Institute of African Studies Bayreuth
30th Anniversary of the IAS / Honouring Ulrike Wanitzek / An EIMASter’s Journey

Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence
Cluster Events / African Cluster Centres: Activities 2020 / Research Projects / African Studies Around the Globe

Iwalewahaus
Mbongeni Buthelezi – Art Meets Science / From Osogbo to Bayreuth and back / Sommer Labor
Dear reader,

Times of crisis often cause introspection and self-reflection, so we are very happy to mark an anniversary pro domo, i.e., the history of 30 years of the IAS. In this issue of NAB, we invite the reader on a stroll down the impressive path of three decades: We took stock of the Institute’s status quo and asked several key protagonists who played a role in establishing the IAS to share their memories and appreciation of the Institute’s work.

We would very much like to thank them as well as all of our other contributors, and hope for all of our sakes that next year’s NAB will see more reports on personal interactions and face-to-face encounters.

Enjoy the read.

NAB Editorial Team
Sabine Greiner, Doris Löh r, Ivo Ritz r & Irina Turner

Welcome!

A year ago, when the last NAB was published, we were at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, which had just started to make its impact felt. At the time we did not expect that one year later the pandemic would affect us more than before. In December 2020 and March 2021 we were mourning the passing of two long-time IAS associates who succumbed to COVID-19. The first, Dr. Salabury Doumbia, was a frequent visitor to the IAS who received his PhD from the University of Bayreuth as early as 1988. His last visit was from March to June 2020 and had to be extended because travel restrictions did not allow him to return to Bamako as planned.

The second was Prof. Omar Egesah, a close collaborator of the IAS and a pillar of our African Cluster Centre at Moi University in Kenya. In Prof. Egesah we have lost an extraordinary colleague who was involved in many joint activities between the University of Bayreuth and Moi University.

In view of the terrible toll the disease has been taking, the restrictions imposed by the pandemic do indeed appear insignificant. Still, the restrictions have put serious constraints on our activities in the IAS and the African Multiple Cluster of Excellence. At the same time, in our efforts to adapt to the situation, we made unprecedented strides in developing digital solutions, allowing us to stay connected in times of limited mobility and to ensure that our academic exchange continues. In the pre-COVID-19 period, we held one larger conference – Frontiers in African Digital Research in February 2020 – where we streamed the event in order to make attendance possible for those not present in Bayreuth. In the meantime, webinars, online workshops, and the livestreaming of conferences have become the new standard, whether in Bayreuth, Eldoret, Lagos, Mak handa, or Ouagadougou (to mention only the five cluster locations). The pandemic has thus brought us much closer to our objective of increased digital integration of all Cluster locations as well as other partner institutions of the IAS.

The new forms of digital communication will surely continue to play a central role. However, the experiences of the past year also made us realise that online meetings can never fully substitute for personal encounters. Hence, we desperately wait for the restrictions to be lifted so that we can resume travel and physical meetings with our colleagues. However, it is unlikely that we will simply return to our old ways of conducting research and academic activities. Online and hybrid formats will certainly remain an important part of our routine as researchers, thus allowing us to intensify our exchange across long distances. Not only face-to-face contacts, but also research was halted by travel restrictions internationally and also within Africa. While researchers cannot wait to resume research without limitations, we anticipate that the amount and frequency of travel will be reduced in the future, not least as an effort to cut down on our carbon footprint.

Despite all the difficulties, 2020 was a productive year filled with exciting activities and stimulating debates and events. We therefore have a lot to report on in the current issue of the NAB. One of the highlights was the start of the new European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies (EIMAS), where the first cohort of students arrived for their first semester in Porto, Portugal in autumn 2020, to be followed by the summer semester 2021 in Bayreuth. The plans for the construction of a new building for African Studies, the Research Centre Africa (Forschungszentrum Afrika) are on track, and we expect construction to start in early 2022 as scheduled.

Last but not least, last year was the 30th anniversary of the Institute of African Studies, which was officially founded on 18 May 1990. Again, the pandemic did not allow us to hold a proper celebration. But we are eager to catch up on this missed opportunity when we celebrate the 40th anniversary of Iwalewahaus in 2021. We are looking forward to welcoming many friends and colleagues on the occasion of these upcoming events and activities, whether virtually or physically. For the time being, we hope you will enjoy reading the NAB 2020 – in its digital or printed format.

Cyrus Samimi and Eva Spies
Director and Vice Director, Institute of African Studies

Rüdiger Seesemann and Ute Fendler
Spokespersons, Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence
African Studies around the Globe

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- ACC Lagos, Nigeria
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Due to the pandemic, the celebrations for the 30th anniversary of the Institute of African Studies had to take place on a much smaller scale than anticipated. 2020 was not a year like any other, and as in all other spheres also the academic life, research, teaching, and interaction was downsized or transferred into rigid digital means of collaboration. In spring 2020, the Institute of African Studies (IAS) commemorated its thirtieth anniversary under these new working and living conditions.

Although this anniversary celebration had been planned to include all active and retired IAS members, distinguished former and current international guests and artists in residence, representatives of all its partner organizations, and the local and transnational academic, political, and cultural institutions, circumstances forced another way of marking the anniversary. No public event, no celebrations. As one modest gesture of tribute, the directors of the IAS and Iwalewahaus offered the newly elected Mayor of Bayreuth Thomas Ebersberger and the newly elected County Administrator Florian Wiedemann, the opportunity to visit the new art exhibition of the Iwalewahaus Sommerlabor jointly with the President of UBT, Stefan Leible, the Vice Spokesperson of the Cluster of Excellence Africa Multiple, Ute Fendler, and the former President, Helmut Ruppert. In the presence of Angelika Beck as Spokesperson of the Freundeskreis Iwalewahaus, the city’s Head of the Department for Culture and Tourism, Benedikt Stegmayer, and the Head of the Bayreuth Marketing & Tourismus GmbH, Manuel Bechmann, the opportunity to visit the new working and living conditions, represented the IAS.

On 2 July 1990, the Institute of African Studies (formerly IFA, later IAS) at the University of Bayreuth had its first constituent meeting. In the three decades that followed the IAS played an instrumental role in putting African Studies on the map of the German academic landscape and in building a global network of scholars in the field of African Studies and beyond. Celebrating its 30th anniversary, the following pages demonstrate in detail the impressive history and extensive academic work of the IAS and give a forum to companions that were or still are a part of the Institute’s path.

Text: RON HERMANN

Bayreuth’s Mayor Thomas Ebersberger, UBT President Stefan Leible and County Administrator Florian Wiedemann (from left) congratulated the IAS on its anniversary. (Photo: UBT)

The IAS is a guarantor for excellent Africa-related research, teaching, cultural activities, and a reliable partner.

Cyrus Samimi, IAS Director

Also, both Ebersberger and Wiedemann emphasised the important role of the IAS as a reliable intermediary between excellent academic work and an open society, free from prejudices.

“We conduct research on Africa only with Africa. It is a relationship both sides carefully maintain. A relationship, which created most powerful friendships. A relationship, that became a success story.”

Stefan Leible, President of the University of Bayreuth

Photos: BIGSAS, Fabrice Lué/Robert Götze, Sabine Greiner; IAS, UBT, Andi Wetland, Christian Willer
The founding of new universities in the '60s and '70s of the last century was an important educational policy desideratum. The steering committee guiding the launching of the University of Bayreuth was clear that the mission statement should include not only traditional university subjects, but future-oriented fields of study as well. The addition of strategic research disciplines was intended to make the newer universities competitive with long-established universities.

African Studies were put on the agenda in December 1976, the steering committee, with the support of the sciences and humanities council, nominated ‘African Studies’ as one of four strategic research fields of the university. The Bavarian state government’s 1977 Plan for Higher Education described the recommendation as follows: “The focus is not limited to African languages and linguistics, but includes a multi-disciplinary approach to the circumstances and problems in African countries and emphasises exploration of the context and interaction between different factors such as ecology, geography, religion, language and literature, history, law, economic development and social conditions ….”

Through the clearly defined requirements, scholars in the humanities and social sciences with a focus on African experience were appointed. An additional advantage was the University senate’s establishment of an African Studies Research Advisory Council in May 1979 under the chairmanship of the Afro and Romance language scholar Janosz Riesz.

The early integration of academics and artists from Africa in the work on African Studies in Bayreuth drew political attention. The first President of Senegal, Léopold Sédar Senghor, increased the profile of Bayreuth’s African scene during his visit to the Richard Wagner Festival in the summer of 1979. At the reception of the Bavarian Prime Minister, Senghor demonstrated his support of the university’s concept. The Bavarian State Ministry for Education and Cultural Affairs in turn endowed a guest professorship, the Léopold Senghor Chair, for academics from Africa.

