



Institute of  
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# NAB

## Newsletter of African Studies at the University of Bayreuth



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## BIGSAS 2.0

The year 2012 was an extraordinary one in the life of the Institute of African Studies. Two great achievements, which we celebrate in this volume of NAB, were made in this year. First of them was the prolongation of the Bayreuth Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) within the Excellence Initiative of the German State and Federal Government. The second was the creation of the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies (BA) funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).





## High score evaluation for the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies

The news of prolongation, when it was finally told – after an hour of trying to connect to the online livestream – was received with great celebration and expressions of relief and satisfaction, as the cover picture illustrates. “We are through”, shouted the president over and over in the midst of the jubilation and hugging that greeted the news. The impressive success of BIGSAS in the Excellence Initiative mirrors the hard work done by everyone who was involved in the first five years. As a milestone of the dynamic development of the profile and the African Studies focus at the University of Bayreuth, the decision of the joint commission of the German Research Council (Wissenschaftsrat) and the Ger-

man Research Foundation (DFG) to prolong the graduate school reflects the quality of the new ideas to be implemented during the next five years.

“The news fills us with joy and pride”, said the President of the University of Bayreuth Rüdiger Bormann. “It shows us that the decision-making body of the Excellence Initiative again acknowledges the international, unique, top position which the University of Bayreuth has reached in African Studies”. BIGSAS, through its innovative and well-structured model of PhD training, field research and inter-disciplinary mentoring as well as administrative support for doctoral students in an interdisciplinary context convinced the group of international expert reviewers

of its potential to continue to expand and evolve into a pre-eminent centre of excellence. The reviewers graded both the written proposal for renewal and the personal presentation of the graduate school by a group of 25 BIGSAS members in Berlin in January 2012 with high scores. To quote President Bormann once more as he talked to the press after the announcement of the decision: “This decision confirms the University of Bayreuth’s strategy to combine research and teaching in powerful and interdisciplinary research areas...As the example of BIGSAS shows, these competences are an excellent foundation for sustainable international research cooperation and for doctoral students with qualifications of high quality standards.

◀ Welcome of new BIGSAS junior fellows in 2012 (BIGSAS)

▼ Celebrating BIGSAS 2.0 (BIGSAS)

Markus Zanner, Rüdiger Bormann and Angela Danner jubilate at news of BIGSAS prolongation. (BIGSAS) ▶

## BIGSAS is prolonged

On 15 June 2012, the administration of the University of Bayreuth and the entire BIGSAS family gathered in the Senate room of the university to know if BIGSAS had been successful in the second phase of the Excellence Initiative.



The University of Bayreuth is one of the leading centres of African Studies and so it will continue to be a home for research talents from Africa, Europe and other parts of the world in the future.”

The composition and output of BIGSAS is unique. As of June 2012, as many as 107 junior fellows were working on their PhD research projects on diverse topics in literature, linguistics, cultural studies and social sciences. Overall, these young academics do research on 28 countries in Africa with a further three projects devoted to African diasporas in three Western countries. For Dymitr Ibriszimow, the dean of BIGSAS, “BIGSAS provides excellent training opportunities for young, highly-motivated and highly-talented researchers from all continents. The doctoral students can develop their own ideas and research interests. Moreover, experienced senior

fellows who have been working in African Studies for years and have built a network with international researchers supervise the junior fellows. The lively exchange of ideas and experiences beyond national and cultural borders support a unique awareness of unity and mutual responsibility – not only at the scientific, but also at the personal level. We are happy to further extend this successful concept in the second phase of the Excellence Initiative and to lead it into the future with new impulses.”

The Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies has strong connections with its six partner universities in Ethiopia, Benin, Kenya, Mozambique, Morocco and South Africa. These partners – individual researchers as well as their universities – participate in the selection of applicants for admission into BIGSAS. They give orienta-

tion and inspiration to the junior fellows in various ways ranging from fieldwork supervision and assistance to career planning and counseling. Since the beginning of BIGSAS, the partner universities have been involved in the supervision of the doctoral students, but in the next five years, they will also actively participate in the decision-making process in BIGSAS during short term working visits to Bayreuth. The African studies focus at the University of Bayreuth is a trendsetter in internationalisation. One important long term goal is to jointly establish doctoral training structures comparable to the extended academic environment of BIGSAS in and between different regions in Africa. As innovative research and training centres, they will certainly play a role in the training of excellent future leaders in economics, culture, languages and politics.

(Susanne Ott/Eric Anchimbe)



## Dymitr Ibriszimow: Dean of BIGSAS



*The dean of BIGSAS, Dymitr Ibriszimow, still mesmerised by the brilliant success of BIGSAS in the second phase of the Excellence Initiative, took time off to talk about BIGSAS, its achievements and the plans for the future with NAB editor-in-chief, Eric Anchimbe.*

**E**ric Anchimbe: As Dean of BIGSAS, it must have been a great success and relief to see BIGSAS renewed or extended for another five years. How do you and the entire membership of BIGSAS feel about this?

Dymitr Ibriszimow: Indeed, it is a great success and relief for all of us, and we are very happy to have the renewal. You know, working very hard for five years with wonderful young scholars who are very devoted to what they are doing, and then having this renewal, it shows that we have been doing a good job. On the one hand, this is confirmed by the junior fellows (JFs), the colleagues, and the guests BIGSAS has received from all over the world – in the past five years we had almost 200 international guests. On the other hand, the bigger question has always been about how the good job BIGSAS is doing will be

appreciated and accepted given the heavy competition with other initiatives, not only from the humanities but also from the sciences, for example, the engineering sciences, medicine, and natural sciences. We are very happy that in this tough competition, our efforts in BIGSAS have been evaluated highly, very positively, and we were awarded a renewal for the next five years.

*E.A.: The extension or renewal of BIGSAS from 2012-2017 means a lot for the Africa focus of the University of Bayreuth; what are the plans for the next five years in this direction?*

DI: We have reached a level that is unique in our 35 or more years tradition of African studies at the University of Bayreuth. This uniqueness speaks for itself, for instance, we have been successful twice in the Excellence Initiative;

◀ *NAB editor-in-chief, Eric Anchimbe interviewing Dymitr Ibriszimow, Dean of BIGSAS. (Anchimbe)*

we, as an Africa focus, have built the first Centre of Excellence, i.e. the Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law (TGCL) within the framework of the programme “Establishment of Centres of Excellence for Teaching and Research to train Future Leaders in Sub-Saharan Africa” of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Foreign Ministry. Furthermore, we have developed a special project called DEVA for archiving field research materials and also research materials from some of our partner universities. Recently, we have also achieved something special, the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies, funded within the programme on Area Studies by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) for the next four years. Many of the founding members of the Academy are also Senior Fellows (SFs) with BIGSAS. The academy is in a sense the next step after BIGSAS because it concentrates on research after the doctoral level. And of course, it poses a question which is very important and crucial for all of us in the Africa focus and also for the whole country: Future Africa. What happens in Africa and what will happen in the future regarding our cooperation with Africa? What can we learn from Africa? And what can our colleagues in Africa learn from us? Internationalisation is one of the most important assets of BIGSAS. We have six partner universities (PUs) in Africa: Université Mohammed V-Agdal, Rabat,

Morocco; Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya; Université d'Abomey-Calavi, Cotonou, Benin; University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa; Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo, Mozambique; and recently, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia became our PU in November 2012.

On this basis, we hope that our efforts in the domain of the internationalisation of the University of Bayreuth will reach the next level of cooperation with our partner universities and beyond. This is our aim for the period 2012-2017. We hope that with our expertise and the knowledge we have acquired not only in the last five years but in the last 35 years, we will be able to contribute to German cooperation and politics with Africa, and that this expertise will be supportive for new ways of mutual understanding.

*E.A.: BIGSAS went to Berlin for the renewal meeting with the slogan: Research on Africa is only possible together with Africa! Is this still part of the plan?*

DI: Of course, cooperation with Africa, with our colleagues and friends in Africa is absolutely a must. It has been a must not only since the creation of BIGSAS but actually since the University was created over three decades ago. Regarding structural developments within BIGSAS, we are planning to develop a so-called sandwich programme for training JFs. This is an important step towards coming closer in the common training of PhDs with our African partners. This means that we choose excellent candidates together with our partners at our PUs. These candidates will spend

one or two years in Bayreuth and the rest of their training at the PU. So, the responsibility for the training is on both sides, i.e. regarding content of the training, finances, and field research. At the end, the doctoral student or JF will receive a degree from both universities. The whole structure involves joint supervision, shared responsibility yielding a double degree for the JF.

*E.A.: Five more years: Will anything change in the programme structure of BIGSAS in this new phase?*

**“Cooperation with Africa, with our colleagues and friends in Africa is absolutely a must.”**

DI: Yes. One of these changes will be the strengthening of the sandwich programmes. Another change is that we will cooperate more strongly in preparing and developing common training structures in the PUs. In doing this, we will learn a lot from the experiences of our PUs since each of these universities has its own specificities and organisational structures, traditions and expectations. We will invite representatives of our PUs to Bayreuth in order to participate personally and contribute to the development of the common structure and environment of BIGSAS: BIGSAS has to be perceived not only as a structure of Bayreuth but as a structure that combines seven universities from two continents.

*E.A.: BIGSAS awarded over 10 PhDs this year alone. This is a great threshold; do you promise more*

*PhDs in 2013 and the years after?*

DI: It is not a matter of promise but rather a responsibility. We shall do this, of course, because we have a clearly organised structure of training based on the individual needs and capacity of the JFs; on the possibilities offered by our interdisciplinary structure; and on the recognition of the needs of our partners. An important element is the disciplinary development of the students which also provides them the possibility of interdisciplinary advancement through the interdisciplinary mentorship groups

that counsel them on their dissertations. One of the most important aspects of the training in BIGSAS is the early integration of the JFs into the scientific community through publications and active participation at international conferences and summer schools before the submission of their dissertations. Every JF has an Individual Research and Training Plan (IRTP), which offers them the optimal conditions to finish their PhD within three years. In 2013, we expect 15 JFs to submit and eventually defend their dissertations. This would be more than the 10 who defended in 2012.

*E.A.: BIGSAS beyond the university: BIGSAS has achieved a significant level of recognition in and out of Germany, for instance, BIGSAS has been invited to the State Parliament of Bayern, The Bavarian*

Minister of Science, Research and Art, Dr. Heubisch visited BIGSAS here in Bayreuth in December 2012, etc. How is that?

DI: It is great! We are very happy that the political level of the State of Bavaria also appreciates our expertise and what we are doing. I think that our JFs are also very happy because they have the feeling that they have something to offer to the State of Bavaria. They must also be looking at the time after their studies when they will go back to their countries to keep the contact with Bavaria. Our alumni who have become important persons in their home countries may eventually like to exchange with the State of Bavaria on issues of politics, democratisation, and higher education development. We are happy that the Bavarian Parliament invited BIGSAS and the Africa focus of the University of Bayreuth to report in front of Members of the State Parliament about its activities and achievements. And we are happy that the Staatskanzlei (the State Government) has also developed interest in our academic activities.

E.A.: And the Bavarian Minister? Was he here to appreciate BIGSAS and to encourage BIGSAS? Or what really brought him here?

DI: I think he feels well with BIGSAS. He came to BIGSAS for the first time in 2011 when we awarded the first BIGSAS Journalist Prize. The prize was for a journalist who wrote in German on Africa in an objective way, exhibiting profound understanding of the continent and deep insight into a topic of great currency. The response to the prize was extraordinary; we received almost

100 articles. When the minister came to inaugurate the prize, he experienced the convivial atmosphere in BIGSAS, i.e. its academia and its multiculturalism, its great brains and its great hearts. Our 108 JFs come from 29 different countries. This atmosphere certainly impressed him, which is why he feels very much at home with us. So, he came again, this time, to congratulate us on the

### **“The Academy is the next step after BIGSAS.”**

renewal of BIGSAS. By the way, the idea of the BIGSAS Journalist Prize was proposed and coordinated by our alumni.

E.A.: BIGSAS and its alumni: How strong is the relationship between BIGSAS and its alumni? Are there any common projects beyond the Journalist Prize?

DI: Of course, we are in close contact with our alumni. We shall have a meeting every second year with our alumni here in Bayreuth. We need to know what is going on with them, but we also need their input on what was good and what should be improved on for the development of both our structure and the individuals who pass through it. Furthermore, we are preparing an internet platform for the exchange of information with our alumni and between the JFs and the alumni.

E.A.: The IAS keeps expanding and successfully too. The Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies was launched in 2012 with a 4.2 million funding from the BMBF. How far does the Academy

promote the common interests of the IAS, BIGSAS and the University of Bayreuth?

DI: The IAS is the cover which brings together all activities of the Africa focus of the University of Bayreuth. In this sense, the IAS may be compared to a father with his children: BIGSAS, Iwalewa-Haus, TGCL, DEVA, SEED and, of course, the new born baby, the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies (BA). The Academy is extremely important; it is a prolongation or continuation of BIGSAS' efforts to train JFs not only as specialists in their disciplines but also as academicians who think beyond disciplinary limits. What happens after the PhD? Of course, many would go back, many would pick up jobs, but many would also like to continue with research. The Academy offers this platform for further research after the doctorate. I see the Academy and BIGSAS as one. The Academy is the next step after BIGSAS.

E.A.: The current funding for BIGSAS finishes in 2017, and there seems to be no possibility to extend it. What is the plan beyond 2017?

DI: The structure will remain, of course. The financing will not be so high, but we will keep up the high quality of training. And of course, we shall look for other possibilities for further financing of this strong international and interdisciplinary structure.

E.A.: Thank you very much for talking to NAB. This sounds very promising and reassuring after the wonderful success, achievements, and recognition BIGSAS has gained so far. We wish BIGSAS good luck!

## **“Future Africa” - The Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies**

*The newly founded Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies is an interdisciplinary research centre of the Institute of African Studies, the University of Bayreuth. The Academy is funded by the BMBF and is dedicated to advanced research on Africa and its diasporas. The core topic of the Academy's current funding period is “Future Africa”.*

Many regions of the African continent are currently experiencing significant changes in their society, culture, economy and ecology. In this context, new conceptualisations of the future emerge that are both creative and diverse. The Institute of African Studies of the University of Bayreuth and 11 of its professors have initiated a new research project that will explore these exciting developments under the theme: “Future Africa: Visions in Time.” This theme will be in the focus of, and help to develop, a new research centre within the University, namely the “Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies”. Founded in October 2012, and inaugurated in a festive event on 3 December 2012, the “Bayreuth Academy”, as it is called in short, will expand the horizon of the well-established field of African Studies at this University at international, national and local levels. Across a broad range of disciplines, it will open dialogues with other Area Studies as well as with fields of research dedicated to ‘systematic’ (i.e. non-regional) approaches. Thus, in its first phase (2012-2016), the Bayreuth Academy will fathom concepts of the future emerging from Africa and its diasporas from different



academic perspectives. An essential concern is to engage in general debates about the concept of ‘future’ through insights gained from regional research, notably African Studies. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is funding this project and the setting up of its institutional structures during the next four years.

### **An innovative platform for research**

“This project is unique in the European research landscape”, explains Achim von Oppen, Professor of African History and First Director of the Bayreuth Academy. “The Bayreuth Academy is a research laboratory of the highest academic standard that will herald a new dimension for

▲ Eric Anchimbe, Kodwo Eshun and Achim v. Oppen during the launching of the Academy. (Gunkel)

African Studies at the University of Bayreuth and beyond. It will systematically bring interdisciplinary research on Africa and the African diasporas into a dialogue with concepts and findings generated outside African Studies, under other regional and disciplinary angles. The two main pillars of this innovative platform of research are, on the one hand, a number of Research (Sub) Projects that address the main theme (currently: “Future Africa”) in a complementary way; and, on the other, a series of Working Groups, each discussing, in the course of one semester, a cross-cutting aspect of that theme. For each of the



latter, a number of guest fellows will be invited, both senior and junior, local/national and international, including scholars from Africa and African diasporas themselves."

### "Future" in the focus of research about Africa and beyond

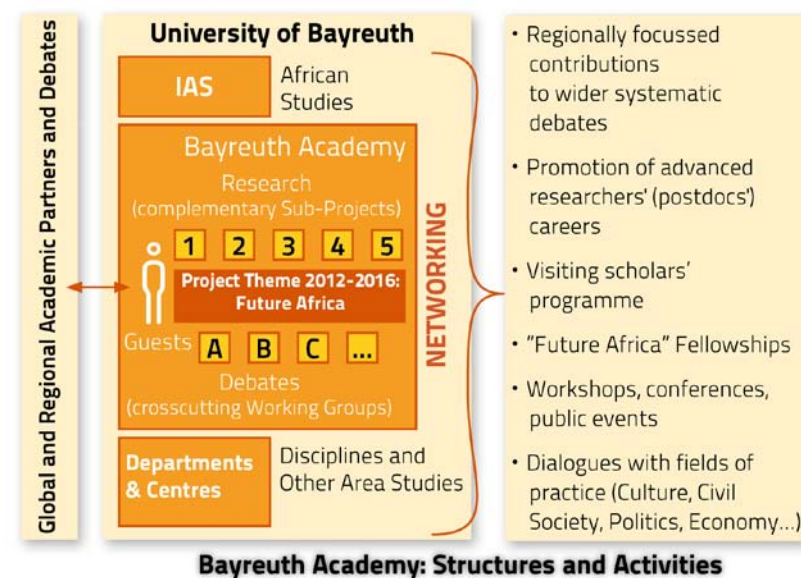
What role do historical experiences and fundamental societal changes play in the formation of visions of the future? What ideas about time (e.g. linear vs. cyclical vs. "frozen") are involved? What is the significance of dichotomies such as "South vs. West", "North vs. South", "culture vs. nature", "religiousness vs. secularism", "masculinity vs. femininity" in concepts and representations of the future that emerge from Africa and African diasporas, in comparison to those developed in other regions of the world? How are they entangled with each other at a global level? These are only a few of the fundamental questions from which the project "Future Africa" takes off. Also, the underlying epistemological and methodological approaches of research into these questions, and their outcomes, will be subject to careful scrutiny. Susan Arndt, Professor of Anglophone Literatures and Second Director of the Bayreuth Academy, cautions against a misperception: "We are not attempting to establish an Institute for futurology for reliable predictions of developments in Africa or worldwide. We rather aim at gaining insights into structures and processes from which innovative concepts of the future emerge. Our main focus is on projections emanating from Africa and its diasporas

that are significant also beyond the African continent and at a global level."

