discussion of research results in Tanougou, North West Benin. (Photo: Tylle)

WAMAKHAIR

Current challenges of water management in Khartoum: academics meet practitioners



◀ Participants of the workshop on challenges of water management in Khartoum on the 14th of March 2009, organized by the research project WAMAKHAIR in cooperation with Ahfad University and Khartoum State Water Cooperation. (Photo: Kirchen)

On the 14th of March, 2009, members of the "Water Management in Khartoum International Research Project" (WAMAKHAIR), as well as practitioners from Sudanese institutions, came together for a workshop at Ahfad University, Khartoum State, in order to discuss current challenges of the water distribution system. In addition, the workshop served to officially launch the research co-operation between the various project members in Khartoum.

WAMAKHAIR is a joint French-German research project initi-

ated by Bayreuth University (Detlef Müller-Mahn, Martin Doevenspeck, Anne-Sophie Beckedorf) and the University Paris 10. The project is funded by the DFG and by the Agence National de la Recherche (ANR). While WAMAKHAIR originates from French-German research collaboration, it has subsequently included Sudanese institutions (Khartoum State Water Cooperation, Ahfad University) and has thus become a French-German-Sudanese project.

The main aim of WAMAKHAIR is to understand the relation-

ship between water distribution and social change. The objective of the workshop in Khartoum was to bring into dialog the views of academics, NGOs, and governmental officials on the present situation and future evolution of the Khartoum water management system. The main topics discussed were institutional perspectives on the water issues, with presentations on the Khartoum State Water Cooperation, policy issues in water management and academic research questions on water. (A.-S. Beckedorf)

Human Rights Conference in Dar es Salaam

In commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law (TGCL), a joint project of the Universities of Dar es Salaam and Bayreuth, and the Tanzanian Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG), co-organized a conference at the University of Dar es Salaam on 25th November, 2008. The Dean of the Faculty of Law, Prof. Sifuni Mchome, PD Harald Sippel of the University of Bayreuth, and Honourable Justice Amili Mamento of CHRAGG addressed the audience during the opening of the conference.

The academic papers presented during the conference by members of the Faculty of Law dealt with important issues of human rights in Tanzania. Prof. Chris Maina Peter provided an overview of the current state of human rights in Tanzania, while Prof. Sifuni Mchome drew the attention of the audience to recent cases of mob, inter-tribal and witchcraft killings in Tanzania and the resulting challenges for society, the judiciary and the government. Corruption in the delivery of justice in Tanza-

nia was the topic of a written contribution by Dr Sengondo Mvungi. Dr Axel Dörken, the Director of the German Agency for Technical Development (GTZ) in Tanzania, added a practical view and discussed the human rights approach in German development co-operation with Tanzania.

The central question during the discussion of the papers was to what extent the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is based on the cultural and social values of Europe and North America, and to what degree its content could be accepted in the African cultural context. The speakers unanimously expressed the view that the Declaration of Human Rights is indeed universal and aims to protect the fundamental rights of any human being anywhere in the world. They concluded from this that human rights are not negotiable and that neither traditional nor religious values can impinge on the rights to freedom and equality of the individual person. (K. Gastorn, H. Sippel and U. Wanitzek)

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TURNS 60!

Theme: Justice and Dignity for All

The Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law (sponsored by DAAD and Aktion Afrika) at the Faculty of Law, University of Dar es Salaam, together with the **Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance** is organizing a Public Lecture in Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to be held at the **Nkrumah Hall**, University of Dar es Salaam on **Tuesday, 25th November 2008**, from **9:00 am**.

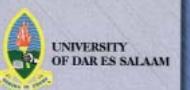
Topics to be discussed include:

- ❖ The State of Human Rights in Tanzania.
- ❖ Corruption in Delivery of Justice in Tanzania.
- ❖ The Challenges of Mob, Inter-Tribal and Witchcraft Killings in Tanzania.
- ❖ Human Rights Approach in German Development Cooperation.

You are all invited.

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 UNIVERSITÄT BAYREUTH

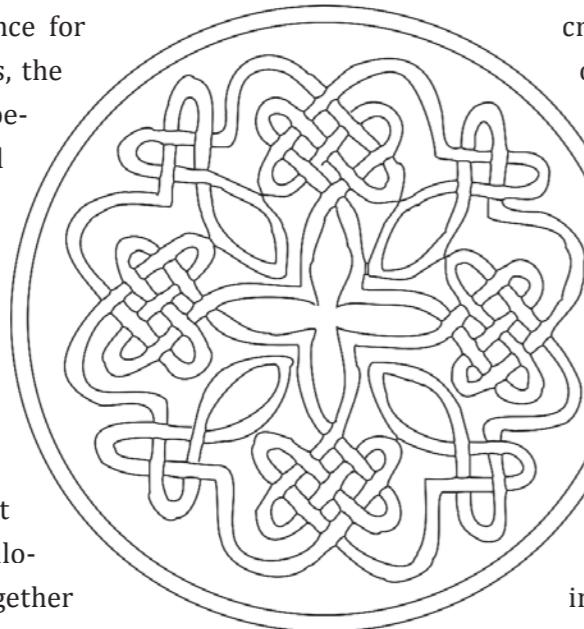
 UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM

22nd Swahili Colloquium

at Iwalewa-House from 22 May to 24 May 2009

Having been in existence for more than two decades, the Swahili Colloquium has become a well-established forum in Bayreuth. Every year, scholars and researchers from different disciplines, who work on various aspects of the language and the respective culture(s), take part in this international colloquium which brings together researchers from all over the world.