The opening of Iwalewahaus on the sixth anniversary of the University’s founding in 1981 was a special milestone for our cultural exchange with Africa. Ulli Beier, with significant experience in Nigeria and his rich knowledge about Africa, was appointed Iwalewahaus Director. Beier’s diverse and varied activities strengthened cultural contacts with African creative artists which was enriched with the establishment of two positions of ‘artist-in-residence’ for African creative artists.

Collaborative Research Programmes
The then Vice President of the University Helmut Ruppert coordinated discussions about the further expansion of African Studies and the consequent path from a multi-disciplinary co-existence towards an interdisciplinary cooperation. The goal was to achieve a broad collaborative research basis of all the disciplines related to African Studies. Already in November 1982, a proposal for a Sonderforschungsbereich (SFB) – a collaborative research programme with the title ‘Prozesse of cultural and national identity in Africa’ – was submitted to the German Research Foundation (DFG). Until the approval, discussions of the members of the SFB with reviewers specified the research agenda. The collaborative research programme (SFB 214) was officially established in 1984 under the title ‘Identität in Afrika – Prozesse of its development and change under the auspices of social science.

The SFB not only fostered cooperative research between the Africa-related humanities at the University, but developed research projects together with African scholars. The 1982 cooperation agreements with Universities in Dakar (Senegal), Abidjan (Ivory Coast), Lomé (Togo), and Cotonou (Benin) built the first basis for joint research and teaching concepts.

In the following years, in addition to the SFB 214, many individual projects from Bayreuth scholars in the humanities and bio-physical sciences were funded by the DFG, the DAAD, and other foundations and ministries. These included specific academic disciplines and the continuing education courses; for example, the successful Bayreuth International Summer School (BISS) for African participants reflected the importance of an Africa focus in the teaching mission.

Founding the IAS
It became necessary for the University of Bayreuth to coordinate the varied activities within a stronger framework. The aim was to bind the ecologically-oriented scientists even more to the humanities and social sciences departments beyond the SFB 214. The immediate goal included institutional security and the continuation of the multi-disciplinary African Studies situated in the SFB even after the funding through the SFB. To continue collaboration successfully in the future, the founding of an African Institute as a central body was planned.

The independent Iwalewahaus was meant to be incorporated as a department into the Institute of African Studies (IAS). The special task of Iwalewahaus (the organisation of exhibitions, concerts, films, African pop culture events, and the collection of African art) would be supported under the auspices of IAS.

The University senate had already agreed in May 1987 to the establishment of an Institute of African Studies. After discussions about the structure and content as well as the financing, the Bavarian State Ministry of the Sciences, Research, and the Arts approved the establishment of the IAS as a central department of the University of Bayreuth in April 1990. Every researcher in an African-related discipline of the University became member of the IAS executive committee: Professors Jamil M. Abun-Nasr, Dieter Fricke, Janosz Riesz, Franz Rotthardt, Helmut Ruppert, Gerd Spittler. The executive committee was supported by a full-time research associate as Coordinator. Two visiting professorships, non-personnel costs, and library resources were provided for the further expansion of the central African Library.

The coordination of all Africa-related research and teaching activities through the IAS led to increased research efficiency and to a coordination of the courses offered in Africa Studies, especially for graduate studies. As a result, the International Research Training Group Intercultural Relations in Africa was approved by the DFG in 1990.

The IAS, as a central partner, has strengthened international networks and prioritised contact to African alumni. Additionally, in 1991 the IAS was a founding member of the research network Europe-Africa Group for Interdisciplinary Studies (AEGIS) with eight other African Studies institutes in Europe to foster interdisciplinary cooperation and to promote international and interdisciplinary synergies in knowledge production of European and African research institutes.
Mamadou Diawara, who did his post-doctoral qualification in Bayreuth, founded this institute in 1997 with the help of the UBT, the SFB 560, and the Volkswagen Foundation. Muscler le savoir local or, Strengthening local knowledge is the institute’s motto, which aims to bolster the African perspective in confrontation with international knowledge.

All these activities were echoed in teaching: From 2002 on and for the first time in Germany, Bayreuth offered African Studies Programmes at BA level (later also MA level) beyond the classical language studies, now including a wide range of subject fields from the humanities and social sciences as well as law and geography.

Over the years, this commitment to transcontinental research cooperation as well as to teaching and early career support has become the central concern of the IAS and has shaped all its subsequent initiatives.

A main step towards creating perma-

nent structures for the promotion of young scholars was the founding of the interdisciplinary Bayreuth Inter-

national Graduate School for African Studies (BIGSAS) that was funded by the German Excellence Initiative of the DFG in 2007. BIGSAS drew from the experiences of the earlier graduate schools, the integration of African doc-

toral students in the Collaborative Re-

search Centre, and from three research projects funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, namely for Tomorrow that built on close coopera-
tion with African universities. From the start, BIGSAS closely cooperated with African Universities in Rabat (Moroc-
co), Eldoret (Kenya), Cotonou (Benin), Maputo (Mozambique) and Durban (South Africa), and later Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), which were selected from the more than 30 IAS partner universi-
ties in Africa. BIGSAS integrates all dis-
ciplines: not only the classical Afri-
can related disciplines like anthropology, African languages, history, and geogra-
phy, but also Arabic studies, sociology, economics, law, literature, religious studies, Islamic studies, and even nat-
ural sciences. Within the framework of the SFB/IFT 560, numerous colleagues from Africa were invited to Bayreuth for shorter or longer periods.

The Point Sud Centre for Research in Bamako, Mali, went one step further. Another milestone in the history of IAS was the research project Future Africa (2012–2018), funded by the German Ministry for Science and Education, which became the nucleus of the Bayreuth Academy. This study group of more than 20 permanent re-
searchers combined interdisciplinary research in five subprojects with sup-
port for post-docs and the integration of guest researchers from Africa and other regions. In 2019 the institutional outlook and academic programme of the Academy was revised, and it was inte-
grated into the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence.

Important developments in the tech-
nical research structure were the start of the digital archive for research data and artworks (DEVA) of Iwalewahaus, as well as for the digitalisation of the library, communication, and teaching services at the University of Bayreuth and Moi University in Kenya (funded by the German Ministry for Science and Education, which contributes to public outreach with the presentation and discus-

sion of art works. Additionally, festivals such as Cinema Africa and African Lit-

erature and the annual BIGSAS award for journalist reporting on Africa are central activities that spotlight African Studies in the city of Bayreuth to the German public.

All the achievements since the foun-
dation of the IAS have led to its latest major success in its 25th year of exist-
ence: In 2019, the Cluster of Excellence Africa Multiple: Reconfiguring Afri-
can Studies started. It is a core unit of the IAS and now integrates BIGSAS and the Bayreuth Academy. The IAS’s aim to promote collaborative research on equal terms with African institu-
tions is mirrored in the cooperation with the four African Cluster Centres (ACC). With the University of Lagos, Nigeria, in Ogbadoogou, Burkina Faso, and Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa, our network was expanded and strengthened, which again opens new ways to jointly work on new projects and the reconfiguration of outdated re-
search structures.
From the foundation of Iwalewahaus as UBT’s Africa Centre to the planning of the Research Centre, this overview shows the most important events and highlights of the impressive path the IAS has embarked on.

- **1981**: Africa Centre – International Research is opened
- **1984**: SFB 214: Identity in Africa – Processes of its development and change is approved by the DFG
- **1990**: IAS – Institute of African Studies is founded
- **1991**: IAS is founding member of AEGIS – Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies
- **2000**: SFB/FK 560 is established
- **2006**: IAS becomes part of ZENEB – Centre for Natural Risks and Development (Zentrum für Natürliche Risiken und Entwicklung)
- **2007**: BIGSAS – Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies
- **2008**: TGCL (Tanzanian-German Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Law) is founded
- **2009**: IAS becomes part of ZENEB – Centre for Natural Risks and Development (Zentrum für Natürliche Risiken und Entwicklung)
- **2010**: ANUB – Africa Network of Uni BT is established
- **2011**: SEED – New ICT Strategies for the Enhancement of Higher Education management is developed
- **2012**: Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies
- **2014**: BRIAS – Bavarian Research Institute of African Studies is founded
- **2019**: Cluster of Excellence is founded
- **2020**: Planning starts for the Forschungszentrum Africa (FZA)

**The old home of Iwalewahaus**

**Photo: Sabine Lehmann**

**The old home of Iwalewahaus**

**Current Affairs**
With 30 years of research and networking in the name of African Studies under its belt, the IAS takes stock of what is today and what will be in the future.