### From concepts of time to revolutionary upheavals: The sub projects

More concretely, five research Sub Projects constitute the core of the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies. The first one, "Beyond Europe: Narratives of the Future in Modern African History", examines projections of African future originating from the continent itself and from African diasporas, through different periods of modern history, notably in times of change, and relates them to Eurocentric visions of the

Classes on the Rise: Concepts of Individual and Societal Future" is dedicated to the role conceptions of the future play in the dynamics of new middle classes striving for social advancement and education in African countries. Fourthly, "Concepts of Future in MediaSpaces" searches for evidence of new genres of artistic production (through language, literature, and visual/graphic images) that emerge in and through the internet, and serve as medial agencies for visions of the future. Fifthly, "Revolution 3.0: Iconographies of Societal Utopias" aims to make the imagery of revolutionary movements in Africa and its diasporas, and their interconnec-



future. Secondly, "Visions of Nature in Time: Concepts of Appropriating and Conserving Nature" centres on the question of how modelling in the humanities and in the natural sciences interact, for example, with reference to strategies of nature conservation or adaptation to climate change. Thirdly, the Sub Project "Middle

tions, accessible under aesthetic, historical and political lenses.

All these projects envisage case studies in different countries and among a variety of groups, but one country of common interest is Kenya and its diasporas. Each of these Sub Projects will also act as a convener for one of the Working Groups mentioned before.

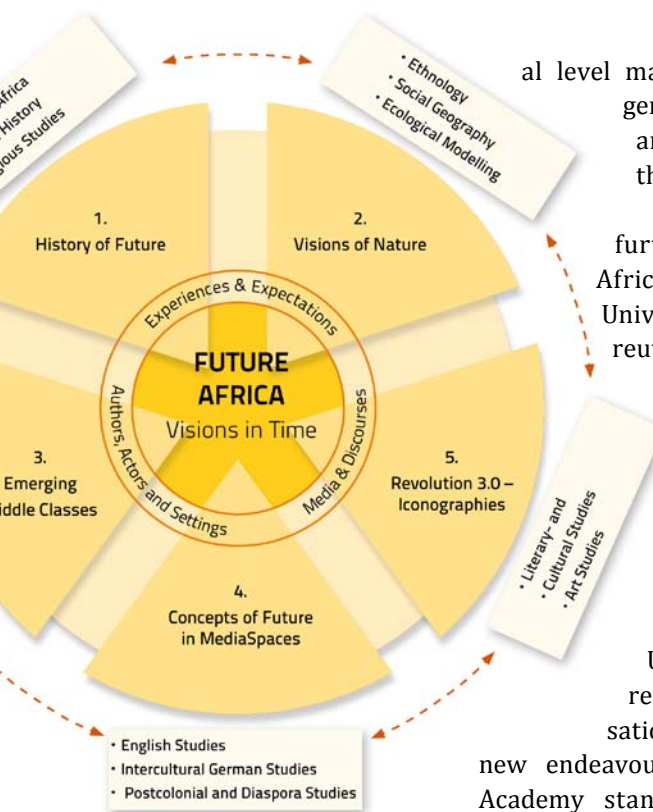
Each Sub Project has been developed, and is now headed by a team of two or three professors from different academic disciplines at the University of Bayreuth, including some that so far have not been involved in Africa-related research, such as History of the Early Modern Period, Global Change Ecology, and Intercultural German Studies. Key positions in the Sub Project teams will be held by postdoctoral researchers.

### Research in dialogue with the public

Besides research and discussion meetings that take place within Sub Project Teams and Working Groups workshops, wider academic audiences will be regularly informed through conferences and lectures about findings and debates emerging from research on "Future Africa". Specific expert audiences from the cultural domain, the political world and the civil society will be incorporated in a series of round table discussions, while special presentations, film screenings, literature festivals and exhibitions will target the broader public in the region, Germany, and also in Africa itself.

### Linking cultures, societies, and economic spaces: New impulses for Area Studies

Finally, "Future Africa" is also aiming to make a more general



impact on academic development in Germany. The project is among a handful of other projects to receive funding from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research whose aim it is to strengthen German academic research in the humanities, especially in the so-called Area Studies of non-European regions, and to emphasise their significance for other research fields, also at an international level. Another aim is to overcome the usual, rigid constrictions to geographically defined spaces, such as the African continent, and to privilege global and transregional interconnections between cultures, societies and economic spaces that classical regional studies have tended to ignore. Points of view that claim universal validity (but often really refer to Western positions) are thus put into perspective while, from a reverse perspective, findings on a region-

al level may point to more general structures and processes at the global level.

The project also further strengthens African Studies at the University of Bayreuth. The Institute of African Studies (IAS), this multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research centre at the University of Bayreuth, is the organisational roof for this

new endeavour. The Bayreuth Academy stands side by side with the international Graduate School BIGSAS that has recently been awarded an extension of its funding until 2017 through the Excellence Initiative for cutting-edge research at institutions of higher education, supported by the States and Federal Government of Germany. By laying the foundation of a new Academy, the IAS once more proves its capacity to attract excellent research talents at all levels of academic careers, including the postdoctoral level, which is a critical and, to some extent, precarious stage for aspiring young academics in Germany.

(Achim von Oppen)

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## Achim von Oppen: Director, Bayreuth Academy

*After the successful application for funding of the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies with the BMBF, Achim von Oppen, the First Director of the Bayreuth Academy, explained to NAB's editor-in-chief, Eric Anchimbe, the stakes, dreams, sub projects, and immediate and long term plans of this new institutional structure of the Institute of African Studies.*

**E**ric Anchimbe: Thanks for finding time to talk to NAB in the heart of the semester. Congratulations on the successful application for funding of the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies with the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). What is the Academy all about?

Achim von Oppen: Thank you very much for conducting this interview with me. In fact, I feel a bit out of breath but I also feel very proud and happy about the fact that this Academy, officially formed on 1 October, 2012 and launched on 3 December 2012, is now in full swing. One of the remarkable achievements of the Academy is that it is funded by the Federal Ministry, which so far has not been directly funding the African focus of the University of Bayreuth.

What is the Academy all about? It is first of all a new star in the sky of African Studies in Bayreuth. It is a new institution; it is a new structural element that is going to develop its own dynamics. Its focus is on "advanced research" in African Studies and beyond. In fact we had been pondering about its name for a long time. The expression "advanced", in our understanding, does not only refer to the level of scholarship that we are striving for here, but is also meant to call on African Studies to develop and discover its importance beyond Africa. The Academy will be going beyond Africa in a number of respects. One is the African di-

aspora which is usually treated as a separate topic but which we are now trying to bring together with African Studies. Also, we are interested in debates and research on topics that are relevant even outside Africa such as, for instance, the global emergence of middle classes. We are also interested in discussions about new media and other issues of the future which are becoming increasingly global. All this makes going beyond Africa as such an important focus of the Academy.

This brings me to the second aspect of the Academy. The Academy is, on the one hand, a forum or, we could even say, a laboratory of debate between different disciplines, including lines of research that address other parts of the world. On the other hand, the Academy has one core project for each period of its life. The first period is starting now and the funding we have received is exclusively directed to our first central or core project, "Future Africa: Visions in Time" (Zukunft Afrika: Visionen im Umbruch). This topic will be the focus of our discussions and will be researched from different perspectives by the Sub Projects we will be running.

*EA: You said the Academy's focus is on Africa and beyond. I am interested in the 'beyond'. Does the 'beyond' refer back to Africa, is it related to Africa in one way or the other, or it has nothing to do with Africa?*

AvO: No, not at all. The idea of

the whole programme of the Federal Ministry (BMBF) that funds us is to show that the so-called Areas Studies have something important to say beyond just regional expertise. Africa is a very strong focus in Bayreuth, in fact Bayreuth is one of the strongest centres, or perhaps the strongest centre, for African Studies in Germany but for some time, there has been a tendency to regard this as a kind of centre of expertise only on Africa. Now, what we want to do is show the special significance of what we can learn from Africa. This is done, firstly, by looking at Africa, its diasporas and the rest of the world in both a comparative and a connecting perspective, academically-speaking. And, secondly, we are called to show the relevance of our research and sort of meddle in major debates going on outside Africa. It is like saying "Hey, we have something to contribute to your debate from our particular Africa-based perspective".

*EA: As one of the first directors of the Academy, there is certainly a lot of ground setting to be done. What are some of the immediate tasks, goals, and dreams of the Academy?*

AvO: The Academy has two directors, I am the first and the second is Susan Arndt, and we are working together on an equal level. She is from literature and cultural studies while I am from history and the social sciences. This nicely illustrates the disciplinary focus of our programme although

it doesn't mean we won't go beyond that. In fact, we envisage debates and discussions with a number of other disciplines as well including law, economics, and perhaps even the sciences. Now, the immediate task is to get the Academy into full swing. We are quite advanced at this point, but there are still a lot of things to do. The first major activities are, firstly, to get the Sub Projects started and to recruit their personnel, which is already partly done. They will mainly be post-docs. Secondly, we will have the first Working Group here in Bayreuth in the summer of 2013, which will bring together scholars from different disciplines, in fact, a lot of them not working directly on African Studies, to share with us their expertise about ongoing debates on visions of the future – which is our core focus. These are the two main lines of academic activities the Academy will be involved in, besides a series of other events addressing wider audiences. Of course, the dream is to create a space that breathes a non-hierarchical discussion atmosphere and is also free from everyday pressures. In this space, post-docs, senior scholars, and guest fellows (we will have a lot of guest fellows), but also doctoral researchers who happen to work on relevant topics, will collaborate in a truly academic and inter-disciplinary spirit.

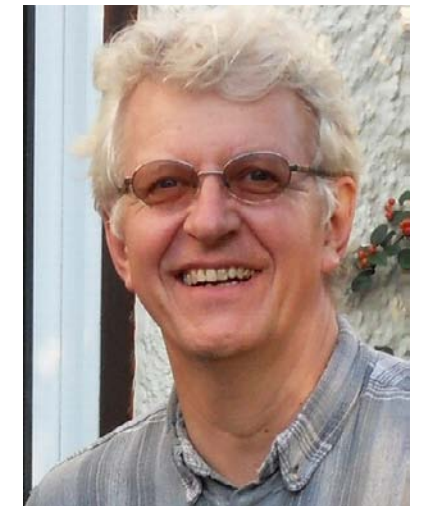
*EA: Given the strong focus on Africa, how involved are researchers and colleagues from Africa in the structure and/or activities of the Academy?*

AvO: This is a very important question because one of Bayreuth's strengths is that it does

research not only on Africa but also with Africa, and in fact, in recent years, we have achieved a lot in this direction. We will of course include scholars from Africa and the African diasporas as guests in our Working Groups and also as researchers in some of our Sub Projects. We will also have African colleagues participating in, and presenting at, the other public events we are going to host. On the other hand, given that we are expected to work beyond Africa, we will have to make sure that we have visitors from other European countries and even from North and South America. In fact, the Academy will play an important role in internationalisation at this university. So, it is not just the collaboration between Bayreuth and Africa we are aiming for, which would be too narrow a perspective, but also to embed our joint debates about Africa and about what we can learn from Africa and African Studies in a much wider circle of scholarship including, of course, Africa and the African diaspora.

*EA: The Academy brings together research projects from a range of different disciplines, e.g. literature, history, development sociology, and human geography; is there a common ground for interdisciplinary cooperation between these disciplines?*

AvO: Inter-disciplinary cooperation is at the heart of the philosophy of African Studies at Bayreuth. Bayreuth has a very inter-disciplinary Institute of African Studies (IAS), which is the umbrella of all our activities. Bayreuth has already successfully carried out a number of very important coordinated research programmes with sub-



▲ Achim von Oppen (Oppen)

stantial amounts of funding and all these were built on the premises of inter-disciplinary cooperation. Now, we all know that it is a lot of work to actually get Sub Projects together in which inter-disciplinary cooperation actually becomes everyday practice. But our emphasis on discussions at a wider level, i.e. across the Sub Projects in the Academy as a whole, is an important challenge which will award us new mileage for truly interdisciplinary exchanges. We've had discussions in which we discovered already that a dialogue between, say, literary studies and sociology or ecological modelling with their quite different languages is not easy, but very instructive. At the moment, we are somehow probing our different languages and disciplinary approaches, trying to understand and learn from each other at a much more intense level than previously. We are also discovering unexpected common grounds. For instance, we have discussed texts describing mathematical modelling as it is used in the natural sciences as a key to a certain philosophical assumption



about future or about time, which are interesting also for cultural studies or historical studies.

*EA: One of the points on which these disciplines might come together is the notion of 'future'. How central is the theme of 'future' to the sub projects, the disciplines and the Academy as a whole?*

*AvO:* It is very relevant, but we should also emphasise that our intention is not to forecast the future and to work in a prognostical way; there are other research institutions that are much better at that. But prognoses of the future may also be of interest as an object of research because they usually involve some vision of time and future. But, our core topic is visions of the future, representations of the future, ideas about the future that are developed within African societies and also within African diasporas. There is a long tradition of projecting futures onto Africa from the outside. Europe has been at the forefront of inventing Africa's future (or an alleged lack of it) again and again. As a result, we sometimes overlook the fact that within Africa itself, there have always been ideas about change over time, from past to future. It is particularly interesting for me as a historian to see that for quite a long time, since the 18<sup>th</sup> Century at least, there have been debates about the future that were comparable to, and sometimes also interconnected with, debates about the future as it was envisaged in Europe or other parts of the world.

Taking Africa as our starting point, we want to focus on such global connections. We also want to take into account the fact that there is a considerable degree

of scepticism about the future worldwide; utopian or euphoric visions of the future repeatedly give way to dystopic ones. Here in Europe at the moment, we are rather in a gloomy mood about the future with all these crises that are looming around us. There is a

**“Within Africa itself, there have always been ideas about change over time, from past to future.”**

reflection on that also in the arts, in literary productions. This may be quite different in other parts of the world, not only Africa, but we don't know yet. At the moment Africa is experiencing an enormous dynamics which is partly due to the new world market conditions and the high demand for African resources, which have also generated more income and new ideas. It seems that after the depressing years of structural adjustment in Africa in the 1980s and 1990s, which Europe is in a way experiencing at the moment, there are some new departures in Africa which are quite interesting to study.

*EA: The Institute of African Studies to which the Academy belongs continues to expand very successfully. BIGSAS was recently prolonged for another five years (2012-2017). How close is the Academy's collaboration with BIGSAS on the African focus of the University of Bayreuth?*

*AvO:* First of all, the Academy is in a certain way complementary to BIGSAS. BIGSAS is the department or structure of the IAS focusing on doctoral degrees and research, and it does a formidable job there, and we are proud of the achievements of this School

of Excellence, as it has now been recognised again. This, however, covers only a part of the spectrum of work in African Studies. Besides, we also have another established wing of African Studies, namely our undergraduate and graduate or Masters programmes

in African Studies, which are also quite famous. The Academy, in contrast, focuses mainly on advanced, post-doctoral research. In a way, we could say, the Academy is going to be the flag-ship of the research wing of African Studies in Bayreuth. Of course, there are also a number of other research projects with external (grant) funding in Bayreuth African studies, some of which may cooperate with the Academy, while others may remain independent. But the Academy undoubtedly will become a new institutional hub for research on Africa in Bayreuth.

*EA: Future Africa is just the first period, you said. Are you, I mean the entire Academy, already thinking beyond 2016 when the current funding period ends?*

*AvO:* The current funding runs for four years but the possibility of applying for extension for another two years, till 2018, will be an important challenge for us. The idea is that this project "Future Africa" is just a starter for the Academy. It is expected of us to create a sustainable research structure that will exist beyond 2016 or 2018, and thereafter will address other core themes on which Africa has much to say.

## BIGSAS Colloquium: Work in Progress I

This year's BIGSAS colloquium, which is organised annually in the winter term, was held in a conference format. It took place on 8-9 November 2012 at the Iwalewa-Haus, the Africa Centre of the University of Bayreuth, and provided once more a forum for junior fellows to present and discuss their work within the wider framework of the BIGSAS academic community. These two days highlighted the great variety of disciplines, theoretical approaches, and methodologies of the BIGSAS PhD projects.