This year's Swahili Colloquium, which has been organised by the Chair of Afrikanistik I and Said Khamis (professor of Literatures in African Languages), had a special thematic focus on "Orality". Orality is



thereby considered in a wide sense, so that different perspectives can be viewed of a phenomenon which considerably shapes linguistic performance, the culturally-socially entrenched forms of language use and, particularly, verbal



◀ Othmar Miraji, editor of the „Deutsche Welle“, a regular guest at the Swahili-Colloquium. (Photo: Müller)

creativity. The thematic focus opens up a view on the variability of Swahili beyond all standardising norms.

It is a variability that finds its expression in youth languages and dialects, but also in literary texts.

The Swahili Colloquium has been held in memory of Sheikh Yahya

Ali Omar, who passed away in London last year. Born in Mombasa in 1924, Sheikh Yahya spent more than half of his life in London, where he taught at the School of Oriental and African Studies. The value of his contributions to the study of classical Swahili literature can hardly be overemphasised. Sheikh Yahya came to the Swahili Colloquium several times and also contributed to the Fumo Liyongo Workshops organised by Gudrun Miehe in 2003 and 2004.

For further information on the Swahili Colloquium, visit the website <http://www.afrikanistik.uni-bayreuth.de/de/kolloquien/index.html> or email to swahili@uni-bayreuth.de

Swahili Colloquium

23rd Swahili Colloquium at Iwalewa-House, May 2010

Having been in existence for more than two decades, the Swahili Colloquium has become a well-established forum in Bayreuth. Every year, scholars and researchers from different disciplines, who work on various aspects of the language and the respective culture(s) take part in this international colloquium, which brings together researchers from all over the world. For further information as well as the exact date, visit <http://www.afrikanistik.uni-bayreuth.de/de/kolloquien/index.html> or write an email to swahili@uni-bayreuth.de

Gudrun Miehe...

... was appointed board member of the newly-founded RISSEA



▲ Gudrun Miehe giving a speech on Swahili manuscripts during the Eighth Lamu Cultural Festival. (Photo: Okoko)

In November 2008, Gudrun Miehe, professor emeritus in African Linguistics, was appointed board member of the newly-founded RISSEA, the Research Institute of Swahili Studies in Eastern Africa. Under the auspices of the National Museums of Kenya, the institution was founded with the idea of not only providing language courses but of also offering a platform, base and a resource centre for national and international researchers working on Swahili culture and language in Kenya.

The Rissea was officially launched during the eighth Lamu Cultural Festival on Lamu (Northern Kenya) where, as well as Gudrun Miehe, other prolific researchers in the field of Swahili were also welcomed as board members. These included Kitula King'ei, professor at the University of Nairobi, Naomi Shitemi, professor at Moi University, Eldoret, Tigit Sengo, Open University, Dar es Salaam, and Kithaka wa Mberia, University of Nairobi (C. Vierke)

Adjaï Paulin Oloukpona-Yinnon

Adjaï Paulin Oloukpona-Yinnon was born in Benin, where he attended school and high school. His German studies were conducted first in Lomé, then in Abidjan, Munich and Tours. His doctoral dissertation, with the title "La 'Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft' et la pénétration coloniale allemande en Afrique", was defended in 1978. His academic career included teaching at the University of Lomé (former Université du Bénin). More recently, he fulfilled teaching assignments at the University of Bouaké (Côte d'Ivoire) and the University of Abomey-Calavi (Bénin). From 1998 to 2004 he directed the Department of German Studies at the University of Lomé. Since 1998 he has been director of the research network **ArtELI** (Atelier de recherches thématiques Ecritures-Littératures-Identités), and since 2002 he has coordinated the Humboldt-Alumni-Network in Africa. He was visiting professor at the University of Ohio in 1989 and at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in 1994.