An anniversary is an occasion to look back to the past and to celebrate the present moment, but it also calls for reflections about the future. Some of the IAS’s visions for the future pertain to plans that the IAS hopes to realise further down the road, whereas others are already concrete and rather tangible.

**New Research Centre for African Studies on its way**

Let’s start with an aim that is tangible. Probably before the end of 2022, construction work will start on the new Research Centre for African Studies (FZA) on the university campus. The building is supposed to be completed in 2024 and will provide space for exchange and creative ideas, especially for PhD students in African Studies, but also for all other scholars as well as artists from or working on Africa. The building’s infrastructure will support the implementation of digital solutions for digital research cooperation and communication with partners in Africa and beyond. These plans were made well before the pandemic forced us into the digital space and complement the digital agenda of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, where innovative ways of digital research collaboration constitute a priority.

**Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence: International knowledge production**

The Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, now based at five locations – the four African Cluster Centres in Lagos, Ouagadougou, Eldoret, and Makhanda in addition to the University of Bayreuth – and comprising almost 150 members, will soon unfold its full potential as a transformative space for research cooperation and joint knowledge production between academic partners based in Bayreuth and Africa – one of the cornerstones of our declared objective to reconstitute African Studies. The new professorships and the four Junior Research Groups we were able to establish in Bayreuth, combined with the even stronger partnerships with African universities, will help sustain and expand our achievements in the field of African Studies for the next decade and beyond. In 2025, when the Excellence Strategy of the German Federal and State Governments is supposed to go into its second round, the Cluster will be up for renewal. Preparing the application for the extension will become a major task for the Cluster starting as early as 2022.

**Beyond the Cluster: BRIAS**

While the Cluster continues as our flagship project, the IAS will continue to support Africa-related research activities and networks beyond the Cluster. The Bavarian Research Institute of African Studies (BRIAS) with its four partner institutions will ensure that Africa remains visible in the Bavarian research arena and will further expand its outstanding expertise in a broad range of academic fields. Our vision for BRIAS lies in the promotion of applied research based on a strong theoretical foundation.

**Digital expertise: Iwalewahaus**

Through Iwalewahaus, the IAS will be involved in a new initiative for the documentation and digital publication of collections from colonial contexts based in Germany. Called Three-road strategy on the documentation and digital publication of collections from colonial contexts held in Germany, this initiative of various German federal and state government agencies will connect a total of 25 museums and institutions in Germany. The inclusion of the IAS and its partners underscores our potential role in supporting postcolonial and decolonial initiatives in this area, as well as our rising visibility as experts in digital solutions for vast collections.

**Striving for excellence in African Studies**

In the coming years, the Institute will pay special attention to revising its African Studies curricula. The University of Bayreuth already offers a broad range of Africa-related BA and MA programmes, and the IAS will facilitate the process of dovetailing the offerings with each other, as well as with our major research initiatives. Through our international network, the IAS team will support student mobility as well as staff exchanges, which will complement similar activities at the level of the renowned Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies. By tying these activities together with its international summer schools and the newly established European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies (EIMAS) programme, the IAS leadership is confident that the IAS will sustain its objective of sustainable excellence in teaching on all levels in the near future.

Another area where the IAS seeks to sharpen its profile is the cooperation between University of Bayreuth-based scholars and non-academics. In the past, Iwalewahaus has been a pioneer in such cooperation and inspired similar working formats in the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies in its earlier funding phase. These efforts eventually coalesced in the Cluster’s transdisciplinary agenda, which the IAS plans to consolidate in the coming years by systematically supporting collaboration with artists and non-academic research partners. Again, the African networks and Africa-based institutional partners established by the IAS will play a crucial role in the endeavour to encourage joint local knowledge production between academics and non-academics.

**Growing outreach**

Last but not least, and in line with the increasing importance of the so-called ‘third mission’ of the universities, the IAS outreach activities will continue to grow in the city of Bayreuth as well as in the wider region and beyond. The Institute will provide a forum for encounters between researchers and larger publics, support civic and educational programmes, and engage in the search for new ways to make our research and teaching relevant for constructive dialogues in society. The IAS remains committed to its vision of a diverse, non-discriminatory, and cosmopolitan space within academia and in the wider society, where African Studies has the potential to play a visible and transformative role.
The Management of the IAS over the years

**Directors and Vice Directors**

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<td>Cyrus Samimi</td>
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<td>01.10.2019 – 30.09.2021</td>
<td>Eva Spies</td>
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**Academic Coordinators**

1990 – 2005
- Eckhard Breitinger
- Christina Ahr
- Ricarda Bienbeck
- Idriss Rabi

2008 – 2011
- Franz Kogelmann
- Ron Herrmann

2010 – 2013
- Ute Fendler
- Ulrich Berner
- Rüdiger Seesemann
- Cyrus Samimi

2014 – 2017
- Ute Fendler
- Ulrich Berner
- Rüdiger Seesemann
- Cyrus Samimi

2018 – 2020
- Eva Spies

The first meeting of the Steering Committee took place on 2 July 1990

**Text: Jacob K. Olupona**

My sojourn at the initial stage of my brief visits allowed me to learn about the German academic system, which is very different from the American and the Nigerian systems that I was used to. I recall that during this time, the University of Bayreuth had developed a significant interest in African Studies; scholarship in African Islam, African literature, and African religion among other fields were growing exponentially. What amazed me was the interdisciplinary syllabus as the focus of the African Studies programme, under which several of the curricula in the Social Sciences and the Humanities were based.

My interest in African religion, for which Ulrich Berner’s professorship was established, brought us together and ultimately led to several collaborative works. Ulrich’s position enabled him to recommend to Bayreuth visiting lecturers and young scholars who came to do their graduate studies. Ulrich had approached me in Nigeria and later in the USA, and encouraged me tonominate strong candidates for training in religious studies. One of those students whom I had taught at the University of Ile (now: Obafemi Awolowo University) in Nigeria, was Afe Adogame, now Professor of Religion at Princeton Theological Seminary, New Jersey, USA. Several of the students from Africa, myself and other senior scholars from Africa, were regularly invited to join hands with Bayreuth faculty to train and mentor the next generation of graduate students in our field.

Ultimately, Bayreuth’s African Religion curriculum developed to become a leading programme in religion in Germany and the world, and its African Studies centre became, in my opinion, the leading African Studies programme in Germany. No wonder then that Bayreuth continues to attract major attention from all over the world. Based on my Bayreuth experience, I did not hesitate to call attention to the Humboldt Foundation in Berlin in 2015 during my hip year to an aspect of the German exchange scholarly programmes. What amazed me was the interdisciplinary curriculum that the Bayreuth African Studies programme operated. Several of the curricula in the Social Sciences and Humanities were based on this programme, which I consider far superior to other African-focused training courses in other developed countries. What I have in mind here is the flexibility of the visiting programmes that enable young scholars who begin their academic training in the various German institutions the opportunity to return to these institutions for further work while developing their careers in their home institutions. The unforeseen consequence of this is that by the time these young scholars have spent a few academic visits to Germany, they have become not only well schooled in the German system, including learning the language, but also on their return to their native lands, they no longer think of emigrating to America or Europe. Nevertheless, they always cherish the opportunity of returning to continue their research, build networks, and bond with their host institutions and their faculty.

On a more personal note, my visits to Bayreuth enabled me not only to share ideas and my scholarship with the Bayreuth students, to lead seminars and lectures in the very popular religion workshop, but also to connect some of the students to fascinating field sites in Nigeria.

I would be remiss not to mention my strong interest in Bayreuth’s programmes in the Arts, through the very famous Iwaloawo, founded by Ulli Beier, the legendary scholar of African and especially Yoruba arts and culture. When I was invited to give a keynote address to mark his retirement, I chose a topic titled, _A Tale of Two Germans: Ulli Beier and Leo Frobenius_. By mere accident I was unable to obtain a visa to visit Germany from the USA at that time. I therefore designated Adogame, who had just graduated from the University of Bayreuth, to read my address.

Finally, during my last visit to Bayreuth, I received an invitation from Eva Spies to participate in an African Religion seminar. I gave a lecture titled _Seeing is Believing. Knowing is Understanding: Doing Research in Nigeria_. After a fascinating interaction with the students, it occurred to me that despite all my visits, I did not have a memento from Bayreuth. So, I went downtown to the mall and began to look for an appropriate store where I could buy a suit that was very native to the Bavarian and German culture. I am glad I got one, which is still in my wardrobe, in my country home in Ile-Ife, Nigeria.
Ulrike Wanitzek: Honouring the ‘Mother of the TGCL’

Test PHILIPP BÖGENSPERGER

The University Medal 2020 went to Ulrike Wanitzek, a founding member of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, for lifetime achievement.