René Umlauf opened the first day of the colloquium by challenging the notion of simplicity – namely the transferability of diagnostic tests between different diseases and cultural contexts – and its socio-technical implications for Uganda's malaria control programme. Marie Paule Coulibaly questioned the response of local organisations to HIV/AIDS in cross-border areas in West-Africa, followed by Lohna Bonkat who presented the results of her fieldwork in Jos, Nigeria where she analyses how women selling in local markets cope with the impact of social conflicts in their everyday life. Felix Brinkmann's project also deals with markets but focuses on the political and economic dynamics among traders at the Chisokone market in Kitwe, Zambia. In the block that followed, both Yawo Koto and Sibel Aydin took us into the field of literary studies. Yawo Koto analysed the representation of the



environment in francophone literature and cinema, whereas Sibel Aydin examined the question of transcultural communication in the fiction of Ahdaf Soueif, a contemporary Egyptian novelist. Kofi Glover closed the first day of the colloquium with some methodological reflections concerning ethnographic fieldwork on polygyny within the Ghanaian middle class.

The presentations on the second day came from diverse disciplines including religious studies, anthropology and urban planning, cultural studies and linguistics. Genevieve Nrenzah presented her project on religious dynamics among "indigenous" priests and their followers in Ghana, while Azza Ahmed examined the negotiation on a local level concerning the Ur-

▲ *Rüdiger Seesemann, Vice Dean of BIGSAS, opens the Colloquium. (BIGSAS)*

ban Nile Interface in Tuti Island in Khartoum, Sudan. Pamela Chepngetich's project focused on the visual representation and economy of photojournalism and self-photography in Dadaab Refugee Camp in Kenya. The presentation by Daouda Traoré concluded the colloquium; he provided insights into the language practices of the Senufo community in Burkina Faso.

The presentations were followed by lively and productive, but also challenging discussions. The BIGSAS Colloquium: Work in Progress II will take place on 31 January and 1 February 2013 at the Iwalewa-Haus.

*(Henriette Gunkel / Christine Ludl)*





## Congratulations on the prolongation of BIGSAS

*He came to Bayreuth to congratulate the Graduate School on its successful renewal for the second phase of the Excellence Initiative of the German Research Foundation (DFG). The junior fellows of BIGSAS used the opportunity to explain why research on Africa is a real gift for Bavaria: "We, as researchers, contribute our expertise to Bavaria and we are happy to work and live here". These words were written in the symbolic gift, a certificate, which was handed over by the junior fellows of BIGSAS to the Bavarian State Minister of Science, Research and the Arts, Wolfgang Heubisch, on the occasion of his visit in November 2012.*

Junior fellow Jean Pierre Boutché greeted the State Minister with the words "We are here in order to learn from each other, to learn to change perspectives and ways of thinking, to question and to analyse systematically". Nadine Siegert, deputy director of the Iwalewa-Haus and a BIGSAS junior fellow, informed the Minister of the commitment of BIGSAS junior fellows to transfer knowledge on Africa to Germany, and especially Bavaria. She stressed the importance of the annual BIGSAS Festival of African and African-Diasporic Literatures, the Bayreuth film festival "Cinema Africa!", as well as the talks about migration, politics and the diversity of Africa that some junior fellows had with pupils and teachers at schools in Bayreuth. "The international importance

of African Studies", Boutché continued, "is summarised in the citation on the website of the Bavarian State Ministry: 'The insights gained at the universities or research institutions define the world of tomorrow'".

The Minister, Wolfgang Heubisch, was moved by the symbolic present. In his speech, he thanked the young researchers from all over Africa and Europe for coming to the University of Bayreuth to pursue their doctorates: "You are a real present for the Bavarian State as you bring with you your personality and professional competences", he said. He expressed his wish to travel to Africa in order to gain deeper understanding of the continent's diversity and potential.

The dean of BIGSAS, Dymitr Ibriszimow, referred to the Graduate School as "one big

◀ Junior fellows, Nadine Siegert and Jean Pierre Boutché, present a gift to Minister Heubisch. (BIGSAS)

## The Bavarian State Minister for Science, Research and the Arts, Wolfgang Heubisch, visits BIGSAS

family" in his opening remarks, and thanked the minister and his delegation for this commitment and support which has, as he said, "substantially contributed to BIGSAS on the basis of the 30 years of development of the African Studies in Bayreuth". The president of the University of Bayreuth, Rüdiger Bormann, acknowledged the diverse competences that have formed the profile of African Studies at the university, among them the Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law (TGCL) and the unique institution, the Iwalewa-Haus. He congratulated all persons present for another important achievement that complements the research structures of African Studies in an ideal way. Reacting to the Federal Ministry of Education and Research's (BMBF) awarding of funding for the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies, in short Bayreuth Academy, for a period of four years, the president proudly echoed that: "This will further strengthen the profile of the University of Bayreuth and the African Studies as a long standing research priority".

(Susanne Ott)

## Status Quo of BIGSAS: Ten Junior Fellows completed their doctorate

The Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies is proud to announce that 10 doctoral students successfully submitted and defended their dissertations between October 2011 and December 2012. In total, BIGSAS bid farewell to 21 alumni who now pursue their individual career paths. Now, BIGSAS expects even more high quality PhDs to be completed in the year 2013.

The number of applicants for BIGSAS reached a new peak this year. For the summer semester 2013, 162 applications were received from applicants in 27 countries in Europe, Africa, Asia and South America.

Currently, BIGSAS has 103 core junior fellows from 27 different countries and five associated junior fellows from Africa and Europe. The latter group are guest PhD students of African Studies who are financed through a third-party funding. They are eligible to participate in all BIGSAS academic activities such as seminars, symposia, discussions and lectures. With the prolongation of the graduate school from November 2012 to 2017, a new category of doctoral students was introduced: the affiliated junior fellows. This group consists of students in the BIGSAS sandwich programmes, the partner universities and other universities. The affiliated doctoral students spend either one or two years at BIGSAS during which they have the same rights as the core junior fellows.

This extended sandwich structure is not only limited to the group of doctoral students. It is foreseen that representatives of the partner universities could



Name	Country of Origin	Supervisor
Ahmed El-Hassab	Sudan	Franz Kogelmann
Baba Mai Bello	Nigeria	Dymitr Ibriszimow
Chikas Danfulani	Nigeria	Franz Kogelmann
Halkano Wario	Kenya	Franz Kogelmann
Laure Peem	Cameroon	Martina Drescher
Lena Kroeker	Germany	Erdmute Alber
Meron Eresso	Ethiopia	Georg Klute
Mimboabe Bakpa	Togo	Manfred von Roncador
Rémi Tchokothe	Cameroon	Said Khamis
Tabea Häberlein	Germany	Erdmute Alber

spend a part of the academic year in Bayreuth and actively participate in the decision-making process at BIGSAS. The new structure also accommodates colleagues from the ecological and engineering sciences who participate in the Research Areas. The latter includes former core postdocs who are still at the University of Bayreuth and who are involved in a third-party funded research project.

Since the beginning of the second phase of BIGSAS, the previously known Gender Programme has been transformed into the Diversity Programme. This change includes "new platforms that accommodate both men and women, offering them a space for social conversations, academic

supervision and scientific discussions. Gender, whether looked upon as a social construct or a structural category, constantly intersects with other societal structures and categories, among them age, class, race, language, and (dis)ability. Diversity includes all instantiations of gender but goes beyond to cover issues of discrimination, inability, divergence, sexuality, and outreach, not only as academic categories but also as social practice in real life communities." (see Diversity Programme flyer) The former Gender and now Diversity Representative Susan Arndt will be supported by the Deputy Diversity Representative Eric Anchimbe.

(Susanne Ott)



## BIGSAS@school



## Junior fellows visit secondary schools in Bayreuth

*Fostering interest in, and creating competence about, Africa – this is only possible together with Africa! This credo of BIGSAS is also the idea behind the newly established project BIGSAS@school.*

In 2012, BIGSAS cooperated with two secondary schools and one primary school in Bayreuth to bring the African continent closer to the pupils and to show them how diverse and complex it is. The project is also intended to add new inputs to the youths' perspectives of Africa and academic life since it gives them the opportunity to meet BIGSAS doctoral students and to ask them questions based on their own interests. Furthermore, the youngsters are introduced to academic research subjects of diverse research areas, such as African cultures and history, African linguistics and religious studies.

The first meetings took place in May 2012, when a group of junior fellows visited the sec-

ondary school, Graf-Münster-Gymnasium, which is specialised in mathematics and natural sciences. Harald Standl, the teacher who contacted BIGSAS, organised the meeting during his lecture on migration. The students aged between 15 and 17 were well prepared for the meeting and eager to ask as many questions as possible. They asked about border control in Africa and if there are problems with the immigration office. From a more personal point of view, they asked how the junior fellows do research and also how they connect with each other. Meeting another group of students in the same school, the students asked curious questions about corruption, migration, the relationship between African countries, and interestingly, if there is still Apartheid in South Africa.

Shortly after this visit, another secondary school, Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium, also signalled interest in the *BIGSAS@school* project. This school spe-

cialises in music and languages. In July 2012, Claudia Hartig, Marina Popp and their two classes welcomed the junior fellows with beverages, self-baked cakes and muffins. After a brief introduction, the huge group split into three smaller groups and went to separate rooms, where they talked and discussed more freely. Although BIGSAS had received questions in advance, the junior fellows were not able to answer all of them, as time was insufficient for everybody. The children's curiosity was insatiable as they continued to ask: "We want to know more, when can we meet again?" "We should have planned a whole day for your visit!" Most questions were about life, family, religion, languages, sports and literature. In the end, all the groups got back together and reported on their impressions and the knowledge they had gained. One girl said "Africa is a continent with over 50 countries. I wasn't aware of this fact before" and another explained, "We learnt something from the people who come from



Africa and not only what the media shows us". The junior fellows left with a feeling of content; since it was evident they had made a lasting change in the thoughts and perceptions of the youngsters.

For a meeting with a primary school the BIGSAS doctoral students prepared themselves differently. They decided to read an African fairy tale called "Das Affenherz" (*The Heart of a Monkey*), in which the young children could interact. They then showed the pupils on a map where their home is and how big their countries are in comparison to Germany. The children asked questions about everything that was interesting for them, e.g. whether the junior fellows had pets; how the climate in their home countries is; if they have schools in each town; what their hobbies were when they were the same age as they are now. An 8-year-old boy confessed: "I like Africa much better now because when I heard the word 'Africa' I used to think of famine. From today on I'll think of the nice visit at school and the wonderful pictures they have shown us".

The cooperation with young scholars from Africa is not only fun but also very important for school pupils and students, as they get first-hand information, learn to think scientifically, overcome prejudices and make use of their language skills. BIGSAS hopes that the success of the *BIGSAS@school* project in 2012 would not only continue in future but would also further develop and expand in scope.

(Susanne Ott)

## BIGSAS Ombudspople elected

## A step forward in potential conflict management



▲ Gudrun Mieke during the Eighth Lamu Cultural Festival. (Okoko)

▲ Gerd Spittler

*"Junior fellows of BIGSAS have the right to study and work in an environment free of exploitation, intimidation, harassment and discrimination based on characteristics such as gender, race, age, sexual orientation, disability, religious or political beliefs and affiliations. In turn, the Junior Fellows are expected to conduct themselves, in all academic activities, in a manner befitting the academic colleagues. They have the responsibility to provide accurate and honest reporting of their findings and dissertation progress and to uphold ethical norms in interpersonal communication, research methodology and academic writing."*

Even if these guidelines of the BIGSAS Codex are clear enough and appreciated by all members of the graduate school, conflicts may nevertheless occur. In case they do occur, they have to be solved in a reasonable way. And in order to be able to offer solutions for cases where interpersonal solutions might be difficult to find, the BIGSAS general assembly elected Gerd Spittler and Gudrun Mieke (emeritus professors of anthropology and African linguistics respectively), as ombudspople for BIGSAS. They kindly agreed to take over the function of mediators in case of conflict.

As former colleagues, they

are well known and acknowledged for their vast experiences as researchers in their respective fields in African Studies at the University of Bayreuth; as members, initiators and managers of the collaborative research centre "Local Action in Africa in the Context of Globalisation", funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG); and as faculty deans and as collaborative experts in their extended research communities. Gudrun Mieke acted as chair of African linguistics between 1992 and 2007. Gerd Spittler held the chair of social anthropology at the University of Bayreuth between 1988 until 2004.

(Susanne Ott)





◀ The guests of the 2012 BIGSAS Festival. Top row (L-R): John Akomfrah, Blaq Pearl, Gabeba Baderoon, Zukiswa Wanner, Tirop Peter Simatei, Pumla Dineo Gqola, Kossi Efoui, Lydie Moudileno, Philipp Khabo Köpsell, Susan Kiguli. Center (L-R): Ken Bugul, Werewere Liking. Front row (L-R) DJ S-Max, Olumide Popoola, Deeb.

N'Dongo D and Faada Freddy of Daara J Family brought their high energy Panafrikan Hip Hop performance to the BIGSAS Festival 2012 ▶



## BIGSAS Festival of African and African-Diasporic Literatures 2012



▲ Cultural critic, scholar and activist Peggy Piesche holding her keynote on "Remembering Flash Forward. The Politics of Memory"

The festival set out to explore how memory impacts conceptualisations of the future and how, reciprocally, conceptualisations of the future shape memories. History, as the vehicle here, offers the

From June 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies convened its second Festival of African and African-Diasporic Literatures under the title »Remembering Flash Forward: African Literature as Poetics in Motion«, held at the Iwalewa-Haus in Bayreuth's city center.

shortest path into the future and leads us all around the planet – with Africa being one of its global players. Especially literature has the ability to envision and probe both memory and visions of the future. It addresses what was, what is, and imagines what might be coming our way. Literature remains true to itself – both conceptually and aesthetically – by constantly reinventing itself. Literature is – always – on the move. This does not only mean that authors, their poetics and ideas – equipped with the latest technological developments, online communication and the world wide web – are at home in the libraries of the world. It also means that literary textures and creations rely on entangled his-

tories, nations, languages and aesthetics, which merge and transcend genres and media, rethinking and reinventing them anew. This amalgamation of worlds of ink, notes and pictures was elaborated on and celebrated during the three days of this latest edition of the BIGSAS Literature Festival.

In the opening reception on day 1, Susan Arndt – the festival's founder and director – warmly greeted all guests and prepared them for the time travels of the subsequent days by setting the agenda and outlining the programme. Words of welcome were also offered by the representative of one of the main supporting institutions of the festival, the Bavarian Min-

istry for Science, Research and the Arts, Claudia Mangels; Bayreuth's Third Mayor Beate Kuhn; the Dean of BIGSAS, Dymitr Ibrizimow; and finally the Deputy Director of the Iwalewa-Haus, Nadine Siegert. After the reception – generously provided by the City of Bayreuth – the programme continued with the keynote lecture by literary scholar and activist Peggy Piesche (Germany/USA) entitled "Remembering Flash Forward: The Politics of Memory". In her lecture, Peggy Piesche, particularly took the opportunity to pay homage to the life and works of African-American woman poet, theorist and GLR-activist, Audre Lorde, who had had an intensively committed relationship to Germany and its fledgling black community in the 1980s. This set the tone for the ensuing panel discussion "Remembering Flash Forward: The Legacy of Memory" in which Peggy Piesche together with feminist



writer and literary scholar Pumla Dineo Gqola (South Africa), shooting star writer Nadifa Mohamed (Somalia/GB), and Spoken Word artist and writer/activist Philipp Khabo Köpsell (Germany) elaborated on how memory is remembered for the future and by fiction. The day ended with the festival's traditional transnational Spoken Word Session, where the poets Blaq Pearl (South Af-

▲ Panel discussion "Remembering Flash Forward: The Legacy of Memory". (L-R) Peggy Piesche, Pumla Dineo Gqola, Susan Arndt (mod.), Philipp Khabo Köpsell

rica), Deeb (Egypt) and Olumide Popoola (GB/Germany) rocked the mikes with the beats provided by DJ S-Max.

Day 2 began with a reading workshop for Bayreuth's young-



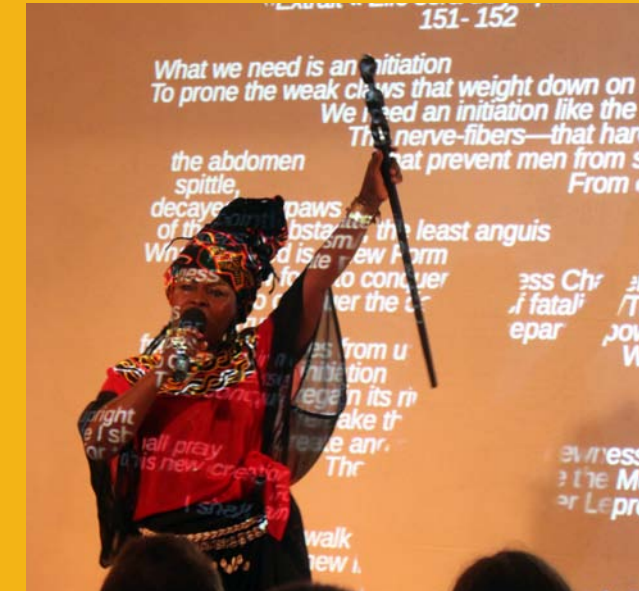


◀ ... and Bayreuth partied hard!