The close co-operation with African Studies at the University of Bayreuth started through Professor (emer.) János Riesz



▲ Adjaï Paulin Oloukpona-Yinnon, Humboldt-Fellow habilitated in Bayreuth.
(Photo: von Roncador)

(Romance Literature) who first invited Paulin Oloukpona to Bayreuth through a DAAD-grant in 1986, and then through an Alexander von Humboldt fellowship in the years from 1987 to 1996. In 1996, towards the end of this period of longer and shorter visits to Bayreuth, fell the defence of his "habilitation" thesis entitled "Die 'Musterkolonie' Togo im Spiegel deutscher Kolonialliteratur". Paulin Oloukpona participated actively in the former collaborative research project at

Bayreuth University, SFB 214 "Identity in Africa", which ran from 1984 to 1997. The cooperation with Bayreuth goes on through joint supervision of master's and doctoral students (with Professor Ute Fendler) and through joint publications. Paulin Oloukpona's main fields of research are situated at the borderline of literary studies and historical and cultural studies: postcolonial issues, identity and diversity. (M. von Roncador)

European Conference of African Studies

At the 3rd European Conference of African Studies, taking place in Leipzig from 4th to 7th June 2009, a number of panels are (co-)organized by scholars from Bayreuth University. These are:

Panel 48: Waterscapes in Africa. The respacing of basins, markets and networks (Olivier Graefe / Detlef Mueller-Mahn): African waterscapes are characterized by a growing disequilibrium of supply and demand, of power and participation, and of redundancy and scarcity. They are presently undergoing critical changes at different scales: transbasin water transfers, privatization and withdrawal of private companies, reshaping of water distribution networks. This panel explores the highly contradictory transformations of waterscapes.

Panel 85: Risk awareness, discourses and the constitution of new social spaces (Elisio Macamo / Lena Blömeritz): The social and political organization of technologically more-advanced societies draws to a certain extent from perceptions of risk. These modes of organization have acquired a new meaning in Africa with the impact of ecological and technological risks through development policy and practice. The panel wants to look into the implications of this development to spatial organization in Africa.

Panel 98: Violent Respacing in Kenya? History, Dynamics and Future Implications of the 2007-08 Post-Election Crisis (Dieter Neubert / Axel Harneit-Sievers): Post-election violence in Kenya in early 2008 was fuelled by land conflicts, identity politics, social inequality and widespread complaints about regional marginalization. With this panel we invite scholars and civil society activists to analyse the post-election clashes against their historical background and point to the options and challenges faced by the new coalition government. How should Kenya's ethno-regional power balance and resource distribution (especially land) be reshaped?

Panel 99: Connecting technologies and social change: empirical findings and theoretical analysis (Dieter Neubert / Rijk van Dijk): The success of mobile phones in Africa highlights the fact that connecting technologies influence African every day life and may trigger social change. The panel focuses on the articulation of connecting technologies (including social technologies) and social change, and presents initial empirical results and analytical approaches from social anthropology, history and sociology.

Panel 138: Text, subtext and context: Considering the relation between text work and field work in research on African literary texts (Clarissa Vierke): The aim of the panel is to rethink the relation between 'text work' and field work in Africa, firstly by considering the research history of philological work in Africa, and secondly by trying to explore the potentials of new approaches that seek to combine the study of texts, and, in particular, the study of their rhetoric, with the exploration of contexts.

Panel 139: African Studies on the web – new possibilities and new services for academic research (Hartmut Bergenthal, Ulf Vierke): DEVA Bayreuth and University Library of Frankfurt/Main are organizing a panel on networking and digitization at ECAS. The panel will discuss the complex task of making primary data (e.g. field notes, survey material, photography) accessible on the web. New solutions to electronic publishing of special collections are proposed, designed to offer innovative documentation solutions and, furthermore, to envision co-operative subject gateways for African Studies. The organisers warmly invite the scientific community to articulate their academic needs and to discuss them with experts from digitization projects, archives and libraries.

Panel 142: African waters - water in Africa, barriers, paths, and resources: their impact on language, literature and history of people (Manfred von Roncador): This panel will focus on the structural and substantial role of water in language, literature and history in Africa. Large amounts of water may be both barriers and ways for diffusion. Water as a resource has determined the way of living. Both aspects are important for language development and conceptualizations.

Editors' note

Since the last issue, the major development within IAS has been the acceptance of the proposal for the establishment of a Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law as described in our front page article.

In the past year, BIGSAS, our Graduate School, has gained momentum and has established a routine which is, however, regularly confronted by unforeseen challenges. Although it is now well-established, this prodigious "daughter" of the Institute of African Studies still merits the main focus of attention in this issue of NAB.

As well as looking at the recent past, at the period between two issues, we propose to look further back to a more remote period, through the introduction of an "Alumni column". We are starting with a short portrait of Paulin Oloukpona, and we encourage Bayreuthian scholars and students to propose candidates for future portraits.

Lastly, we would like to call for papers, and also for volunteers to participate in the planning, editing and composing of NAB.

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

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

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

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Deutsche
Forschungsgemeinschaft
DFG

NAB

Newsletter of African Studies at
Bayreuth University

Vol. VIII 2009

ISSN 1867-6634 (print)

ISSN 1867-6642 (online)

Published by the
Institute of African Studies
www.ias.uni-bayreuth.de

University of Bayreuth
95440 Bayreuth, Germany

NAB online:
[http://www.ias.uni-bayreuth.de/
en/publications/nab](http://www.ias.uni-bayreuth.de/en/publications/nab)

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Manfred von Roncador, Rüdiger Seesemann,
TGCL, Yannick Tylle, Stephen Okoko,
Ulrike Wanitzek (cover)

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