Each year, the dies academicus celebrates the anniversary of the foundation of the University of Bayreuth. And each year, the University makes use of this stage to award the University Medal to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the academic landscape. This year, the medal went to the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence’s founding member Ulrike Wanitzek. The legal scholar, who retired in April 2020 after having served the University of Bayreuth for four decades, was acknowledged for her achievements in the field of law as well as for her tireless efforts and pioneering work in African Studies.

Academic Background
At the University of Bayreuth, Wanitzek completed her law studies with the first state examination. After her legal clerkship, including the second state examination in Augsburg, she was drawn back to the city where she had started her education. Wanitzek earned her doctorate and later a degree in post-doctoral studies in the fields of civil law, comparative law, and sociology of law at the University of Bayreuth. Between 2001 and 2007, she lectured at the Institute for African Studies (IAS) in the Faculty of Law and Economics at the University of Bayreuth, before founding the Tanzanian-German Centre for Eastern African Legal Studies (TGCL) in 2008. In her academic career, Wanitzek developed a special expertise in regional cooperation and legal integration, women’s and children’s rights, as well as land law, particularly in Tanzania and Ghana. Furthermore, among her numerous accomplishments was the establishment of a new subsidiary subject, “Law in Africa,” for which she shared manifold insights from her empirical research on living law and legal pluralism. Currently, Wanitzek is the Senior Academic Director of the IAS in Bayreuth.

Outstanding interdisciplinary network
Combining her two passions for law and the African continent, Wanitzek built a unique chair that connected legal and other scholars from academia all over the world, especially in the Global South. As a member of the IAS Steering Committee, she made sure that the juridical component was ever present in the interdisciplinary dialogue on the topic of Africa.

Founding the Tanzanian-German Centre for Eastern African Legal Studies (TGCL)
Wanitzek has continuously added to the international visibility and global networking of the University of Bayreuth. She founded and successfully directed the Tanzanian-German Centre for Eastern African Legal Studies (TGCL) in 2008. With a thematic focus on regional integration law in the Eastern African community, the TGCL has become a key institution in the training of future leaders within the region. The highly specialised LLM and PhD programmes are conducted at the School of Law at the University of Dar Es Salaam, in close cooperation with the University of Bayreuth. During her twelve years as project leader, Wanitzek successfully ushered more than 120 students to their degrees.

UDSol Award in 2020
To honour the decades of distinguished service and dedication Wanitzek offered to the field of African Legal Studies via her committed personal and later institutional cooperation with the University of Dar Es Salaam School of Law (UD-Sol), she was presented with an appreciation award on behalf of the UDSol, as acknowledgment. In particular as Director, Wanitzek led the TGCL throughout a decade of successful cooperation between the University of Dar Es Salaam School of Law and the University of Bayreuth. A partnership set to last.

Lasting impact
The African Studies focus area at the University of Bayreuth and the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence continue to benefit from Wanitzek’s longstanding groundwork. She helped in shaping the cluster’s agenda in its formative period by inserting essential juridical components and contributing her outstanding expertise and network.

The extent of her achievements is also reflected in the recently established Chair of African Legal Studies—a unique chair at the Faculty of Law and Economics at the University of Bayreuth, which was specifically created to carry forward Wanitzek’s work following her retirement.

To all the colleagues and students whose lives she has enriched and shaped, Wanitzek has been much more than an inspiring legal scholar and passionate project leader. She has enthusiastically supported young academics in their aspirations and steadily contributed to an open and productive working climate. Through her open-minded, cooperative, dedicated, and appreciative personality, Wanitzek has created lasting personal and professional ties between Bayreuth, Dar es Salaam, and many other places.
While the pandemic was in full swing in 2020, a new chair was established at the University of Bayreuth: Sabelo J. Ndlovu Gatsheni joined the Cluster of Excellence as head of Epistemologies of the Global South with Emphasis on Africa. In this interview, the renowned scholar talks about his first weeks in Germany as well as his goals and focus for the new position.

My appointment coincided with the intensification of coronavirus and the lockdowns across the world. This made me happy and anxious simultaneously. Happy that I got the job but anxious that I had to prepare for the change of jobs within a constrained environment, where travel was very restricted except for repatriation flights. The German Embassy in Pretoria was so supportive, as were the colleagues in the Human Resources and Welcome and the International offices/departments. My family was also happy and anxious simultaneously because our young son had no passport yet. We had to get him one as soon as possible, but again within a context where the offices were closed. Fortunately, we managed to get all the paperwork on time for me to assume duties by mid-2020.

I arrived in Bayreuth at the beginning of August 2020. I was lucky to be included in the repatriation flight for EU citizens and those travelling for employment purposes. My family joined me at the end of August 2020, also because they were allowed to board the repatriation flight for EU citizens and those travelling to join family. This meant that I had to find family accommodation very quickly and, again, with the help of colleagues here at Bayreuth, I managed to get the house sorted in no time.

The next challenge was to regularise our stay here which meant fulfilling various bureaucratic regulations from the immigration office, and again there was always help from my secretary and colleagues. Work-wise, I had to hit the ground running in two ways. I had to immediately prepare for winter semester teaching and also lay the foundation for the new chair in Epistemologies of the Global South. How I coped with this was because of the support of the colleagues here in Bayreuth. I also drew from my long experience as an academic in five other universities where I worked in Zimbabwe, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. That experience enabled me to cope.

The establishment of the chair in Epistemologies of the Global South [...] indicated that [UBT] is on the right side of history in terms of reacting practically to the insurgent and resurgent demands for decolonisation of knowledge.

You are chair of Epistemologies of the Global South with Emphasis on Africa - why, in your opinion, is it important to offer this scholarly focus at UBT?

The establishment of the chair in Epistemologies of the Global South with Emphasis on Africa at the University of Bayreuth indicated that the institution is on the right side of history in terms of reacting practically to the insurgent and resurgent demands for decolonisation of knowledge – demands which have assumed a planetary scale. This chair is very unique in that it is not disciplinary. This gives it the force to cross-fertilise and inform epistemic changes across disciplines. The chair’s interventions in theory, methodology, epistemology, and practice position it at the cutting edge of research, teaching, and learning demanded by the 21st century. In the current century, there is no institution of higher education that can successfully continue to ignore the demands for ecologies of knowledges drawing from epistemologies of the Global South – the majority world whose knowledges have been pushed to the margins since the time of colonial encounters. Thus, the chair in Epistemologies of Global South is timely in many ways and indicates a positive attitude of the University of Bayreuth to be the leading institution in pursuit of relevant knowledge generation and teaching that is not hostage to old knowledge that is Eurocentric. I see the chair maturing into a catalytic and galvanising force for decolonisation of epistemologies, scholarship, curriculum, and pedagogies. My chair brings fresh air of thinking across academic and intellectual traditions as well as thinking, researching, and teaching beyond the prison walls of disciplines and disciplinary tribes.

What are the topics that you most want to convey to your students here at the University of Bayreuth and what are the topics you are most passionate about in your research?

I am already actively involved in teaching in Global History, Anthropology, Development Studies, and BIGSAS. Underpinning what I am offering to the students is to make them aware of the complex politics of knowledge itself and to be sensitive to cognitive injustices which have deprived the modern world of access to some of the most useful knowledges about being human itself, about other visions of life, and about ways of decolonising methodology, and decolonisation of curriculum. This is the basis for a practical contribution to the task of reconfiguring African Studies. What my chair is bringing is the necessity of rethinking thinking itself about Europe and Africa intellectually and academically as essential pre-requisites for the reconfiguration of African Studies.

My engagement with BIGSAS is under the banner of Epistemologies of the Global South: Contributions to Reconfiguration of African Studies. This is meant to inject into the research theory from the south, epistemologies of the south, and the Global South. I am passionate about the feminist and womanist archives that have consistently confronted the patriarchal and sexist forms of power and oppression. I am passionate about the intellectual resources from the Black radical tradition which for centuries has been concerned about the fate of Africa and the lives of those invented as Black. I am passionate about the politics of knowledge and the decolonisation of institutions of higher education so as to ensure that the knowledges and epistemologies are generable in African contexts. In a nutshell, I am passionate about epistemic justice and epistemic freedom!

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## African Alphabets of the Bayreuth Cluster: Launches AABC App

**Text and photos by Ulrich Rebstock**

In 2020, the Cluster’s Research Section ‘Learning’ developed an app for mobile and desktop devices providing users with keyboards for 44 of the most common African languages and scripts.