▼ Egyptian Rapper and Poet Deeb performing during the Spoken Word Session



▼ Werewere Liking performing her Voix de Ventre d'Africaines



sters at the International School Bayreuth. Zukiswa Wanner, a young South African writer, who has also published children's literature, paid them a visit, enriching them with an interactive reading which the kids welcomed with much enthusiasm. Back at the Iwalewa-Haus, South African poet and Assistant Professor of Woman's/African Studies, Gabeba Baderoon, opened the day's programme with her keynote address on race and gender in South African writing and popular culture. Baderoon spoke about how literature can open up political and imaginative spaces that cannot normally be accommodated within conventional archives. This session was followed by the festival's first reading entitled "Writing Beyond and Forward" with award winning writer Kossi Efoui (Togo/France) who read from his latest novel *L'ombre des Choses à Venir* (Shadows of Things to

Come). Ken Bugul (Senegal/Benin), one of the superstars of francophone literature, offered captivating excerpts from her classic autobiographical novel *Le Baobab Fou* (*The Abandoned Baobab*) while Olumide Popoola (Germany/GB) shared a chapter from her debut novel *This is not about Sadness*. "Sci-Fi, AfroFuturism and Migration" was the title of the next slot: renowned journalist and cultural critic Greg Tate (USA) and filmmaker John Akomfrah (GB/Ghana), one of Britain's preeminent black intellectuals, discussed the anticipatory logic of Afrofuturistic thoughts, structures of feelings and sounds at the interstices of the utopian/dystopian divide in Black Culture/s, thereby predicting immanent changes or transformations in the realms of politics and technologies. This was followed by the screening of John Akomfrah's latest film *Nine Muses*.

In the morning of day 3, French literary scholar, Lydie Moudile-no, presented her keynote lecture on "Hybridity, Popular Culture and the Francophone Canon" in which she explored the aesthetic hybridity of recent francophone publications that straddle the line between elite and popular genres.

This was followed by Zukiswa Wanner's (South Africa) lecture entitled "Art and Activism", spiced with illuminating excerpts from her novel *The Madams*. Also, poet and feminist activist, Susan Kiguli (Uganda), read selected poems from her comprehensive oeuvre and Nadifa Mohamed (GB) read from her acclaimed debut novel *Black Mamba Boy*.

The panel discussion "Literature in Transition" with Zukiswa Wanner, Kossi Efoui, Olumide Popoola and Tirop Peter Simatei (a visiting Humboldt-Fellow from Moi University Eldoret,

Kenya) concluded the academic programme of the festival.

A theatre performance by one of Africa's most revered artists came next: Werewere Liking, writer, dramatist, performer and singer, and Cameroon's "Grande Dame of the Arts" performed her one-woman-piece *Voix de Ventre d'Africaines* (*Voices from the Womb of African Women*), an oratorical and musical tour-de-force through the monologues of her female literary characters. This outstanding and exuberant performance was greeted with standing ovations from an enthralled audience at Iwalewa-Haus.

The concluding big open-air concert on Bayreuth's market square then provided the appropriate celebratory closing act for the 2012 edition of the festival: Deeb, Egypt's "Tahrir Square Rapper" offered a brilliant laid-back warm-up for a cool mid-June evening. His performance was followed by the Daara J

Family, Senegal's finest Hip Hop formation, which brought their energy-packed performance to Bayreuthers and the festival's enthused international guests. The two leading men, Faada Freddy and N'Dongo D – modern day griots performing in Wolof, French, English – and their 3-man band sonically climaxed this pivotal celebration of "Remembering Flash Forward: African Literature as Poetics in Motion" in 2012!

The entire festival has been documented, so you can obtain further information and watch video recordings of all events

via the festival's website: [www.bigsas-literaturfestival.de](http://www.bigsas-literaturfestival.de) or contact Nadja Ofuatey-Alazard, the festival's deputy director and head of communication, by email for further queries at [BIGSAS-Literaturfestival@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:BIGSAS-Literaturfestival@uni-bayreuth.de). The festival is a joint enterprise of numerous BIGSAS senior fellows, postdocs and junior fellows, along with PhD students from the Graduate School "Intercultural Encounters", MA students of "Intercultural Anglophone Studies", the Bayreuth Event and Festival e.V. (BEF) and various institutional supporters. (Nadja Ofuatey-Alazard/BIGSAS)

The next BIGSAS Festival of African and African-Diasporic Literatures will be held June 20<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013 under the title "Intertextuality: Dialogues in Motion".

[www.bigsas-literaturfestival.de](http://www.bigsas-literaturfestival.de)  
[BIGSAS-Literaturfestival@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:BIGSAS-Literaturfestival@uni-bayreuth.de)



## BIGSAS at the local police department: Polizeipräsidium Oberfranken



**W**hy should academics in African Studies meet the police in Bayreuth? For the dean of BIGSAS, Dymitr Ibrizimow, and the president of the Polizeipräsidium Oberfranken, Reinhard Kunkel, the reason was clear: fostering mutual understanding and intercultural competence on both sides.

The BIGSAS delegation comprised 20 junior fellows accompanied by the dean, Dymitr Ibrizimow, Diversity Representative, Eric Anchimbe, and the BIGSAS administrative team. Police officer Polizeiobererrat Horst Thiemt explained the structure and tasks of the police departments in the region of Oberfranken and offered insights into daily work and challenges. Dymitr Ibrizimow introduced BIGSAS, its PhD research training programme for young academics, its research areas and some of its activities

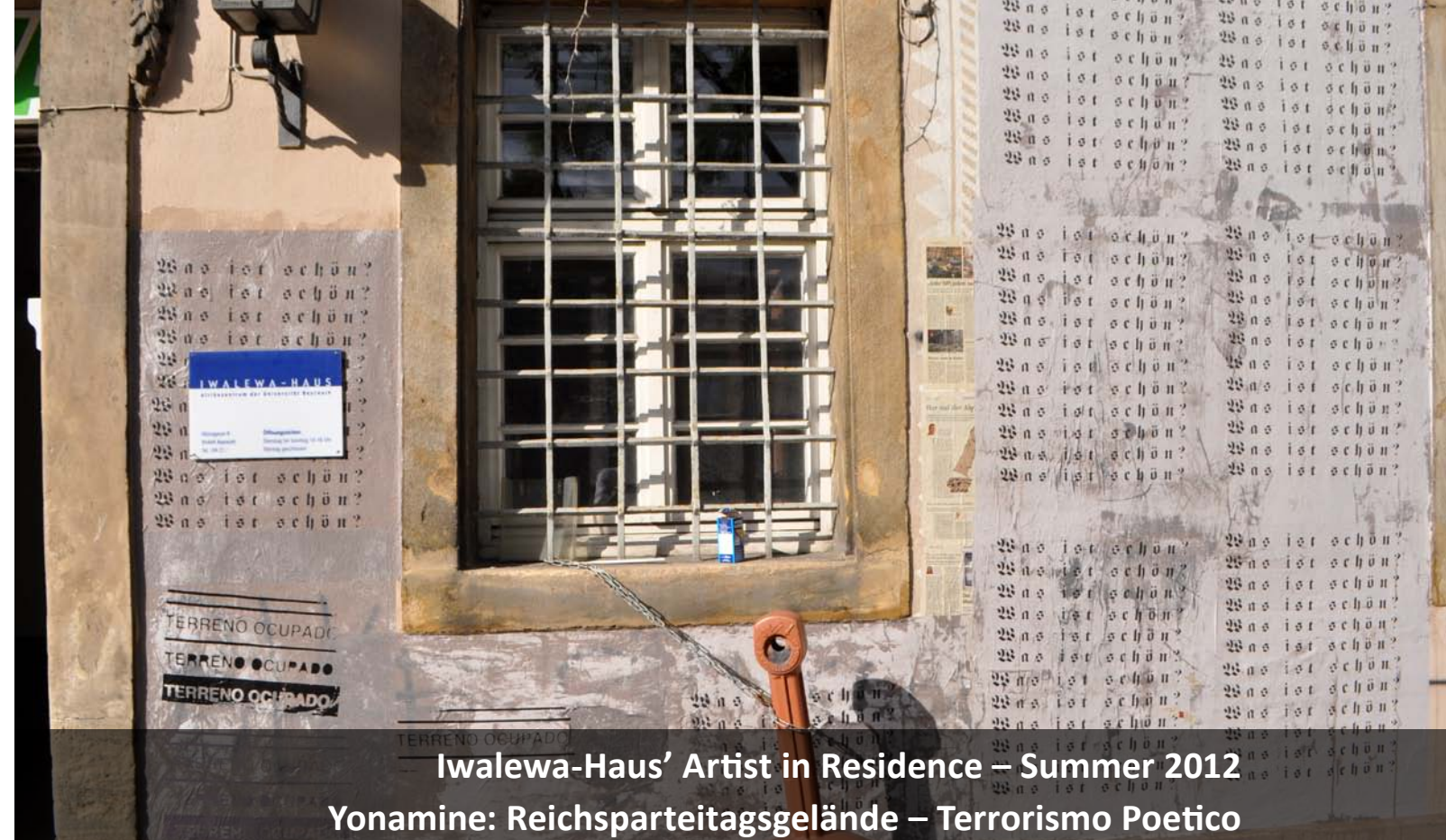
and events. As the junior fellows had expressed interest in gaining knowledge about the role of the police in Germany and Bavaria, the specific legal foundations of the police structure, its duties and rights were thoroughly explained.

A lively discussion followed the talks. Some members of BIGSAS talked about their own personal experiences with the police highlighting the difficulties that usually ensue from communication across cultures and languages. These experiences were received by the officers as valuable to their effective service to the people. As they explained: in their professional contexts they often deal with intercultural, social and also often with language problems. Police president Reinhard Kunkel and his members of staff were able to give the junior fellows some helpful tips, while they on their part also gained new in-

▲ *BIGSAS delegation and the President of the Polizeipräsidium Oberfranken (Polizeipräsidium Oberfranken)*

sights about, and approaches to, intercultural interaction. Moreover, the police department and BIGSAS discovered their common interest in football and they decided to organise a football match in the near future. Finally, the BIGSAS delegation had the unique opportunity to visit the police headquarters' control room and operation centre, where all information on crimes, road accidents and traffic, and emergency calls is received and coordinated. Such a rare access to the technical and human infrastructure and the daily challenges of the Bavarian police was highly appreciated by BIGSAS, and both parties agreed on future meetings to strengthen cooperation and exchange.

(Susanne Ott)



## Iwalewa-Haus' Artist in Residence – Summer 2012 Yonamine: Reichsparteitagsgelände – Terrorismo Poetico

In June 2012, “Was ist schön?”, read a graffiti in fracture on the facade of Iwalewa-Haus. This line marked the starting point of the exploration of the museum's aesthetics and archives by multimedia artist Yonamine (Angola/Portugal). The preliminary cap stone of his performative project “Reichsparteitagsgelände – Terrorismo Poetico” was then installed inside: An urn on scarlet red velvet and a dangling noose in front of a still frame of the crematory of Buchenwald. Engraved in the metal cap of the modest container holding his artworks' ashes is the line “Arbeit macht frei”: Three small words which epitomise the horror of Auschwitz in its absurd cynics. Known for his characteristic courageous takes, Yonamine was invited to critically investigate both the institute's archive and collection along Iwalewa-Haus' three lines of thought and practise: “archive – laboratory – utopia”. Yonamine then stirred the archive in, so far, the most radical way; more rigidly than the curators had expected. He worked mostly on the facade, where drawings by Georgina Beier, renowned artist and wife of Ulli Beier, had been present for 30 years and had become part of the public space. Yonamine's intervention caused friction in the local and academic public, but can also be read as part of a generational change in the institution.

Ulli Beier's death in 2011 seems to have finally marked the establishment of new perspectives and beginnings in the history and personae of the Iwalewa-Haus. Yonamine's interventions added a perspective to the core question of aesthetics: “Was ist schön?” - “Who defines it?”, leading to a productive conflict played out on the museum's walls. The controversy triggered by his artwork on these walls has been a call to re-think the concept and structure of the residency programme which will continue in 2013 with the curator fellowship of the Kenyan artist Sam Hopkins and the residency of the Ugandan artist Ronex, who was awarded the residency at the Iwalewa-Haus in the context of the first contemporary art festival in Kampala in 2012.

(Katharina Fink & Nadine Siegert)





## Aquitaine Afriques: Contacts, Zones 20 Années de Migration

Iwalewa-Haus cooperated with MC2a and LAM – Les Afriques dans le Monde (Centre de Recherches Pluridisciplinaires et Comparatistes) in Bordeaux in the exhibition “Aquitaine Afriques: Contacts, Zones” (April–September 2012). The exhibition was a joint project between the Iwalewa-Haus and the Bordeaux-based Gallery MC2a (Migration Culturelles Aquitaine Afriques). Curated by Guy Lenoir, who is the founder and director of MC2a, the exhibition marked the starting point of the collaboration between these two institutions, and is intended to expand in the coming years. In this project, the Iwalewa-Haus again served as a contact zone – one of the major aims of the Iwalewa-Haus since it celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011.

A comprehensive review of the activities of the Gallery MC2a since its foundation in 1989 shows not only their vision, but also the various collaborations they have had with artists of different proveniences. “Aquitaine Afriques: Contacts, Zones” provided a picture of contemporary Africa, mediated through the works of artists like John Kiyaya (Tanzania), Loïc Le Loët (France), Chéri Samba (DR Congo) and William Kentridge (South Africa). The exhibition was not only a journey through the history of MC2a and the history of France, but also told the history of African migration and presence in France and beyond. Mobility and migration formed the guiding principles of the exhibition, and the historic presence of Africans in France was also explored as well as recent migrations on the Route Nationale 10 – one of the major roads of African migration in France.

Moreover, the exhibition offered the Iwalewa-Haus a great opportunity to enter public space in Bayreuth. An overseas container, symbolising global trade, was set up in the city at Leopoldplatz in summer 2012. With a VW-Golf car artistically redesigned by the Congolese artist Freddy Mutombo placed on its top, the container invited visitors, passers-by to rethink the meaning of mobility in a globalised world.

Yassine Balbzioui (2010) from “Safari Bamako” ►







## Abrie Fourie – Oblique

The exhibition ‘Oblique’ by Abrie Fourie opened in October 2012 at the Iwalewa-Haus. It followed the publication of the artist’s monograph of the same name in 2011. The body of work on display contained two sets of images. 1) A HD-film installation presenting all the images contained in the monograph as a series of slides, and 2) a selection of images installed and exhibited as framed photographs. These two bodies of work span more than two decades of the artist’s practice, and contain work produced in Africa, Asia, Europe and America. Abrie Fourie’s work engages intensely with cross-cultural identity and the artist’s experiences as a citizen, immigrant and traveller in countries geographically and culturally far removed from his native home, South Africa.

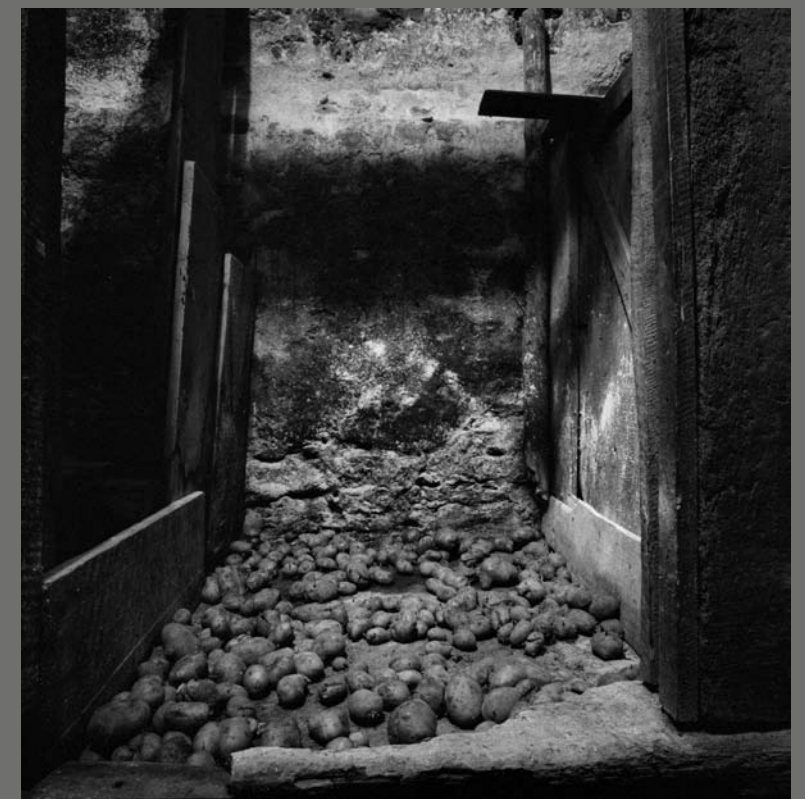
In the film installation, the narration of a text by the author and theorist Ivan Vladislavić foregrounds Fourie’s interest in the sometimes volatile and complex

relationship between text and the photographic image. Vladislavić problematises the disjunction between memory and what we as viewers and consumers of photography project onto the medium.

Fourie’s practice can be seen as a catalogue of memories; as an ongoing archive. He explores the familiar and intimate zones of home with the same interest and curiosity as he does the unknown. He states that this approach is “not so much defining a place, as circling the relationship between spaces, sign and self; it hints at that silent tension between absence and presence, abstraction and reality.”


The exhibition ‘Oblique’, curated by Storm Janse van Rensburg (Berlin), was first shown at the Haus de Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany, as part of “Labor Berlin” – an experimental exhibition platform for international artists living in Berlin. The exhibition was subsequently hosted by the Johannesburg Art Gallery.

▲ *Abrie Fourie (2011) Former reservoirs along the N1 National, Kromrivier, Western Cape, South Africa*



*Abrie Fourie (2011) Kartoffeln, Steinbächle, Ilshofen, Baden-Württemberg, Germany ►*





## Videoclips as musical mapping of Recôncavo Baiano

Recôncavo Baiano, located in the northeast of Brazil, is a region with a very diverse musical background, and is generally considered the birth place of Afro-Brazilian culture. The selection of video-clips curated by the Institute of African Studies (IAS) guest professor, Claudio Manoel, presents the local music scene of the small city Cachoeira. Its multitude of sounds range from Samba de Roda and Camdomblé through choirs and philharmonic orchestras to Samba-rock, Jazz, Rap and Pop. The do-it-yourself videos use digital tools to produce and spread low budget visual documents, which are far away from standard commercial musical productions. They are the result of a course dealing with movies and audiovisual media offered at the Universidade Federal do Recôncavo Baiano. The exhibition launched a closer cooperation between the Universidade Federal do Recôncavo Baiano in Brazil and the IAS here at the University of Bayreuth. The overall goal is to eventually set up a joint study programme with focus on media, cinema and arts studies.

*Videostill from Banda Refugiados "Além dos muros" ►*



Tina Deininger & Gerhard Jaugstetter:  
"Flüchtlingsboote II" ▶

▼ Tina Deininger & Gerhard Jaugstetter:  
"Spuren am Quai"



## Traces on Lampedusa – A photographic exhibition

The photographers, Tina Deininger and Gerhard Jaugstetter, showed, between November 2012 and March 2013, images of people (mostly refugees) along with their boats as they undertake the risky and perilous journey across the Mediterranean Sea for Europe via Lampedusa. The pictures also show these travellers after they have landed on the island of Lampedusa. The island has become a symbol of global refugee movements between Africa and Europe and the ambiguous space of the Mediterranean Sea. In Lampedusa, the refugees feel closer to

their destination, Europe, but still far away from it. Even if they leave the island again – or are forced out – they do leave traces on it. The boats which carried them to Lampedusa are traces of the journey and also silent witnesses of the fate of the people – emblematised in the pictures by charred skeletons of boats piled together and a littering assortment of personal belongings left behind by the hurriedly dispatched travellers away from Lampedusa. The photo exhibition shows elusive moments of these traces, captured by the camera.







## AfroSat – II

The exhibition sequence AFROSAT offers a forum for artists whose work traces entangled histories and imaginative worlds between Europe, USA and Africa. The satellite dish evoked in the title reflects a utopian position: as a receiver of encoded African and Afro-diasporic signals which, transformed into images/sounds/texts, are sent or transmitted into the European reception area, where they overwrite long established dichotomies. The 2012 AFROSAT forum, curated by Henriette Gunkel and Anna Schrade displayed films and video installations by John Akomfrah (UK), The Otolith Group (UK) and Kara Lynch (USA) – all of which have been inspired by, and constituted significantly of, the cultural aesthetics and discourse of Afrofuturism which combines science, technology and science-fiction as a means of exploring the Black experience.

▲ kara lynch "Slaveboat" Videostill from "The Archivist's Vault: Juneteenth/Paradise, a prologue (Invisible)"

While the transatlantic slave trade and its politics of memory and history, of displacement, and cultural alienation form a central point of reference in these art productions, they are simultaneously configured towards the future – transgressing the boundaries of technology, media, time/space in their search for creative possibilities and potentialities for political interventions today. The opening of the exhibition was embedded in the BIGSAS African and African- Diasporic Literature Festival, and was organised by the BIGSAS Workgroup 'Afrofuturism.' Two of the artists were present, namely Kara Lynch and John Akomfrah, while the writer, musician and cultural critic, Greg Tate, took centre stage as the DJ at the after-party. The audio tour 'O Paradise' that was part of Kara Lynch's exhibition is available for download at the Iwalewa-Haus website: [www.iwalewa.uni-bayreuth.de](http://www.iwalewa.uni-bayreuth.de)

## Personalia



■ **Johannes Döveling**, Wirtschaftsjurist (University of Bayreuth), LL.M. (Cape Town), is now the Manager of the Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies (TGCL). He took over this post from Christian Kirchen in November 2012. His research interest lies in the field of regional integration law, especially concerning the East African Community, administrative law, and environmental law.



■ **Katrin Pfadenhauer** took up the position of wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin (Assistant Professor) in the Romanistik II Department in May 2012. She obtained her PhD in Romance Linguistics from the University of Bamberg. She is author of "... y la español también" Fallstudien zum indigenen Spanisch zweisprachiger Mixteken in Mexiko. (2012; University of Bamberg Press). Among her research interests are, contact linguistics, colonial linguistics, creole and minority languages, and Latin American Spanish.



■ On 31 May 2012 **Gabriele Sommer** has been elected as Chair of the Association of Africanists (Fachverband Afrikanistik) at the general assembly in Cologne. Sommer is professor of African Linguistics (Niger Congo) at the University of Bayreuth and will chair the association for the next two years after having taken over from her Bayreuth colleague Manfred von Roncador (Institute of African Studies). The Association is an advocacy platform for scholars from German-speaking universities and organises the "Afrikanistentag", a biennial conference which will again take place in 2014.

■ **Tatjana Thelen**, Professor for ethnographic methods and social network analysis at the University of Vienna, substituted Erdmute Alber from October 2011 to March 2012. Among her research interests are care and social security relations, local state formations, kinship, social networks, and post-socialist transformations. While in Bayreuth, she gave a talk entitled "Den Staat verwandt machen: Praktiken und Imaginationen von Staat und Familie in Serbien" on 30 October 2012. From April to July 2012, **Ute Röschenhaler**, professor for ethnology at the University of Mainz, also substituted Erdmute Alber. Röschenhaler's research focuses principally on economic anthropology, the dissemination of cultural institutions, ethnography, media studies, advertising, life style studies, cultural heritage, intellectual property, social norms, and urban studies.



## Personalia



■ Since 4 August 2012 **Manfred von Roncador** is officially retired. Before joining the professorship Afrikanistik I in 1992 he studied Linguistics, Philosophy, Romanistik, Slavistik and Afrikanistik in Munich, Hamburg and Oldenburg where he completed his PhD in 1986. He taught at the Institute for German Studies at the University of Groningen and was a DAAD-Lecturer in Ouagadougou. Thanks to an affective collaboration with the DAAD, he was guest lecturer in Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Togo. Von Roncador co-initiated partnerships with some African universities, he co-supervised several master and advanced degree theses and followed up the work of many African junior researchers of whom five were admitted into BIGSAS and two have graduated. Since 1996 he has been a co-editor of the newsletter *Gur News* and co-organiser of the related conference whose fifth edition took place at the University of Bayreuth in July 2012. During this symposium it became obvious that von Roncador will be an active retiree. He is still an academic committee member of *Afrique et Langage* and *Letras e Ciências Sociais* and member of West African Languages Society and the Association of Africanists that he chaired from 2009 to 2012.

(Rémi Armand Tchokothe)



■ **Clarissa Vierke** received the research award (Wissenschaftspreis) from the University Association of Bayreuth (Universitätsverein). It is awarded annually to one outstanding post-doctoral researcher. On the occasion of this year's Dies Academicus, the chairman of the University Association, Horst Eggers, presented the award to Clarissa Vierke and highlighted Vierke's merits in ground-breaking and innovative research on languages and cultures of Eastern Africa. Vierke has been working on the cutting edge between linguistics and literary studies always taking into account the important view of African actors. She received her PhD as Junior Fellow of the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) with an excellent dissertation on classical Swahili poetry from Kenya. Since then, she has been extending her research focus on contemporary literary genres from East Africa and is currently working on an international interdisciplinary research project on language contacts in lusophone Africa (Mozambique). The University of Bayreuth has nominated her in 2012 for the renowned Heinz Maier - Leibnitz prize of the German Research Association (DFG),

## Guests



■ Visual artist, **Yassine Balbzioui**, whose work featured in the recent exhibiton "Aquitaine Afriques" at the Iwalewa-Haus, was invited as a visiting artist to conduct a workshop with children and youth in the context of the Iwalewa-Haus' Outreach Programme in the course of "Intercultural Week 2012", an initiative of the Federal State of Germany. His stay was funded via the governmental programme "Toleranz Fördern, Kompetenzen Stärken". While in Bayreuth, he worked with children from the centre for asylum seekers in the context of Iwalewa-Haus' emerging "KinderKunstClub". "Identity to rent" was the title and the guideline of the workshop. Facilitated by Balbzioui, children got to know and try art techniques such as painting, costume-making, and performance. Together, they curated an exhibition which was open to the public on 27 September 2012. The workshop met Iwalewa's guiding lines of being a *laboratory*, not only for artist but also in the sense of outreach and accessibility. A particular encouragement in this context was the participation of the Bayreuth public: local bus company Viol sponsored the transportation of the children's families to the vernissage and back. In the context of his stay as a guest, Yassine Balbzioui also gave public lectures about his artistic practice and discussed with staff, students and other interested guests. Balbzioui, a young prominent artist based in France and Morocco, challenges notions of migrancy and identity in his artistic practice.



■ The Angolan artist **Yonamine** was artist in residence at the Iwalewa-Haus from June to August 2012. During his stay, he worked on his project "Reichparteitagsgelände - Terrorismo Poetico", an aesthetic investigation of German history and language. He also presented aspects of his work in seminars and worked closely with BA and MA students. Yonamine is one of the most promising young artists from the Angolan contemporary art scene. He is at the forefront of formulating a new vision of a post-war society in the context of the ambivalence between economic power and social injustice. Moving between Luanda and Lisbon, he is also part of the generation of nomadic artists, using residencies like Bayreuth to find new themes to explore and new artistic strategies to develop his position towards art and history in general. He has been exhibited in various places including Venice, Bordeaux, Havana and Sao Paulo. The residency in Bayreuth was his first long stay in Germany.

■ **James Mafela**, Professor of African Languages at the University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa was at the University of Bayreuth in July-August, 2012 on a DAAD Scholarship for library research. His host in Bayreuth where he is not really a stranger anymore was Eckhard Breiting. James Mafela has been working on a lexicographic study about his Venda region and other projects in collaboration with the Berlin Mission there. He is a prize winning author writing in Venda.





■ **Onookome Okome** is professor at the Department of English and Film Studies at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Alberta, Canada. He visited Iwalewa-Haus in the context of an Alexander von Humboldt Research Award between June and August 2012. Here, he gave a presentation on “African cinema and the meaning of independence” in which he discussed two major streams of African cinema, i.e. African Francophone film and Nollywood, and their relation to the modes of European and American cinematic representation. He also worked on two book-length studies. One entitled *Nollywood, Cinema, Culture, Society and Modernity* and the other on *Onitsha Market Pamphlets*. During his stay in Bayreuth, he discussed the first steps in a joint research project with colleagues here on the influence of Nollywood on other independent African film markets.



■ **Jakub Barua**, one of Kenya’s finest filmmakers and photographers was guest at the Iwalewa-Haus in October 2012. He presented two of his films and talked about his perspective on Nairobi as an architectural enigma text. Barua graduated from the University of Warwick, UK and went on to study film directing at the National Film School in Lodz, Poland. His award-winning films have been screened at numerous film festivals around the world, and yet his work is little known in Kenya. His work is defined by sophisticated aesthetics and the exploration of memory and history through narrative forms, which happen to be important discourses for the Iwalewa-Haus and its own history and collection. Besides his art creation, Jakub Barua has also been engaged in arts management positions, e.g. as artistic director of a Warsaw-based TV station and as the festival director of the Zanzibar International Film Festival for 2005/6.



■ The media scholar **Claudio Manoel** was a guest at the Institute of African Studies in October 2012. He teaches audiovisual media at the Universidade Federal do Recôncavo de Bahia in Chachoeira; is the producer of the DJ-collective *Pragatecno*, and is a curatorial consultant for the art society Hansen Bahia and the cultural administration of the region. During his stay in Bayreuth, he curated the exhibitions ‘Recôncavo baiano – Videoclipe como mapeamento musical da cultura afro-brasileira’ and ‘Corpo, Afroculturas, Tecnologias’ at the Iwalewa-Haus and gave two lectures on media theory and practice. His visit was important in the context of the growing collaboration between the Iwalewa-Haus and universities in Brasil, which are also related in triangular networks with universities in Africa. At the Institute of African Studies, such a network is in the making between Chachoeira, Maputo and Bayreuth and is aimed at developing strategies and practices in research and teaching.



■ **Jessie Kabwila-Kapasula** was invited by Susan Arndt (English Studies and Anglophone Literatures) as visiting professor from April to July 2012. Kabwila-Kapasula is head of the Department of English at the Chancellor College of the University of Malawi and holds a PhD in Transnational Feminism in Comparative Literature from Binghamton University, New York. Her research interests include contemporary feminist and gender theories, African sexualities, African/Postcolonial theory, diasporic literature, women and film and cultural studies. She is a feminist who approaches feminism both as an academic and as an activist.

During her stay at the University of Bayreuth, she enriched the academic life and work with her expertise in all of these areas. The junior fellows of BIGSAS enjoyed her talk on “How to Really Do a Ph.D”. She also held public lectures entitled: “African and Afro-diasporic radical feminist agency: Interrogating selected texts of Adichie, Dangaremba and Danticat” and “‘Sanitising’ the Nation? Interrogating Malawi’s legal and policy discourse on sexual minorities”. Through her participation in the BIGSAS Diversity Programme’s *Salongespräch* she offered practical strategies on how to overcome structures of power and conventions within the academia and beyond, in her talk: “The Joys of an African Feminist Academic Activist: Unpacking Jessie’s Path to Scholarship and Leadership”. Also highly appreciated was her input in the BIGSAS Festival of African and African-Diasporic Literatures, “Remembering Flash Forward: African Literatures as Poetics in Motion”.

■ **Chukwuma Okoye**, Professor and Head of the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, University of Ibadan, was the guest of Eckhard Breiting between September and October 2012 as an Alexander von Humboldt returning scholar. Chukwuma Okoye has been working on a book length study of Igbo masquerades. His manuscript *The Body of my Friend: Liminal Presences in Igbo Masquerade Theatre* is forthcoming in the Bayreuth African Studies series edited by Eckhard Breiting. In his research, Chukwuma Okoye looks at masquerades primarily under performative aspects. He is also a widely recognised playwright. He won the Association of Nigerian Authors’ drama prize for his play *We the Beast* (1991).





■ **Adams Bodomo**, Associate Professor in the Department of Linguistics at the School of Humanities, University of Hong Kong and Director of the University's African Studies Programme, spent three months, from April to June 2012, at the Institute of African Studies (IAS), the University of Bayreuth. He was invited by Manfred von Roncador. While in Bayreuth, Adams Bodomo worked on a project about the Dagaare language in Ghana.

His research centers on general linguistics, syntax, semantics, computer-mediated communication, digital humanities, and African studies. He is the author/editor of over 10 books on diverse linguistic topics, including language typology, e.g. *The Structure of Dagaare* (1997, CSLI) and lexicography, e.g. *A Dagaare-Cantonese-English Lexicon for Lexicographical Field Research Training* (2004, Köppe). His recent book, *Africans in China: A Sociocultural Study and its Implications on Africa-China Relations* (2012, Cambria Press) focuses on his most recent research interest, i.e. the vibrant emerging diaspora of Africans in China; being part of a new direction in linguistics which he refers to as 'diaspora linguistics'. He elaborated on this during his talk entitled "Africans in China: Language use in Africa's newest diaspora" in the Linguistic Colloquium.

He will be nearer to Bayreuth in the future, since he has been appointed full professor for African Studies at the University of Vienna, Austria, thus allowing for more frequent exchanges with colleagues in Bayreuth. Besides enjoying research and teaching in Bayreuth, he also took a vivid interest in Franconian and German culture and took time off to explore the nearer and farther landscape during his daring hiking and trekking expeditions.