In late 2020, the Cluster of Excellence published African Alphabets of the Bayreuth Cluster (AABC), an application that facilitates the work of African Studies scholars. The application for desktop devices and mobiles was developed to provide a common linguistic base for all kinds of communication and the transfer of information about African affairs inside and outside the Cluster.

### App considers a multitude of requirements

The app’s development concentrated on two aspects: technical suitability and linguistic authenticity. The trilingual app (German, English, French) must be robust enough to be applied on the four main types of devices — desktop and mobile devices run by both Windows and Mac — and suitable to operate under urban and rural conditions. Its installation and use had to be easy, and its development and support immediately and simultaneously applicable for all devices. These requirements demanded additional technical efforts, but forced the development of a few, hopefully not final, limitations with respect to the representation of characters. To display all the alphabets and fonts used in Africa on keyboards within one and the same app environment meant to enter unknown territory, not only in terms of technology and design, but also in terms of user conventions and normativeness. With three different standard Latin keyboard systems for German, English, and French, the transliteration of African languages into the Latin keyboard alphabets required flexible solutions, often verring into five- and four-line keyboards. If standardized solutions were rarely available. Often it was (and still is) initiatives led by local experts who set themselves the goal of modifying or replacing existing, mostly exogenous alphabets, and their corresponding keyboard layouts with new designs. Sometimes, professional linguistic interests were also involved. When designing the keyboards of the AABC app (in cooperation with Marvin Müller of App-Stone GmbH [www.app-stone.org]), priority was also given to the vernacular requirements and suggestions of the users concerned. Since the development of the AABC app with currently 44 selectable keyboard layouts is an ongoing process, suggestions for improvement are welcome.

### Novel operating features

The app is optimally adapted to the conventional specifics of the device used. After installation, all the app keyboards are integrated into the respective operating system and can be treated there like all other keyboards. When switching from one keyboard to another, all device-specific restrictions are communicated to the user. Among the various novel operating features of the app is the use of the top line of numbers for frequently used shortcuts in non-Latin keyboards, as well as a new approach to displaying and using diacritics and letter variants in the mobile applications. Of particular importance is the assignment of up to twelve variants of each individual letter by using the caps lock key on the normal side and the superscript side (see fig. below). This includes diacritics, up to four of which can be added to each letter at a time.

### List of supported African languages

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Hausa</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hassāniya</td>
<td>Hausa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nīko</td>
<td>Oromo Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oromiya</td>
<td>Oromiya</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Pan African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pan-Nigerian</td>
<td>Qwertty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qwerty</td>
<td>Swahili</td>
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<td>Swahili</td>
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<td>Wolof</td>
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It is to be hoped that the interest shown by EReF (Bayreuth University Library, Digital Services) and the data curators of the Cluster in AABC will attract more attention to the app. The accurate and authentic handling of texts, terms, and proper names of African provenance must be regarded as one of the cornerstones of the Cluster’s research principles.

### Ulrich Rebstock

Ulrich Rebstock is the mastermind behind the app.

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### #LockdownVoices: Artists Coping with the Pandemic

**Test Sabine Greiner**

At the beginning of the pandemic, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence asked artists associated with the organization how they coped with the situation. Their answers and contributions could be found on all social media channels of the Cluster under the hashtag #LockdownVoices.

In May 2020, the Corona pandemic had taken the world by storm. Every aspect of daily life and work was affected by this crisis that had reached global creative communities and forced them to stay at home. As a result, activities such as concerts, exhibitions being cancelled, and venues closed. The global creative community felt the repercussions of the Coronavirus as much if not much worse than the rest of the world. Even though their livelihood was in jeopardy many of them turned to an artistic outlet to give voice to their anxiety and frustration. They used their talent as a valuable outlet channeling their worries and thoughts and subsequently shared them with the world.

Giving a platform to the Cluster’s creative community was seen as an essential component of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence. The Cluster of Excellence asked their artists that are associated with the research organization to share their artwork that was created during that special time. Posting or sharing this input on the social media channels of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence was created in order to mark these contributions as evidence of a special time in global history. Prof. Dr. Ute Fendler, Deputy Spokesperson of the Cluster and PI of the Cluster’s Research Section “Arts & Aesthetics”, explains: “The hashtag #LockdownVoices has been created to give artists a platform to display their thoughts and creations during this trying time. It is conceived as a form of moral support for the artistic community that is especially suffering from this crisis.” If you would like to keep track of the Cluster’s social media activities, follow Africa Multiple on: Facebook – @AfricaMultiple, Twitter – @ClusterAfrica, Instagram – @exw2052, YouTube – Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, and LinkedIn – Cluster of Excellence Africa Multiple.
Philosophy and Genre: An ERC Consolidator Grant at the University of Bayreuth

The team in session with filmmaker Anna Sowa of Choutte Films (top row from left: Anna Sowa, Albert Rondha, Alena Rettová, Chantal Gishomu; bottom row from left: Pierre-Philippe Fratierre, Michelle Clarke, Benedetta Lanfranchi) support the University to give the study of African intellectual traditions, African languages and literatures, African art, postcolonial and decolonial theory, and the epistemologies of the Global South create a unique context for the work of the ERC team.

Examing the rich traditions of thought in Africa

Philosophy and Genre argues that philosophy is always expressed in a specific cultural context. The impact of genre on philosophical expression within the rich traditions of thought in Africa. Since 1 April 2020, the University of Bayreuth has hosted an ERC Consolidator Grant, entitled Philosophy and Genre: Creating a Textual Basis for African Philosophy, led by Alena Rettová, Professor of African and Afrophone Philosophies at the University of Bayreuth. The Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence and the ERC team have regularly met online. They run a webinar series, inviting prominent scholars who work on African philosophy and genre studies.

The impact of genre on philosophical expression is especially relevant in African cultures, where academic philosophy has been decisively informed by European philosophical traditions and still remains largely oriented towards philosophical questions as defined by Western philosophers or, at best, by the globalised discourse of postcolonial criticism. As a consequence, the academic tradition of philosophy in Africa uses almost exclusively European languages and projects its understanding of reality within a European philosophical conceptual repertoire; it is divorced from philosophical discussions developed within a literary tradition and a culture: both have a profound impact on what philosophy examines and communicates. The impact of genre on philosophical expression is especially relevant in African cultures, where academic philosophy has been decisively informed by European philosophical traditions and still remains largely oriented towards philosophical questions as defined by Western philosophers. As a consequence, the academic tradition of philosophy in Africa uses almost exclusively European languages and projects its understanding of reality within a European philosophical conceptual repertoire; it is divorced from philosophical discussions developed within a literary tradition and a culture: both have a profound impact on what philosophy examines and communicates.

Within the medium of African languages and through genres that have for centuries served to articulate philosophical topics in African cultures, Philosophy and Genre, running until March 2025, draws upon case studies in eight languages and multiple genres to theorise the role of genre in philosophical expression and to examine the content of the rich traditions of thought in Africa.

The team at the University of Bayreuth consists of three postdoctoral researchers and one senior researcher. Chantal Gishomu’s research covers poetry in Kinwundu; Benedetta Lanfranchi works on digital genres; Michelle Clarke studies short fictions that project scenarios of ecological development; and Albert Kasanda interrogates the essay in Gikuyu. Another senior researcher, Pierre-Philippe Fratierre, Professor of French Studies at the University of Warwick, UK, collaborates with the team. Featured works on Francophone novels and essayistic prose. The Principal Investigator, Alena Rettová, works on novels in Swahili, Lingala, Shona, English, and French.

The project was launched in the beginning of the African coronavirus crisis and its first year was heavily affected by the pandemic and the anti-virus restrictions imposed by the governments of European and African countries. The team have regularly met online. They run a webinar series, inviting prominent scholars who work on African philosophy and genre studies. As a virtual reading group, they have collaborated in realizing the multiple facets of genre theory.

The IAS has been instrumental in attaining this international recognition through the coordination and organisation of conferences, summer winter schools, visitingnips, setting up cooperation agreements with universities in Africa and elsewhere, facilitating the acquisition of third-party funding, and especially its role as an ambassador of the University of Bayreuth worldwide. At all the places I have visited on four continents during my IAS years people always happily mentioned the IAS and were looking forward to coming back to Bayreuth.

Oh, yes! I spent most of my last years at the University of Bayreuth co-working on this application. I will summarise my vi-sion and will explain the role of creating projects as well as my career as a researcher. I wanted to learn the dynamics of writing a wide-scale interdisciplinary project proposal.