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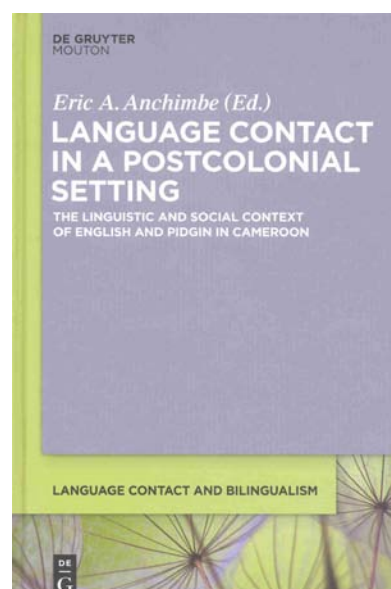
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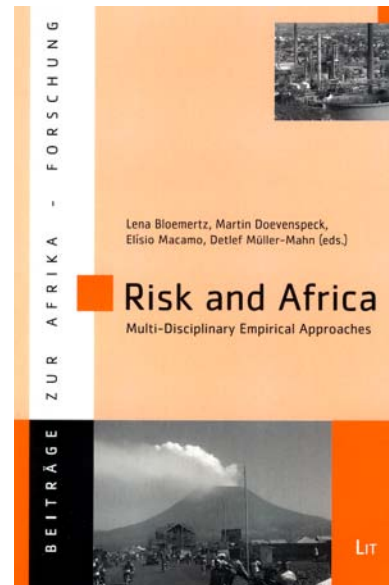
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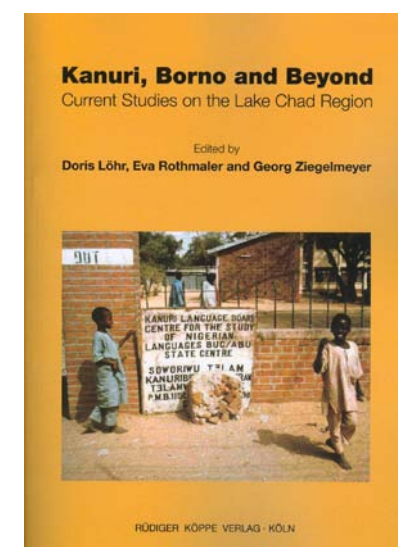
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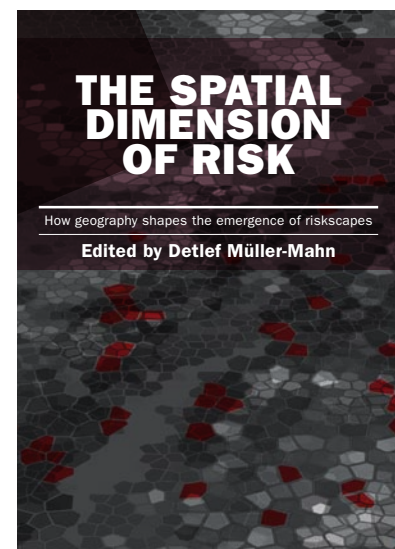
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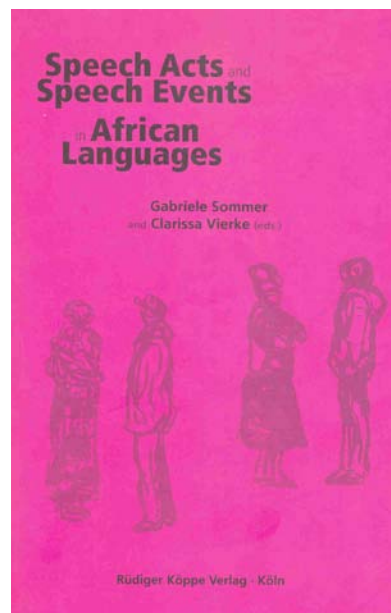
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## Child fosterage in the context of ethnic heterogeneity in Benin

Jeannett Martin, ethnologist at the University of Bayreuth, has been conducting research on the project "Child fosterage in the context of ethnic heterogeneity (Borgu, Benin)" financed by the DFG during the periods of June 2009 - June 2010 and April 2011 - March 2012. Borgu, situated in Northern Benin, is a region of ethnic heterogeneity and fluidity. Here, the social practice of child fostering is widespread. This research project is a comparative study of the practice, norms and forms of child fostering among three 'ethnic' groups in the Borgu, namely, Fée, Fulbe and Gando. The aim is to gain insights into the numeric relevance and the range of variation with regard to cultural notions and forms of child upbringing within these groups. An integrated comparison of rural and urban environments will provide further information



▲ Pullo Djon Wuro with children, region of Kalale (Northern Benin), 2010. (Martin)

on the transformations of the social practice under the conditions of urban life. Furthermore, the project also investigates the various forms of child fostering between members of different

ethnic groups and the interrelation between notions and practices of child fostering on the one hand and ethnic identities on the other.

(Erdmute Alber)



## The Estate of Ulli Beier



The estate of Ulli Beier also called Obotunde Ijimere, the founding director of the Iwalewa-Haus, now resides in Bayreuth since April 2012. Here the estate will be digitized as part of DEVA – Archive and Database System for African Studies at the University of Bayreuth and also as part of the Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding (CBCIU), Osogbo, Nigeria. For the first time, the collection of diverse material was inspected and assembled. Besides Ulli Beier's private library, the estate contains various publications from the early days of the

Iwalewa-Haus and several editions of the literary journal, *Black Orpheus: A Journal of African and Afro-American Literature*, founded in 1957 by Janheinz Jahn and Ulli Beier. There are also over 30 folders containing articles mainly from the *Nigeria Magazine*, as well as newspaper articles about exhibitions and artists. Apart from these, there are 41 digitalised compendiums of archived material covering different topics. The estate also includes Ulli Beier's photo archive which consists of slides, negatives and photographs, showing objects of the Iwalewa-Haus' collection, various

ceremonies, and architecturally-interesting buildings. A number of film reels (8mm) and video tapes are available which document the work of Georgina and Ulli Beier as well as many other artists. The estate, in its multifaceted nature, portrays the wide range of interests the Beiers had in Africa and the arts. Musical CDs complement the unique and diversified composition of the estate. After the itemisation and the indexing of the estate, it will be made available for research and teaching just like the Iwalewa-Haus' collection itself.

(Sigrid Horsch-Albert)



## "Mashing Up the Archive" - Iwalewa-Haus Curator Fellowship

The German Federal Cultural Foundation (Kulturstiftung des Bundes) is funding an 18-month residency of the Kenyan artist and curator, Sam Hopkins, at the Iwalewa-Haus. With the help of the guest curator, vacant buildings will be used as venues for a mini festival. The project aims to increase public awareness on African cultures and the conditions of Africans living in the diaspora. Together with the University of Bayreuth, the

fellow will critically examine the 600 pieces of the Iwalewa-Haus collection along with the archived material. The goal of the mashing up project is to have this material viewed from a different perspective and presented in new contexts. Despite increased efforts in creating awareness, when the German public encounters African art today, they still view it as something rather exotic. Conceived as a "contact zone" in the 1990s, the Iwalewa-Haus museum is not lim-

ited to one specific building; the artworks are displayed around town in places marked by political and social tensions. In this way, the limited physical space of the museum is allowed to expand into the public sphere of everyday life in the city of Bayreuth. Through this project, the Iwalewa-Haus is at the same time investigating its own archive from a new perspective and also exploring new spaces for art in Bayreuth.

(Nadine Siegert)

## DEVA project: Saving the musical heritage of Cameroon's modernity

In June 2012, the official inauguration of the project to digitise the audio treasure of the Cameroon Radio archives took place at the residence of the German ambassador in Yaounde, the capital of Cameroon. It is a joint enterprise between the CRTV (Cameroon Radio and Television Corporation), the Iwalewa-Haus, and DEVA (Central Archive and Database System for African Studies at the University of Bayreuth).

The CRTV archives own thousands of hours of modern music from Cameroon on reel and reel tapes. These magnetic tapes – some of which are forty or fifty years of age – are in danger as the substance is deteriorating bit by bit and this may result in the total loss of the recorded music. The radio, for a long time, served as the only recording studio for many artists and orchestras. Today, several years after, it turns out that these recordings might have been the only existing sound documents or recordings of certain groups, orchestras or singers. Of course, the music recording

industry in Cameroon did record and publish music, but as anywhere else, not all of the country's vibrant and diversified musical output has been recorded.

After digitising these tapes, the radio will again be able to broadcast some of the entirely forgotten tunes and will once more thrill the public with a full history of Cameroonian music. The ongoing project is being carried out by Joachim Oelsner, who may well be regarded as one of the few highly knowledgeable specialists of Cameroonian music and music history. The CRTV applied for this project, funded by the Cultural Preservation Section (Kulturerhalt) of the German Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt) in Berlin, through François Bingono Bingono, a senior journalist with CRTV. The Goethe-Institute and the German Embassy in Yaounde have been instrumental in facilitating this venture. In Bayreuth, Wolfgang Bender, Professor of Ethnic-musicology and Sarah Böllinger (DEVA) are responsible for the project.

The benefit of the cooperation for DEVA, the University of Bayreuth is obvious: It offers to house the data in its long term storage facilities and guarantees constant servicing. This enables anybody worldwide to consult the database and receive information on Cameroonian music which until now was unknown out of the country. The "metadata" may help to promote many musicians and singers from Cameroon.

To allow the Cameroonian public to profit from the digitised data itself, an access point will be set up at the entrance into the CRTV broadcasting house in Yaounde for visitors and the rest of the public who may be interested in it. A website is presently being constructed to accompany the work in progress. Selected music titles and artists will be identified on whom the public will be asked to participate in adding comments, updates, stories, etc. about the artists and singers, or completing and translating their song lyrics.

(Wolfgang Bender)



## Views of the World / Imagens do Mundo

### Films from the Archive of INAC. DVD-Edition of Historical Film Material of INAC (Maputo)

In cooperation with the National Institute of Audiovisual and Cinema in Maputo (Mozambique), ICMA (Instituto Cultural Mozambicano-Alemão), and the FCLS of the University Eduardo Mondlane, Ute Fendler (Romance Studies) edited historical film material of the archives of INAC. Ten episodes of the newsreel Kuxa Kanema of the early 1980s, the first feature film “Mueda, Memoria e Massacre” by Ruy Guerra and the docu-



mentary “Canta meu Irmão” give an insight into the early film production of Mozambique. The project was funded by the programme “Kulturhalt” of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

More information: [www.arcadia-film.de/en/index.php/projects/multimedia\\_installation/o\\_mundo\\_em\\_imagens\\_dvd\\_edition\\_mit\\_filmen\\_aus\\_mosambik](http://www.arcadia-film.de/en/index.php/projects/multimedia_installation/o_mundo_em_imagens_dvd_edition_mit_filmen_aus_mosambik)

(Ute Fendler)

◀ The DVD of the edited film material “Views of the World” (Fendler)  
▼ Some of the film reels used in the DVD project (Fendler)



## Family resources and relationships in West Africa

Since 2009, Erdmute Albert and Tabea Häberlein (University of Bayreuth) have been running the DFG-funded project entitled “Inner family resource flows and intergenerational relationships in West Africa”. Intergenerational relationships and particularly the changes of the role and status of elderly people in north eastern Togo (Kabiye), north western Benin (Lokpa) and north eastern Benin (Baatombu) are at the centre of interest of this research project. The focus lies

on resource flows between the generations, especially those resources which ensure the supply for the elderly. The research on intergenerational relationships in Africa is accompanied by various discourses on power, status and prestige of old people. To critically analyse these clichés, the research project conducted quantifying surveys in three villages over a period of one year (2009-2010) with the objective of investigating intergenerational familial resource flows. The comparison

of the three case studies yielded interesting findings on national and regional distinctions about familial intergenerational supply. Re-flows from towns or other diasporas into the rural area were also considered. Furthermore, the project used qualitative research methods to investigate the social construction of age and intergenerational relationships, the changing roles of the old as well as their power and status positions within the families.

(Erdmute Alber)

## BIGSAS Football teams: A little bit of play after work

Gradually, BIGSAS is already being known around Bayreuth not only as an academic centre of excellence but also as a football team – also aspiring as usual for excellence. BIGSAS FC, the JFs, SFs and friends of BIGSAS men's team, was officially created in 2011, and has since been involved in a number of competitions. The women's BIGSAS FC team has also been active, being a great attraction in the Hof Garten where they regularly train on Sundays. Though we label the teams as men's and women's, the teams very often are indeed mixed – a solid take-off point of BIGSAS' new ‘Diversity Programme’. We thank BIGSAS for providing the necessary support.

BIGSAS FC takes part in the Wilde Liga football league organised by the City of Bayreuth. In 2012, we played in the first division of the league against nine other teams and finished sixth on the league table. Our trophy shelf is gradually growing with two trophies already won: the Nürnberg African Festival tournament 2010 and the University of Bayreuth Beach Soccer Interkulturelle Doppelpass tournament in June 2012. We are poised for more exciting adventures in 2013. For instance, we are currently planning a match with the Polizeipräsidium Oberfranken – whom BIGSAS visited last year.

Our colours are orange and green both representing our positive disposition for the future and our love for an ever-green planet earth. There is always space for new members in the teams: we, therefore, invite friends of BIGSAS, to join us.

(Eric Anchimbe)



▲ University of Bayreuth Beach Soccer Interkulturelle Doppelpass tournament  
▼ BIGSAS FC before a Wilde Liga Match (Cheikh)





## Aesthetic body modifications and beauty in Istanbul



▲ A billboard in Istanbul (Liebelt)

In August 2012, the DFG approved funding for Claudia Liebelt's research project on "Aesthetic Body Modifications and Femininity in a Global City: Cultures of Beauty in Istanbul". Drawing from anthropological research, most importantly participant observation in selected clinics and beauty salons in different urban neighbourhoods, as well as narrative interviews with urban residents in various social positions, the research project ethnographically investigates the cultural meanings and the social embeddedness of aesthetic body modifications and femininity in a complex urban place – Istanbul. By this, the project seeks to

contribute to our understanding of culturally informed, gendered bodily practices in their (urban) diversity, in defiance of the assumption of increasingly standardised beauty norms and images in an age of globalisation. Moreover, rather than assuming an increased commodification of individual bodies or body parts, transforming practices of aesthetic body modification will, in this research, be linked to transforming modes of subjectivity and citizenship. Considering beauty salons as social spaces, and aesthetic surgery as social events, as a starting point, this research project seeks to investigate cultural imagina-

tions of morality, public space, modernity, citizenship, technology and health in their relation to changing forms of gender and kinship in a global city. From the background of an increasingly self-confident public presence of women and a new Muslim middle class, the project attempts to provide a more complex analysis of Turkish society, fill significant gaps in the academic literature, and contribute original ethnographic data to contemporary debates on the role of the body in globalised consumer capitalism. The project has been approved for 36 months and will begin in September 2013.

(Erdmute Alber)

## 'Football-migration' – A dream of Europe



▲ Football talents of a professional soccer academy in Ghana. (Ungruhe)

Erdmute Alber and Christian Ungruhe are currently researching the phenomenon depicted in the title "Football-migration' – A dream of Europe and its impact on the image of Africans in Europe". This project has been running since 2009 and is funded by The Bavarian State Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts and the Migration and Knowledge Research Network (Formig). For a while now, football has provided young Africans the possibility of going to Europe in order to achieve a better standard of living. Although only a few actually make it to the top, the dream of Europe is ubiquitous among all young talents whether they are playing in clubs, soccer academies or simply on the streets. However, media re-

ports exclusively focus on certain problematic issues linked to the phenomenon, for instance, the accusations of human trafficking by supposed agents, the talent-drain in the African communities and the danger of racist attacks in Europe. Little is known about the actors' or footballers' perspective in the process of football-migration. The aim of this project, therefore, has been to explore the footballers' agency in this process.

The major research questions include: How do young Africans develop strategies to gain football-related knowledge that may lead to contracts with European clubs? What kind of migratory paths do young talents use and how do these paths differ from other forms of migration? How does the communication

of football-related knowledge in Europe at professional and amateur levels reflect and contribute to images of Africa? Fieldwork is conducted in Ghana, South Africa and Germany mostly using qualitative research methods. The overall objective is to examine the formation, transfer and articulation of football-related knowledge among street footballers and young talents in football academies. Data is collected using participant-observation, biographical interviews with African professional and amateur players in Germany and expert interviews with player agents, coaches and other football functionaries. In this context, a key objective is to include male and female perspectives.

(Erdmute Alber)



## Cinema Africa 2012

### A season of recent films from Africa



◀ Filmmakers, Akin Omotoso (L), Joao Ribeiro (R), and Senegalese film critic and editor of *Africane*, Thierno Dia (C) in front of Cineplex Bayreuth shortly before the projection of *Man on Ground*. (Fendler)

After the resounding success of the past years, Cinema Africa was back again last November in Cineplex Bayreuth with a hilarious mix of feature and documentary films from and about Africa. The 2012 edition of Cinema Africa presented recent films from Africa that projected a mixture of genre elements dealing with political and social issues. Taking the form of a political thriller, *Un pas en avant: Les dessous de la corruption* by Sylvestre Amoussou (France/Benin 2010) critically exposes the level of corruption in international circles. In the film, *O último voo do flamingo – The last flight of the flamingo* (Mozambique, 2010), the Mozambican director Joao Ribeiro merges criminal investigation with traditional narrative forms yielding a compact political thriller spiced with elements of magical realism.

The Nigerian filmmaker Akin Omotoso's *Man on Ground* (South Africa, 2012), revisits the 2010 hate attacks in South Africa from the perspective of two immigrant Nigerian brothers. A new variant of the concept of homecoming, i.e. from the USA to Africa, is handled in the film *Tey – Today* (Senegal/France, 2011) by the Franco-Senegalese filmmaker Alain Gomis. The loaded themes of the political and social films were lightened by the Moroccan comedy *The Mosque* (2010) by Daoud Aoulad-Syad, which is a critical reflection of the meaning of cinema. The film illustrates the blurred boundaries between fiction and reality as well as illusion and existence. The political documentary film *Our Beloved Sudan* (2011) by the young film director Taghreed Elsanhoury illustrates the recent history of Sudan, focusing on the origins of the conflict and the emergence of the new nation, South Sudan.