Yes, I wanted to be part of the chapter in Bayreuth African Studies, a chapter in which working on equal footing with colleagues in-from Africa would be emphasised and the politics of creating positions, recruiting, and consolidating positions in African Studies would put diversity more into focus. The Cluster has made significant strides in this direction, but there is still a long way to go. Thirdly, regarding the research agenda, I wish to emphasise the need for more socially relevant research projects, rather than projects that turn the African continent into a testing ground for context-irrelevant theoretical experimentation. Lastly, I strongly wish that Clusters in general provide more space for advanced research and reduce the administrative demands on researchers.

A scholar of African Literatures and Languages and founding member of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, Rémi Tchokothe hails from Cameroon, where he still resides after receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and English Literature from the University of Yaoundé 18 years ago. He is an MA student, PhD student, and assistant professor at the Africa Studies at the University of Bayreuth. He is a specialist in African Languages and Literatures and Literatures in 2012 at BIGSAS, he took up the position of academic councilor at the Chair of African Literatures at the University of Bayreuth. As he progressed his researcher interests in the field of Swahili fiction to include African youth languages and the nexus of literature and migration. As one of the few African scholars employed at the University of Yaoundé at the time, Tchokothe was instrumental in putting Critical African Studies on the agenda of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence. He remains affiliated with the Cluster, where he co-directs the research project “Multiple Artworks, Multiple Indian Ocean” and remains an outspoken advocate for the reconfiguration of African Studies.
New Year Lecture: Figuring out How to Reconfigure African Studies

Text and photos SABINE GREINER

On 16 January 2020, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence invited the interested public to the Cluster’s first annual New Year Lecture. Rüdiger Seesemann, Dean of the Cluster, took it upon himself to give the inaugural lecture under the title Figuring out how to reconfigure African Studies, providing illuminating insights into what the Cluster has set out to achieve.

In late 2019, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence decided that the Cluster’s yearly line of activities were in need of a proper kick-off event. The idea of the annual New Year Lecture was born. The lecture was envisioned as a platform where members of the Cluster present, exchange, and further develop ideas that provide leads for joint work in the months to follow. For 2020, none other than the Dean of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, Rüdiger Seesemann, presented the inaugural New Year Lecture as the first of a series of yearly events.

“Teaenery years” of the Cluster begin

The inaugural New Year Lecture took place on 16 January 2020. While conceived as the first get-together of all Cluster members in each calendar year, invitations also went out to the interested public. Markus Zanner, Provost of the University of Bayreuth at the time, delivered a welcome address to a huge crowd: more than 150 people had accepted the invitation and attended the highly anticipated lecture in person, with many more watching via live-stream. Zanner congratulated the Cluster on its first year of existence. Comparing the Cluster’s expected life-span of seven years with the lifetime of a person, he mused, “With one year gone, the infancy of the Cluster is now almost over. Now, I wish the Cluster good ‘teaenery years’!”

An ongoing process

After being introduced by Ute Feindler, the Cluster’s co-spokesperson and Vice Dean of Internationalisation and Public Engagement, Seesemann first reviewed the previous months of the Cluster’s existence, from the selection of the African Centre of Excellence in July 2019 to its official inaugural event, the opening conference that culminated in a magnificent concert in the Margravial Opera House in late October 2019. He then reflected on the Cluster’s logo, which can be read as a metaphor for the multiple forms of connective knowledge production the Cluster aims to achieve. The Dean went on to mull over the Cluster’s motto “Reconfiguring African Studies”, describing it as “a lofty objective” echoing the Cluster’s overarching aim, “which is no less than the reconfiguration of African Studies, on both the conceptual and the structural level.”

Seesemann explained that the Cluster, as stated in the original proposal text, “is conceived as a transformative space, within which to systematically advance the study of African and African Diasporic ways of life and world-making via the pursuit of cutting-edge research and theory-building based on new inter- and transdisciplinary formats of research cooperation.” However, Seesemann continued, “developing a blueprint for the reconfiguration of African Studies is one thing, and implementing it is another.” The first year had taught the members of the Cluster an important lesson: Reconfiguring African Studies was a process that required perseverance. Rather than taking a few straightforward steps, the Cluster members need to figure out over and over again how to reimagine African Studies.

Necessary tools to reach the Cluster’s goal

According to Seesemann, the Cluster employs two important structural tools in order to work towards this goal: First, the establishment of new research partnerships with African academic partners through the African Cluster Centres, thus complementing the existing research networks; and second, the gradual creation of a Digital Research Environment designed to take over three essential tasks: to connect all segments of the Cluster’s research infrastructure, to offer tools that allow the Cluster members to work jointly with shared databases, and to provide working formats that reflect the heterogeneity, complexity, and dynamism of the Cluster’s research. Seesemann also stressed the importance of the Cluster’s agenda for the promotion of gender equality and diversity, where structural and conceptual components are closely intertwined.

Multiplicity is key

The Dean of the Cluster also gave a detailed exposition of the Cluster’s research agenda and asked whether ‘Africa’ could be defined in the first place. Seesemann scrutinised this question by using the example of Islam as object of study in Islamic Studies – his area of expertise. In order to introduce a substantial change of perspective, he emphasised the need to overcome binary models inherited from the colonial gaze by zooming in on the multiplicity of the research object. The conceptual reconfiguration of African Studies, he argued, means to explore and analyse the multiple, relational, and reflexive ways in which the African and conceptual components are closely intertwined.
The Cluster's Knowledge Lab made a virtue out of necessity: As a response to the pandemic, the events completely shifted to an online format and as a result brought the international Cluster members even closer together.

The Knowledge Lab is the central forum of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence where overarching theoretical and methodological discussions take place. Cluster members and guests, groups as well as individuals, present their research projects to exchange ideas, discuss their methods, and engage in systematic reflection on their work and disciplines.

Changes and challenges in 2020

Two major developments have shaped the form and content of the Knowledge Lab in the past year. Firstly, after defining four annual themes to focus theory discussion on, the Cluster formed four annual theme groups. These groups are designed to engage a broad range of people and perspectives in programme and event planning. Each group consists of Principal Investigators, early career researchers, and further Cluster members, and coordinates an annual programme with the support of the Vice Dean of Research. This includes the events for the plenary colloquium and the programme for the annual Cluster conference. The group will also publish an anthology based on the annual theme which results from the events of the academic year and will be one of the key publications of the Cluster. The annual theme groups are open to all Cluster members who wish to actively participate in the design of events and the further development of the Cluster agenda.

Secondly, in response to new working conditions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, Knowledge Lab meetings were completely shifted to digital communication formats. The forms of collaboration in the Cluster abruptly changed with the contact ban, as did the collaboration with international partners. From the summer semester of 2020 on, no more face-to-face meetings were held in Bayreuth. Since then, Knowledge Lab meetings have been held entirely as online Zoom events.

The switch to online meetings took some getting used to: no more meeting people in a real room, no more communicating through the nuances of physical expression, no more face-to-face conversations around the scheduled meetings. The participants of the digital Knowledge Lab communicate via a static screen with sometimes poor resolution, unstable connections, and shaky picture or sound, without eye contact. The new daily routine takes its toll, and Zoom fatigue was noticeable for many participants after a while.

Moving closer together

But the change was more than a stopgap – it had positive consequences. The Cluster was forced to use existing technical facilities (in particular, video conferencing) on a daily and systematic basis, to develop suitable working formats for them, and to integrate both into the Cluster's everyday life. The online events of the Knowledge Lab are planned and prepared more intensively, moderator and discussant roles are assigned, and all steps and procedures are precisely coordinated. The events are carefully documented: some are recorded. Above all, the difference between Cluster members present in Bayreuth and those absent has disappeared. In the new formats of digital sociability, ACC partners have become closer, and the exchange of content with them has intensified considerably. Meanwhile, most of the Knowledge Lab events are planned with the participation of the ACCs.

COVID-19 has also set new framework conditions for research. Research trips had to be postponed or even cancelled, which put a lot of strain on project staff. In the Knowledge Lab, this has led to a focus on conceptual discussions, exchanges of ideas about field research in Africa under pandemic conditions, and a particular attention to alternative ways of making research data accessible. Finally, Cluster members felt challenged as researchers to live with the threat of a viral epidemic and to do their best to better understand it and its consequences.

Website of the Cluster’s annual themes and annual theme groups:
At the end of January 2020, the Cluster's Digital Solutions team organized an international conference on the topic of digital research in African Studies. The event, called Frontiers in Digital African Research, attracted experts from all over the world to Bayreuth for presentations, discussion, and exchange.