Additional projections and discussions with the film directors gave the opportunity for deeper insight into issues of aesthetics, themes and production. Parallel to the discussions of the films in Cineplex, three directors namely Sylvestre Amoussou, Akin Omotoso and Joao Ribeiro, held talks with various audiences in which they gave insights into their other and future productions.

(Ute Fendler)

[www.cinemaafrica.uni-bayreuth.de](http://www.cinemaafrica.uni-bayreuth.de)



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

### Legal scholars from Dar es Salaam and Bayreuth prepare the ground for the future of the TGCL

The East African Community, founded in 2000 by Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, and extended in 2007 to include Burundi and Rwanda, plays a growing role in the region both in the economic and the political spheres. Consequently, legal expertise on the law of regional integration is increasingly required by lawyers in Eastern Africa. The TGCL fills a gap by providing legal training specifically in regional integration law in Eastern Africa.

During its four and a half years of operation, the TGCL has acquired the reputation of being an expert institution in the field of regional integration law, with special regard to the law of the East African Community (EAC). As a consequence, the former name of Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law has been changed to Tanzanian-German Centre for Eastern African Legal Studies.

Several TGCL planning workshops were held in 2012 to explore ways of ensuring that the TGCL will become the leading institution for regional integration law in Eastern Africa with respect to both research and teaching. As the TGCL is a joint project of the two partner Universities of Bayreuth and Dar es Salaam, the workshops were devoted to an intensive exchange of ideas and plans for the future of the TGCL between members of the two Universities. The workshops were hosted by TGCL Project Leader Ulrike Wanitzek and the Managers of the TGCL in

Germany, Christian Kirchen (till October 2012) and Johannes Döveling LL.M. (from November 2012). The TGCL Coordinator in Tanzania, Kennedy Gastorn, participated in all these workshops.

During the first planning workshop in January 2012, Gordon R. Woodman, the TGCL Programme Adviser from the University of Birmingham School of Law, joined the TGCL team and contributed to the deliberations. The agenda consisted mainly of an analysis of the evaluation results, after the TGCL had been evaluated at the end of 2011, and action to be taken in the light of these results.

The second round of planning discussions took place in August 2012 with Josaphat L. Kanywanyi, Professor emeritus of the University of Dar es Salaam School of Law, and Khoti C. Kamanga, Coordinator of the Centre for the Study of Forced Migration at the School of Law; Benedict T. Mapunda, and Rita A. Mwaipopo, then Coordinator Postgraduate Studies of the School of Law. The discussions centred around measures to make the TGCL self-sustaining after the end of the current period of funding by the German Foreign Office through the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

In November 2012, Michael B. Wambali, Head of the Department of Public Law, Luitfried X. Mbunda, and Hamudi I. Majamba,



Head of the Department of Private Law, visited Bayreuth for the final workshop of the year. The major topics of the discussions included the future organisational structure of the TGCL and its position as an autonomous unit within the University of Dar es Salaam School of Law.

During these visits, academic contacts with professors of the Faculty of Law, Business Administration and Economics of the University of Bayreuth were established and deepened. Torsten Kühlmann and Andreas Remer looked into the possibility of adding an interdisciplinary component in the area of business administration and economics to the TGCL study programme. Proposals for teaching and research on the harmonisation of national laws in the fields of consumer protection law and intellectual property law were discussed with Martin Schmidt-Kessel and Michael Grünberger.

(Ulrike Wanitzek)



## Bayreuth African Studies at the 2012 Münchner Wissenschaftstage



▲ Serah Kiragu (L), Müller-Mahn (R) and BR journalist Florian Hildebrand at the Münchner Wissenschaftstage 2012 (Bucher)

African Studies at the University of Bayreuth took an active role in this year's Münchner Wissenschaftstage held from 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012 in Munich. Detlef Müller-Mahn, the Chair of Social Geography, and Serah Kiragu, a doctoral student at BIGSAS, led a debate about Africa's population growth based on the guiding question: "Population growth and climate change in Africa: Do we understand the problem?" In the course of the interaction, the team from the University of Bayreuth shed light on the complexity of Africa's food security challenges, beyond the simple causal link to population growth and climate change.

Since her research in BIGSAS centres on ways of adapting to current and future climate risks

in Kenya's semi arid rural areas, Serah Kiragu provided first hand details on the role local perceptions, knowledge and adaptive capacity play in this domain. She backed this with knowledge and experience gathered while working as Senior Programme Officer in charge of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation with the International Union for Conservation of Nature at its Eastern Africa regional office in Nairobi. Projects such as the Pangani Climate Change Adaptation project (Tanzania) and the Environmental Assessment Capacity Building project (East and Southern Africa), which she was involved in, also tackle issues of population growth, climate change and food, water security.

In addition, Müller-Mahn and

Kiragu emphasised the benefits of researching Africa together with African researchers – a major priority of the Institute of African Studies.

The Münchner Wissenschaftstage is a four-day annual event that brings together scientists and researchers to talk about scientific and technical issues to a general audience. This year's evening event was moderated by Florian Hildebrand, a science journalist with the Bayerische Rundfunk. The multi-dimensional approaches to understanding the challenges of food security in Africa were well received by the audience, confirming the vital ingredient that the University of Bayreuth African Studies has to add to science and policy debates.

(Serah Kiragu)

## The Makings and Uses of Motor Roads

*In the days from June 7 to 9, 2012, the charming Thurnau Castle served as the venue for the international workshop The Makings and Uses of Motor Roads. The workshop brought together scholars who pursue anthropological, sociological and historical research on the social worlds emerging on, and alongside, the motor road.*

Sixteen papers, along with a film screening, were presented by participants coming from England, Germany, Ghana, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Scotland, Sudan, Switzerland, and the USA. The workshop was organised by the research project "Roadside and Travel Communities: Towards an Understanding of the African Long-distance Road" based at the Universities of Bayreuth and Frankfurt. The funding was made available by the SPP 1448 "Creativity and Adaptation in Africa" of the German Research Foundation, the University of Bayreuth, and BIGSAS.

The main thread of the workshop followed from the observation that motor roads, together with the rules and conventions for using them, are quite literally cultural constructions. In many regions across the globe, road-making and road use draw from North Atlantic models. However, beyond (and beside) the mere functional surface of motor roads, a wide field emerges that invites quotidian road users to appropriate and reconfigure the spaces of the road and its road-sides in various creative ways. The workshop presentations, while covering a wide range of regions, themes and approaches, all centred on these creative processes and practices of road-making and road use, yielding a wealth of ethnographic materials, historical insights, and novel theoretical approaches.

Framed by an introduction and



a final discussion, the workshop presentations were grouped together into six sessions, dealing with topics that ranged from communities formed on and along the road, to issues of road cultures, road safety and road construction, through to conceptual juxtapositions of movement, speed, space, power and modernity.

The first session assembled three papers on roadside com-

▲ A typical full-loaded truck (Stasik) munities, starting with two analyses drawing on research in Ghana: Michael Stasik (Bayreuth) on the manifold polyrhythms that structure an urban bus station, and Gabriel Klaeger (Frankfurt) on the various spatio-temporally adjusted strategies of road side vendors. The first workshop day was com-



pleted by Kurt Beck's (Bayreuth) ethnography of the harbour-like institution of desert truck stops in western Sudan.

In the second session, the focus shifted to travelling communities. Rami Wadelnour (Bayreuth) discussed diverse techniques Sudanese lorry drivers employ in order to navigate the adverse environments of desert tracks. Continuing on the theme of long-distance travel, Sven Kirschlager (Berlin) described the role of musicians performing inside Mexican busses who transform the vehicles into concert stages, thereby turning the loosely related groups of passengers into audiences aligned in their experience of movements, sounds and alluring lyrics.

Session three started with Tanya Argounova-Low's (Aberdeen) discussion of the intriguing driving practice of 'drifting' performed by youth in urban Siberia. She carried out a comprehensive analysis of post-Soviet car-cultures centred around speed, risk and individualism. Taking up the dialectics of audacity and freedom, Erik Bähre (Leiden) gave a historiographic account of the liberties and the strictures members of South Africa's rivalling taxi associations operate in since the last years of Apartheid rule to present times. Jamal J. Elias (Pennsylvania) closed the session with a presentation on Pakistan's 'queens of the roads', the sumptuously decorated busses and lorries traversing the country. Accompanied by a great many stunning images, he analysed the road as a stage on which social class and aspirations are constructed and performed.

The following session shifted from road cultures to issues of danger and safety on the road. Osman M. Osman (Khartoum) gave a meticulous description of Sudanese policies promoting road safety, comparing these, appropriately as it is, with a 'perforated water bag'. Drawing on a rich repertoire of observations of road interactions in urban Ethiopia, Rodolfo Soares (Lisbon) contrasted the apparent dangers of roads with many pedestrians' apparent ignorance of these dangers. Michael Bürge (Zurich) analysed the ambivalent character of improved roads in Sierra Leone: as tarred roads bring forth many economic merits, thus securing opportunities, they simultaneously increase the risks of accidents, thus engendering insecurities.

Session five dealt with the broad themes of road making, space and society. Samuel A. Ntewusu (Accra) discussed the construction of a major trunk road that linked the northern region of the colonial Gold Coast with the country's south, unravelling its manifold consequences in terms of economy and trade, power and domination, labour, migration and pathogenesis. Capturing similarly complex dynamics of road-making in a present-day setting, Luca Ciabbarri (Milan), focusing on a major economic corridor between Ethiopia and Somaliland, investigated the processes of road construction as a form of spatial transformation that engenders changes in social landscapes and relations as well. Finally, Mark Lamont's (London) paper aptly concluded the session with the proposal of an 'anthropology of

infrastructure'. Departing from the question in whose ownership roads are and elaborating the answer through an ethnography of a squalid road in rural Kenya, he challenged various major 'functionality'-discourses of policy planners and policy makers.

The last workshop day was commenced by Christian Ungruhe (Bayreuth). By way of a careful ethnographic elaboration of the minutiae of commercial load carriers around bus stations in urban Ghana, he proposed a thesis on the crucial relation between mobility and modernity. The last paper, presented by Erdmute Alber (Bayreuth), carried forward this connection through an ample review of anthropological literature dealing with mobility, relating it to concepts of power, material culture, and resources.

In the closing session, workshop chair Kurt Beck rounded up the three days of presentations and discussions by carving out the main thematic and conceptual threads and positioning the workshop findings within the still incipient field of studies on (auto-)mobilities. Up to now, this field is dominated by works whose empirical scope seldom reaches beyond mobilities in North Atlantic regions. The widening of the empirical basis beyond European and North American practices of road-making and road use – as propounded in the workshop papers – thus yields the long-pending reconceptualisation of a theoretical framework for understanding the world's diverse and vibrant road realities.

(Michael Stasik)

## Bayreuth Alumni return to Eldoret ... and encounter Maseno

*When the Institute of African Studies applied for funding through the German Academic Exchange Service's (DAAD) programme for international alumni networks back in 2009, there was no indication that this initiative would be the starting point for a success story.*

Through a first DAAD grant, a sequel of workshops were held in 2009 and 2010 at two partner universities in Africa and in Bayreuth (cf. NAB Vol. X, 2010, p.44, and Vol. XI, 2011, p. 44), and from these emerged a core group of dedicated alumni networkers, mainly from the humanities (linguistics, literature, and media studies). It was with their encouragement that Dieter Neubert, Professor of Development Sociology, and Uli Bauer from the Department of Intercultural German Studies, decided to reapply, when the DAAD published a new round of their international alumni network-funding scheme. Their concept once more convinced the reviewers and international networking at the University of Bayreuth has entered the next phase, and found new and strong partners.

### Extending the alumni and partner network

Africa-related alumni activities started off with a vision: to bring together former researchers from the large third-party funded research projects (such as the special research field "Cultural Identity in Africa", SFB 214), guest lecturers and researchers from IAS, the Iwalewa-Haus, and various departments of the university, as well as graduates (mainly PhD) from African countries and throughout the



▲ Bayreuth Alumni in Eldoret, Kenya (IAS)

University of Bayreuth. In the meantime, this circle has been extended for obvious reasons. An ever-increasing number of scholars are graduating through the new Africa-related BA and MA programmes, through BIG-SAS, as well as through the Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law (TGCL). The latter have even founded their Alumni Association (cf. NAB Vol. XI, 2011, p. 51).

In addition, the University of Bayreuth has recognised the benefits of an extensive international alumni network: former associates of the university are often engaged in key positions at international institutions of higher education, both in academic and in administrative capacities. Keeping in touch with former "Bayreuthians" may open new channels for recruitment of talented young scholars, as well as for identifying trends in research and collaboration. Since 2011, Bayreuth Alumni International has become an integral part of the International Office. Initiated by Arnim Heinemann, Head of the International Office, the concept

was rewarded by winning the ideas competition "Research Alumni of German Universities", announced by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). One of the core elements of the emerging network are regional "clusters" of Bayreuth Alumni, with a focus on Southeastern Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. In September 2012, a first Regional Network was founded in the context of a conference hosted at Shanghai International Studies University.

### Workshops and Conferences in Kenya

November 2012 witnessed a series of events that have moved trans-regional networking for African Alumni yet one more step ahead. On 1 November 2012, a colloquium brought together scholars from five universities to determine challenges for German Studies and German as a Foreign Language in the region of Eastern



Africa. The occasion was well timed to announce the start of a new DAAD-funded Masters programme in German at the University of Nairobi, with participants from several African countries. In the wake of this colloquium, that incorporated contributions by Bayreuth Alumni from Germany, Kenya, Uganda, and Burkina Faso, the annual IAS Alumni Workshop opened at Moi University Eldoret on 5 November 2012. The opening "International Office Day" was hosted by Bobby Wishitemi (DVC Research and Extension, MU), Stefan Jablonski ("Vizepräsident" for Studies and Teaching, UB) and Arnim Heinemann (Head of International Office, UB), and was dedicated to excellent German-Kenyan partnership and the new Bayreuth International Alumni Centre (BIAC). The latter was strengthened when the participants jointly established a Regional Alumni Network for Eastern and Southern Africa and elected Florence Indede (Maseno University) as its co-ordinator.

The seven days witnessed an intensive workshop on "Opportunities and chances of new media: Utilising new media and technologies in research and teaching". Anybody who may have thought that "new" (digital) ICT would prove a bad choice, considering poor internet accessibility, unreliable power supplies, and other (mainly technical) barriers, was proven wrong! African countries and societies are subject to the same processes of change and innovation that mobile computers, smartphones and other devices have triggered for example in industrialised countries in Europa, the Ameri-

cas, and Asia. The spread of mobile telephones has an impact on literacy in Burkina Faso (paper presented by Jean-Claude Naba), as well as on pastoral nomads in Ethiopia by providing an easy and quick access to information on pastures and water supplies, as well as the prices on the regional meat markets (Kelemerwork Reda Tafere). Maseno University (Kenya) has recently built up an eCampus and courses are taught through a web-based Learning Management System (LMS), thereby providing new opportunities for distance learning and extending their services to employed professionals throughout the country (Betty Ogange and Beatrice Akoth Okoth). How new technologies affect the work of researchers in the field could be learnt from papers presented by Gratien Atindogbé (Cameroon) and Peter Narh (Ghana/BIGSAS). On the one hand, they facilitate documentation (e.g. of endangered languages or of oral narration), but overly modern gadgets (video cameras, tripods, microphones, and high-performance batteries) can cause research partners to "clam up". Experiences from foreign language classrooms show that teachers have become creative, for example, by drawing on their student's obligatory mobile telephone (some even possess more than one phone!) and rely on these resources for information dissemination, when it comes to handing in assignments, for web research (e.g. for presentations and papers), and so on (William Wagaba, Margaret Nanfuka Mbalule). These are just a few examples of exciting insights into

the imaginative appropriation of "new" technologies and media in highly diverse, and often challenging, contexts that were provided during the workshop.

After starting off at Moi University Eldoret, the group of thirty participants and organisers from eight African countries and Germany, moved on to Kisumu, where the concluding part was hosted by Maseno University. An excursion day enriched the group with multiple impressions of the rich cultural heritage and natural beauty of equatorial Kenya. And there was plenty of time to socialise!

#### The way ahead

At the point of writing this, it is possible to look back at an eventful year in terms of international alumni networking. Two regional networks have been established, and the respective coordinators are inviting all interested alumni to contact them and help to create thriving organisations. In the spring of 2013, yet another alumni workshop will be held, this time in West Africa, to be precise: in Lomé (Togo), in conjunction with local alumni and partners. At this event, the Bayreuth International Office is planning to inaugurate a corresponding regional network for West and Central Africa. A call for papers will be circulated shortly. And to conclude on the initiatives funded by the DAAD in 2012 and 2013, a stakeholder workshop will bring together alumni from Africa and China in the autumn of 2013 at the University of Bayreuth. Thus, there will be more opportunities to report on international alumni activities in future!

(Uli Bauer)

## Iwalewa-Haus Outreach projects



This year, the Iwalewa-Haus engaged in a number of initiatives which connect its work stronger with the city of Bayreuth and its residents – and contribute to bridging the gap which tends to exist between academic work and public interest.