Who would have thought at the beginning of last year that the conference Frontiers in Digital African Research, organized by the Digital Solutions team of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, would be one of the last major non-virtual research events of the Cluster before COVID-19 first turned everything silent and then moved it into the digital sphere? Even though the pandemic already had a stranglehold on Wuhan by then, the conference’s organisational team was able to bring speakers and visitors together in person at bawenewhaus from 30 January to 1 February 2020. Additionally, the Digital Solutions team started to address their aim to use the digital space as a better link to the Cluster’s partner universities. The talks were live-streamed, but only the talks. Today, with the forced development of online formats, the academic community handles online conferences more professionally. The post-COVID world will definitely profit from the experiences, which started in February 2020. Going forward, there will be more hybrid formats, which will allow a much broader communication.

Furthermore, since the field-driven research of many Cluster-funded projects cannot take place because of the pandemic, issues of data retrieval, data processing, and statistical data evaluation and data verification in social media networks have become an alternative option to field-driven data agglomeration. These approaches require their own concepts, methods, and tools – an aspect that would have its own place in a panel of a conference organised nowadays.

Although the conference format might have been ‘old fashioned’ in some respects, all the topics of digital transformation that were addressed in four thematic panels from the angles of various disciplines have stayed current and have become even more relevant through the pandemic. Indeed, the opening keynote speech by Tunde Ope-Davies (Openbi), Professor at the University of Lagos, addressed the impact of the exponential growth in the use of ICT technologies across the African continent and emphasised the opportunities these technologies provide for the digitization of academic knowledge and collaborative research.

Stefan Ouma, Chair of Economics Geography at the University of Bayreuth, in his analysis of knowledge production procedures of the five big academic publishing houses, illustrated that Big Data epistemology, originating from economically-driven contexts, has already entered the academic field. Research data becoming proprietary capital in this corporate world finds, however, counter-developments in open access initiatives and data blogs. Focusing on the potential of societal change through ICT technologies, Zakari Yau from the Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) in Kano, Nigeria, gave in-depth insight into the reasons for the gender digital divide in Nigeria and showed ways to overcome it and build up a gender digital inclusion agenda.

The topic of legal and ethical requirements in research data management (RDM) processes has remained equally important or has become even more so through the wider use of digital tools, like video conferencing, since the start of the pandemic. Alex Makaula from the African Law and Technology Institute (AFRLIT) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, presented an overview of the state of the art in privacy law regulations on the African continent, mostly drafted after the model of European General Data Protection Regulation (EU-GDPR) rights but not yet finally adopted. Makaula also pointed out that the main challenges lie in the varying perceptions of privacy and awareness of the matter in Africa. This is also due to a lack of experts concentrating on the issue, especially in an academic context.

Oliver Watteler from the GESIS Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences in Cologne, Germany, then gave insight into the complex issue of the GDPR, also in relation to the question of data collection and data processing in and outside the EU, which is of high relevance for African Studies scholars based in the EU. Michael Kowt from Yale University, USA, subsequently gave an entirely different view, talking about ‘techlash’ and the issue of digital colonialism, where decentralisation, education, and global equality are an imperative. Markus Coester from the University of Bayreuth addressed copyright and intellectual property rights (IPR) issues, particularly in relation to research on African music, criticising the large amount of unsolved and only insufficiently addressed issues.

The panel Semantic Web Technologies was a mixture of best practice projects on ontology-driven information systems and their architecture, with interlinked important aspects of semantic mappings, especially in the field of natural language processing (NLP), as Gábor Bella from the University of Trento, Italy showed: the mapping of concepts of meaning in different natural languages allows diversity-aware digital language resources and tools for underrepresented languages to be built up. This will help to overcome the digital language divide and will enable balance between universality and uniformity, as well as locality and diversity, in the digitised world.

The panel on Digital Archives and Repositories in Africa and African Studies again aimed to dive into existing data-bases and projects, tackling also upon issues of outreach and participation, as with the International Library of African Music (ILAM) of Rhodes University in South Africa. How archives can be used for participatory research and practices nowadays, turning the music archives into living holdings, was shown by the etnomusicologist and ILAM archive director Lee Watkins. Usability, accessibility, and creating awareness of archival holdings and their relevance in an increasingly digitalised society form part of social and economic development. Awareness of historical archival holdings, their preservation, and accessibility are equally at the heart of the Endangered Archives Programme (EAP) of the British Library, discussed by its curator, Jody Butterworth. After an overview of the project’s history and its outreach by web access statistics, recently accomplished digitisation projects in Africa were presented, including the early Islamic pious prints of the Maal Muhammad Idris collection in Zanzibar and the Taal family archives in Senegal and Mali.

Mireille Djennou introduced the audience to the comprehensive collections on and from sub-Saharan Africa held at Indiana University, and how they are currently accessible to users. The panel closed with the talk by Wolfgang Kraus about the Ethnographic Data Archive (EDA) recently established at Vienna University, Austria. While current science policy demands unrestricted sharable open data, he pointed to the problems these demands pose to ethnographic data with its qualitative dimension and equally highly person-driven components. Despite these specifics, Kraus emphasised the importance of preserving digitally ethnographic data and sharing it whenever possible, as rich and interesting materials and information are embedded in these datasets and supersede the research questions of their primary researchers.

The conference facilitated discussions between lecturers.
Transdisciplinary and Insightful: Symposium on Intersectionality

S
ince October 2019, the topic of intersectionality has suc-
cessfully been added to the curriculum of the Universi-
ty of Bayreuth. In the beginning of February, a symposium on the top-
ic brought even more scholars and students together for a valuable ex-
change. It scrutinised intersectional-
ity as a concept and as an analytical approach that influences political
activism.

The Africa Multiple Cluster and the Gen-
der, Queer, Intersectionality and Diver-
sity Studies (GeQuInDi) network at the University of Bayreuth, explains.

In October 2019, Arndt founded a com-
plementary studies programme at the University of Bayreuth titled Intersection-
ality Studies. Arndt says: "The symposium was a perfect way to end the first semester of our new programme – we were able to offer students and scholars a valuable array of different opinions and views on intersectionality. They were able to partic-
ipate in the debate with experienced and renowned scholars of the topic."

Keynote by S.N. Nyeck

The symposium started on Thursday evening with a keynote by S.N. Nyeck who at the time was residing in Bayreuth as a fellow of the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies. Nyeck built her talk titled Intersectionality, Intercon-
textuality and No-thing around the film Proteus and scrutinised intersectionality and examined queerness in the coloni-
ral context. "Implied in the very idea of intersectionality is the assumption that something must always intersect at a given interpersonal construct. Yet, auto-

matically and empirically, an intersec-
tion may yield nothing and is said to be 'empty' even if the intersecting sets are not," Nyeck pointed out.

The Future of Intersectionality

The second day of the symposium started with a panel discussion focus-
ing on the future of intersectionality. Nyeck, Arndt, Antje Klei and Annette Keilhauer, both from the Friedrich-Al-
exander-University in Erlangen, and Christine Vogl-William, the Cluster of Excellence’s Director of the Gender and Diversity Office, all contributed to the debate. The discussion’s topics ranged from intersectionality in literary studies, to the use of the term ‘race’, and to the relevance of the study of intersectional-
ity itself.

Panels on Friday

On Friday, two panels discussed the topic of intersectionality from various angles:

Panel Activism and Resistance (Chair: Christine Vogl-William):

・ Ramola Ramtohul (University of Mauritius)
Intersectionality and women’s/intersectional activism in Mauritius

・ Rejoice Chipurupi
(University of Johannesberg)
Endangered political voice. Reflection on activism in Zimbabwe’s ‘new dispensa-
tion’

・ Antje Daniel (University of Vienna)
Intersectionality and protest: New pathways in social movement studies? Intersec-
tional lens on student protests in South Africa

・ Tania Mancheno
(University of Hamburg)
Notes on a decolonial approach to man-
hood

・ Peter Simatayi
(Moi ACC, Moi University, Eldoret)
Diaspora’s intersectionalities

・ Xin Li (University of Bayreuth)
Post-colonial and post-human intersec-
tionality – Towards a trans*sectional paradigm

The day came to a festive close with music played by the Merheba Dao after a long day of discussions and lectures the partic-
ipants gladly listened to Mahan Mirarab on guitar and Uygur Vural on cello.

Keynote by B Camminga

The last day of the symposium started with a keynote by B Camminga from Wits University, Johannesburg. Cam-
mimga talked about Intersectional vi-
dences. A reading of parliamentary debates about transgender asylum seekers in South Africa. They started from the specific rights that are granted to trans-
gender persons in South Africa and that should be granted to transgender asylum seekers, too, but as Camminga stressed, transgender asylum seekers are both, trans-
gender and asylum seek-
ers, and thus face inter-
sectional discrimination.