In 2012, the annual Iwalewa-Haus summer street party was held under the motto NEIGHBOURHOOD CELEBRATION – celebrating the shared space of Münzgasse with the neighbours of the Jewish community. The programme of the day was diverse including talks and music but centred on the topic of Sephardic cultures. In the morning, two city tours were organised which gave insights into the city space of Bayreuth first with the focus on Jewish life, and the second, guided by BIGSAS junior fellows Peter Narh and Gilbert Ndi Shang, with focus on the

▲ Children during the "KinderKunstClub" facilitated by Yassine Balbzioui (Fink)

connections of Bayreuth to the African continent. Afterwards, Fredereck Musall, Professor at the Hochschule für Jüdische Studien, Heidelberg, gave a talk on "Sephardic narratives in popular culture", which was followed by a concert by Stuttgart-based band 'Asamblea Mediterranea'. This successful cooperation will be continued in the next years given its particular importance since Münzgasse 9 will be home to the Jewish community when the Iwalewa-Haus eventually moves down the street into its new building.

Another initiative of the Iwalewa-Haus focuses on children: every four weeks, the Iwalewa-Haus staff hosts the "KinderKunstClub" – an art club for children which emerged from a workshop facilitated by visiting artist Yassine Balbzioui. After the

workshop, the kids wished to 'come back' to Iwalewa-Haus. So, the once-off engagement with the kids – 6-15 years old, most of them living with their families at the asylum seekers' home in Bayreuth – grew into a commitment that extends the Iwalewa-Haus' portfolio as an institution situated within Bayreuth and as a space for diverse communities. The "KinderKunstClub" is facilitated by Nadine Siegert and Katharina Fink with the help of students and visiting artists and is held based on the conviction that art can play a social role and is for everyone. A further aim is to provide children direct access to excellent artists and artistic material. Interested parents can get more information from, or sign their kids up via: [fri.fink@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:fri.fink@uni-bayreuth.de).

(Katharina Fink)



## World Congress of African Linguistics



After Cologne in 2009, the seventh World Congress of African Linguistics (WOCAL) took place on Cameroon's greenest university campus: Buea. From 20-24 August 2012, more than 200 participants from all over the world took part in the conference chaired by Pius Tamanji and Gratien Atindogbé, Associate Professors of African Linguistics at the Universities of Yaounde I and Buea respectively.

In addition to six plenaries and several poster sessions, the substantial amount of panels provided participants with a broad view of completed, ongoing and future research projects cutting across phonology, syntax, sociolinguistics, language documentation and development as well as translation studies and African Sign Language. A major highlight of the WOCAL, in addition to the workshop on African Sign Language, was the memorable presentation given by two specialists of African Sign Language namely Godele de Clerk and Sam Lutalo-Kiingi. Lutalo-Kiingi from Uganda is the first deaf African to have completed a PhD in linguistics at the University of Central Lancashire.

▲ *The University of Buea welcomes WOCAL 7 to its campus (Tchokothe)*

The University of Bayreuth was actively represented at the Congress by Doris Löhr (coordinator of the newly created Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies), Eva Rothmaler (Afrikanistik II), Klaudia Dombrowsky-Hahn (Afrikanistik I), Daouda Traore (BIGSAS) and Rémi Tchokothe (Afrikanistik I). Sincere thanks are due the local organisers who put in every effort (e.g. the presence of a medical staff throughout the conference) to ensure that their guests had a fruitful and pleasant time at the foot of Mount Cameroon. Also, to ensure that the interesting academic exchanges, discussions of new ideas and the research networks between colleagues from far and near which took place during the WOCAL are properly documented, work on the conference proceedings is already going on. In 2014, Shigeki Kaji will – hopefully – say KARIBUNI Tokyo (Welcome to Tokyo) to participants at the eight WOCAL.

(Rémi Armand Tchokothe)

## Swahili Colloquium



In 2012, the Swahili Colloquium celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> edition at the Iwalewa-Haus. Founded in Frankfurt in 1987, it moved to Bayreuth in the 1990s. The colloquium is regularly funded by the German Research Council and has gained a lasting name as a forum for research on Swahili – the ancient vernacular and trade language in East Africa. It is the only scholarly forum outside Africa where an African language is not only the subject of the conference but also an important medium of communication.

Every year, the symposium attracts linguists and scholars in literary and cultural studies from Eastern Africa, Europe, Asia and the Americas. This year more than 70 scholars from all over the world participated in the conference that took place from 18-20 May at the Iwalewa-Haus. Besides taking a look back at the history of the colloquium, the presentations mainly focused on three topics which have gained prominence in research on Swahili language, literature and culture in recent years: globalisation (utandawazi), postcolonialism (baadaye-(ya-)ukoloni) and

▲ *Participants at the Swahili Colloquium (Sommer)*

postmodernism (usasabaadaye).

The issues were discussed from different perspectives: linguistics, literature, art, anthropology, geography and history. Also this year, the Iwalewa-Haus and its exhibition of photography by the Tanzanian master photographer John Kiyaya, who has portrayed life at the shores of Lake Tanganyika for the past thirty years, offered a friendly but also inspiring context for further exchange and discussion. Due to an ongoing cooperation with the University of Bordeaux in the field of Swahili research, John Kiyaya himself opened the exhibition together with the renowned French travel writer and journalist Jean Rolin who also introduced Kiyaya's oeuvre to the participants.

On the final evening of the colloquium, a spoken word performance by the internationally acclaimed Kenyan rapper Abbas Kubaff reconstructed retrospectively the quarter-of-a-century existence of the Swahili Colloquium.

(Gabriele Sommer)

## Literature, Arts and the Social Sciences



During the summer semester 2012, the Romanistik Department of the University of Bayreuth, organised and hosted an international workshop under the theme "Literature, Arts and the Social Sciences". The workshop was a collaboration between three universities: Bayreuth (Germany), Limoges (France) and Ottawa (Canada). The aim of the workshop was to question the idea and the uses of 'interdisciplinarity' with a special focus on literature and literary creativity in their capacity to investigate, cross over and nourish other arts disciplines such as the visual and performative arts. The presentations and the ensuing exchanges were highly enriching. The student participants took the chance to discuss with guest professors, artists, playwrights, etc. among them Valentin-Yves Mudimbe, Kossi Efoui and Nestor Zinsou.

Justin Bisanswa, Professor of African Literature and Francophonie, University of Laval, Canada, presented a keynote lecture

▲ *Justin Bisanswa, Maroua El Naggare, Khadija Mouhsine, Viviane Azarian, Kossi Efoui during the conference (Azarian)*

on the interface of, and relationship between, literature and politics. From a similar perspective, Janos Riesz, Emeritus Professor of Romance Literature, University of Bayreuth, talked about the relationship between literature and history. Jean-Pierre Dizon, Professor of anthropology at EHESS, offered profound insights into the understanding of literature from an anthropological point of view. The concept of geocriticism, which is an emerging trend in literary criticism, was the topic of the talk given by Bertrand Westphal, Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Limoges. The renowned professor and writer Valentin-Yves Mudimbe gave a keynote lecture on literature and philosophy. In addition to this, he met with BIGSAS PhD students in smaller workshops to advise them on their research projects.

(Viviane Azarian)



## Symposium on Utopia in Swahili Narratives: For Said Khamis



▲ Said Khamis, to whom the symposium was dedicated (Sommer)



▲ Kenyan rapper, Abbas Kubaff performs in honour of Said Khamis (Sommer)

Closely intertwined with the Swahili Colloquium, the international symposium, "Dunia Yao. Utopia/Dystopia: Imagining Society in Swahili Fiction", took place at the Iwalewa-Haus from 17-19 May 2012. Funded by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation and organised by the Chair of African Linguistics I, the symposium focussed on utopian and anti-utopian constructions of society in Swahili fiction and particularly in the Swahili novel since the 1990s as well as in related fields of artistic expression like poetry, popular literature and music.

As Farouk Topan (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London) outlined in his keynote lecture, the key aim of the conference was to analyse this contemporary thematic trend and its expression in different forms of fiction, and to investigate its motivation, its forms of representation, its style as well as its mediativity. With 18

experts in the field of Swahili literature, music and arts from Eastern Africa, the USA and Europe, the colloquium allowed for an engaging and profound discussion which will also be reflected in the forthcoming proceedings of the symposium.

One thing that was particularly rewarding at the symposium was the interdisciplinary exchange across boundaries of genre and discipline. For instance, the performance of the German-Kenyan symbiotic artistic duo Ingridmwaniröberthutter was conceived as a stylistic expansion of the fragmentary narration and forms of representation in the post-modern Swahili novel. A reading session, involving the Swahili authors Kyallo Wamitila, Ken Walibora and Said A. Mohamed as well as a spoken word performance of the Kenyan rapper Abbas Kubaff gave first-hand impressions of artistic production in the field.

The symposium was dedicated to Said Ahmed Mohamed

Khamis who, since 1997, has held the professorship of Literatures in African Languages at the University of Bayreuth and who celebrated his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday this year. Given his scholarly competence and literary sharpness, particularly in the literature and music of Eastern Africa, Said Khamis has contributed to research in African Studies.

As Said Ahmed Mohamed, his "nom de plume", he has become one of the most well-known and celebrated authors writing in Swahili. His vast oeuvre comprises narratives, short stories, novels, theatre plays and poetry. His avant-garde works also played a prominent role during the symposium. The symposium's title *Dunia Yao* ("Their World") was taken from one of his novels. The title does not only underline the constructed nature of visions for society, but the novel also paradigmatically represents the recent shift in topic and style.

(Gabriele Sommer)

## 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Gur Languages

Theme: Internal and External Classifications of Gur Languages



The focus on Gur languages at the University of Bayreuth has become tradition since the 1990s when Gudrun Mieke, now Emeritus Professor of African Linguistics, succeeded in bringing together a group of researchers on Gur languages in the Afrikanistik I department. Together with colleagues from Humboldt University Berlin, this research group was able to obtain a research grant from the DFG in 1996 which was renewed in 2000. The group consisted of Gudrun Mieke, Kerstin Winkelmann, Ulrich Kleinewillinghöfer, Manfred von Roncador, and later Stefan Elders and Klaudia Dombrowski. In the

framework of this research project, three conferences were organised in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (1997), Cotonou, Benin (1999) and Kara, Togo (2001). After the expiration of the DFG funding, the Bayreuth group succeeded in obtaining further funding from the Thyssen Foundation in 2005.

The 2012 conference, that took place from 5-7 July, was also financed by the Thyssen Foundation. It focused on the internal and external classification of Gur Languages. Luckily, the second volume of *Noun Class Systems in Gur Languages, Vol. II: North Central Gur Languages* (ed. Gudrun Mieke, Brigitte Reineke

▲ The Gur Conference brought together old and new faces (Mieke)

and Kerstin Winkelmann) was out just in time to be presented at the conference. The book is an elaborate investigation of noun classification of North Central Gur Languages.

The major goal of the conference, however, was to bring together young scholars from Africa and to offer them a forum to exchange ideas on their current research and to present the results of their comparative research. A collective volume consisting of papers presented at the conference is in progress.

(Manfred von Roncador)



## 15<sup>th</sup> Mega-Chad Colloquium

The 15<sup>th</sup> Mega-Chad Colloquium took place from the 13-15 September 2012 at the University of Naples, Italy, under the theme “Exchanges and communication in the Lake Chad Basin.” Sergio Baldi, Professor of African Linguistics in the Dipartimento Asia Africa e Mediterraneo, welcomed the participants from all over the world to the Istituto Orientale of the University of Naples, where the colloquium was held.

As it has been the case every second year, researchers from different disciplines working on the Lake Chad area also answered

this year’s call and so assembled in Naples to present their current research. The University of Bayreuth was represented by Eva Rothmaler (Afrikanistik II) who gave a paper entitled “Contact and exchange: Agriculturalists and pastoralists in the Lake Chad Basin.” She also, in her capacity as one of the editors of the 14<sup>th</sup> Mega-Chad colloquium, presented the newly published proceedings of that colloquium: *Man and Health in the Lake Chad Basin - L’Homme et la Santé dans le Bassin du Lac Tchad* (ed. Eva Rothmaler, Rémi Tchokothe and Henry Tourneux). The 14<sup>th</sup> Mega-

Chad Colloquium took place here in Bayreuth in 2009.

The participants enjoyed the time they spent together discussing, exchanging views on communication in the Lake Chad Basin, and planning future projects as well as enjoying Italian hospitality. The proceedings of the Naples conference will be published in due course.

The next colloquium is envisaged for 2014 and will be hosted by Wouter van Beek at the University of Tilburg in the Netherlands. Its theme is “Religion, ritual and beliefs in the Lake Chad Basin.”

(Eva Rothmaler)

## NAB Call for Papers

*NAB: Newsletter of African Studies at the University of Bayreuth* is published annually by the Institute of African Studies. The newsletter is published in English.

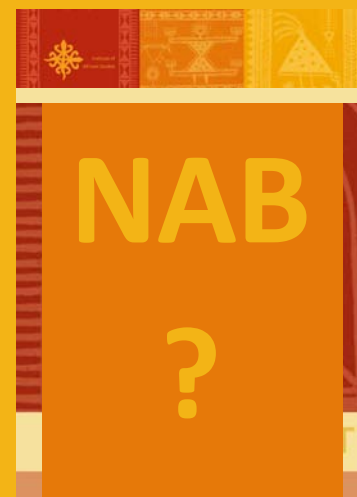
The deadline for submission of contributions is 20 November every year.

Reports should have around 450 words. Short texts (Guests, Personalia, In brief) should have 100-150 words. Main articles should have at least 750 words.

Photos are always very welcome and should be submitted in original size and file format (not resized, not cropped). Minimum file size for report photos is 1,200 px width. One column photos need to have at least 600 px width.

To avoid unnecessary delays in the editorial process, please, kindly stick to these guidelines.

All submissions should be sent in separate files with clear labels to [NAB@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:NAB@uni-bayreuth.de).



## In Memoriam



▲ The Bayreuth and Eldoret delegations in front of Moi University Eldoret, Kenya (Scherer)



▲ Rüdiger Bormann (Bayreuth) and Richard Mibey (Eldoret) signing the cooperation agreement (Scherer)



## Professor Rüdiger Bormann

Professor Rüdiger Bormann, President of the University of Bayreuth, died in a tragic accident in Cologne on 13 January 2013. He was 60. Before joining the University of Bayreuth in 2009, Bormann had worked in different portfolios in university and research organisations. For example, he was a member of the *Wissenschaftsrat* and the Excellence Initiative of the Federal and State government of Germany.

As president, he always supported the Africa focus of the University of Bayreuth. He consolidated several partnerships with universities in Africa. In 2010, he led a delegation from the University of Bayreuth to our partner university, Moi University Eldoret, Kenya to sign a cooperation agreement on Sandwich and Double-Degree Programmes and innovative IT scheme for intercultural training. He was also very supportive in the renewal application of BIGSAS in the Excellence Initiative and the creation of the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies funded by the BMBF. As Dr. Markus Zanner, *Kanzler* of the University said during the commemoration service, Rüdiger Bormann “was a distinguished scientist, thoughtful administrator, wise adviser and a personal friend”. We will always remember him.

## The University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania condole with Bayreuth



We have received the sad news of the tragic death of the President of the University of Bayreuth, Professor Rüdiger Bormann, with deep sympathy. We, at the University of Dar es Salaam in general and the School of Law in particular, join the University of Bayreuth in grieving this terrible loss of a great friend, academician, scholar and coordinator. May His Soul Rest in Eternal Peace.

Prof. M.A.H. Maboko (Acting Vice-Chancellor)



## Editorial

This 12<sup>th</sup> volume of the Newsletter of African Studies at the University of Bayreuth (NAB) is also published by the Institute of African Studies, University of Bayreuth, and reports on projects, achievements, publications, guests, and exhibitions of the Institute and its affiliated structures, i.e. BIGSAS, the Iwalewa-Haus, the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies, and the faculties. It offers an overview of the activities of the Institute in the year 2012.

A few changes have taken place since the last volume. An almost completely new editorial team took over editing of NAB in September 2012. This team is made up of Eric Anchimbe (editor-in-chief), Magnus Echtler, Nadine Siegert, Susanne Ott, Hans-Thomas Tillschneider, Idris Riahi, and Fabian Schwarz. We sincerely thank the former team for the great job they did over the years, and look forward to a productive time serving and cooperating with you on NAB. Manfred von Roncador, who edited the NAB as editor-in-chief for over five years, went on his well-deserved retirement in 2012. On behalf of the new team, we wish to thank him immensely for the inexhaustive effort he invested in NAB and for ensuring a smooth transition. This goes equally to members of the former editorial team: Christine Scherer, Martin Doevenspeck, Regina Fein, Stefanie Jost, Franz Kogelmann, and Ulrike Wanitzek.

We will forever miss the determination and availability of the president of our university, Prof. Dr. Rüdiger Bormann, who died after an accident in Cologne on 13 January 2013. From the many articles in this newsletter that mention him, we immediately understand the extent to which he supported and worked for the Africa focus of the University of Bayreuth – the fruits of which are the renewal of BIGSAS, the creation of the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies, among others. Rest in Peace!

We all wish our readers a wonderful year 2013!

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

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