In bringing together xen-
ophobic and sexist bias-
es, these perceived illegal immigrants are left in an either-or position. This was shown by looking at state-NGO-LGBT-dynamics and the tensions between constitution and realities. As Camminga showed, all this is happening in a field of transna-

tional influences setting frames and leav-
ing transgender asylum seekers between transformativity and transnormativity.

Panels on Saturday

Afterwards, another three panels exam-
ined intersectionality from various per-

spectives:

Panel: Trans*Intersectionality
(Chair: Annette Keilhauer)

・ Tomás Jules Fuetty (University of Kiel)
Trans* and critical diversity

・ Mario Faust-Scalisi
(University of Bayreuth)
Sexuality minority rights and Chilean comic cultures

・ Antje Keilhauer
(Chair: Antje Daniel)

・ Palagia Goulmari (Oxford University)
‘Where are you (really) from?’ Trans-
gender ethics, ethics of unknowing, and transformative adoption in Jackie Kay’s Trumpet and Toni Morrison’s Jazz

・ Jody Metcalfe (University of Bayreuth)
Mixed race adoption in South Africa and Germany

・ Diana Zee Smida
(University of Bayreuth)
Knowledge, emotion, critical feminism, mad studies

・ Numaira Khan
(University of Bayreuth)
Exclusion and subordination of Hindu widow’s in Bapsi Sidhwa’s novel: Water

・ Panel Intersectional Feminism
(Chair: Mario Faust-Scalisi)

・ Tomupuise Maphosa
(University of Bayreuth)
No home for a girl in return

・ Stephen Ntshikizayi
(University of Bayreuth)
‘Where are you (really) from?’ Trans-
gender ethics, ethics of unknowing, and transformative adoption in Jackie Kay’s Trumpet and Toni Morrison’s Jazz

・ Nelly Fais-Sad
(Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main)
Lolita – The myth of the child-woman in visual media

The symposium ended with an overview as to where Intersectional Studies are heading – as theory; approach, but also

as activism.

The group of participants in front of IWALEWAHAUS
The First Year of African Legal Studies in Bayreuth Saw Various Digital Events

Text PHILIPP BOGENSPERGER, ISABELLE ZUNDEL

The Chair of African Legal Studies at the University of Bayreuth looks back at its first full year since its establishment in late 2019.

2020 has been the first complete year of the Chair of African Legal Studies (ALS) and, since then, a lot has happened already. The unexpected outbreak of the pandemic in spring of 2020 knocked initial plans on the head but at the same time marked the beginning of a rethinking. Creative solutions for new ways of academic exchange were sought and found. And the increasing digitalisation opened up new ways of cooperation in the academic field. In this spirit, ALS Chairholder Thoko Kaine and his team brought the African legal world to Bayreuth through a number of digital events.

Everyone’s human rights – A series of debates on human rights in Africa

From August to October 2020, the Chair of ALS at the University of Bayreuth hosted a series of debates under the title “Everyone’s human rights – A series of debates on human rights in Africa.” Held for the first time, the series comprised five lectures followed by discussion, and presented diverse and interdisciplinary perspectives on the topic of human rights.

The series was kicked off by Joan Nyanyuki, Executive Director of the African Child Forum in Ethiopia, speaking about “Improving access to a child friendly justice system in Africa.” Her talk specifically showcased the challenges that children on the African continent are frequently confronted with. In the second lecture, Redson Kapindu, High Court Judge in Malawi and professor at the University of Johannesburg, focussed on the topic “The principle of human dignity in constitutional adjudication in Malawian courts.” The third speaker, Melina Kalfelis, member of the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies, lectured on “They are frightening, but I can sleep at night. On violence, human rights and security in the postcolonial state.” Kalfelis described her current research on Koglweogo, a self-defence group establishing forms of extra-legal governance in Burkina Faso.

Yvonne Dassab, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Namibia, continued the series in her talk using the law as a tool to enhance social justice: locating Namibia’s value system using the text of the Namibian constitution. Chikosa Silungwe, Attorney General of the Republic of Malawi, rounded off the series with his talk on “Constitutions and human rights: Whispers from the South,” focusing on the Malawian presidential elections in 2019/20. The extensive, fruitful, and interdisciplinary discussions after each presentation provided a frame for close and informal exchanges between all participants and was described as “academically stimulating” by Kapindu.

First Chilean-German-Tanzanian Legal Talk (CGT Talk)

On 28 September 2020, the Tanzanian German Centre for Eastern African Legal Studies (TGCL), of which Kaine is also project leader, together with the Heidelberg Centre Latin America (HCLA) launched a legal talk series. The first conference – held online – brought together over 40 students and researchers from East Africa, Latin America, and Germany. This connection between scholars from the Global South is innovative in the history of the TGCL.

Firstly, Jesse James of the University of Dar es Salaam School of Law, Tanzania, presented on the topic of Synopsis of Tanzania human rights legal framework. Secondly, Rita Lages from the University of Chile, Faculty of Law, Human Rights Centre, gave an introduction to the migration and asylum law of the European Union. The third presentation, entitled Fundamental rights in the current Chilean constitutional debates, was given by Sven Kozrlitus, HCLA, who is a long-term DAAD lecturer at the Law Faculty of the University of Chile. The online event ended with a lively discussion where comparisons were drawn between the respective countries.

Climate Justice in the Global South

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity. Climate change laws, energy laws, and human rights frameworks are key instruments for coping with this challenge. The Global South is disproportionately affected by the global implications, which should be reflected in the measures designed to fight climate change. On 12 October 2020, the Chair of ALS hosted a workshop featuring leading international experts on this topic, each focussing on a different specialist subject. The speakers were Stephen Turner of the University of Essex, Philippe Cullet, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London, Ronald Malcom from the University of Surrey, all in the United Kingdom, and Patricia Kameri-Mbote and Oguye Nicholas Oromiah, both from the University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Kaine also gave input focusing specifically on the role of the African Union in relation to climate change. After each presentation, the topic was reflected on in a thought-provoking conversation with the audience. The workshop was also the kick-off event to the Chair’s seminar Climate Justice in the Global South, which focussed on the possibilities available in international environmental law and human rights to seek just and equitable outcomes for communities in the Global South for damage resulting from climate change.

All of the aforementioned events have been made available to the public on the official YouTube Channel of the ALS Chair. In addition to the events, the Chair of ALS has established the africanlegalstudies.blog in which cutting edge analyses on key issues in African politics, law, and development are published weekly.
Events

Cinema Africa Presents AfriKaleidoskop – a Film Night at a Historic Movie Theatre

Text SABINE GREINER

The Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence continued its cinematographic endeavours in 2020. In January, the Cluster extended an invitation to see three outstanding films during one movie night.

When Cinema Africa was founded thirteen years ago by Ute Fendler, Chair of Romance and Comparative Literature at the University of Bayreuth, her vision was clear: Bringing African voices and pictures to a broader German audience. Today, that vision is so much in line with the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence’s agenda that it came as no surprise that the research organisation has adopted and supports the initiative’s projects wholeheartedly.

After a very successful cinematic festival in the fall of 2019, the Cluster’s Internationalisation and Public Engagement portfolio went full speed ahead to plan a number of cinematographic events that were supposed to happen in the course of 2020. However, the Cinema Africa screenings, along with every other artistic get-together around the world, came to an abrupt halt as soon as the Corona pandemic hit Germany in March 2020. And so it came about that Cinema Africa’s only event of 2020, AfriKaleidoskop took place on 15 January 2020.

AfriKaleidoskop presented at an iconic place

For AfriKaleidoskop, Fendler and her team invited people to experience a set of three films during an all-night movie event. The location had been chosen carefully: Cinema Africa welcomed the audience at the Reichshof, an iconic movie theatre in Bayreuth that once was the crown jewel in a group of distinguished cinemas but eventually had to make way to the big cineplex chains; today the Reichhof is used for selected events only. “To give people a chance to see our presentation in that historic setting in Bayreuth made the evening extra special,” recounts Fendler, who is also the Deputy Spokesperson of the Afrika Multiple Cluster of Excellence. “We aimed to combine old and new, modern and old-fashioned, German and African, in order to give people an extra incentive to come and join us.”

The plan worked out just as the organisers had hoped and a total of 150 people came together to experience one, two, or all three of the movies presented at the renowned movie hall.

the iconic movie theatre Reichshof was the venue for the 2020 Cinema Africa. (Photo: Sabine Greiner)

Carefully: Cinema Africa welcomed the audience at the Reichshof, an iconic movie theatre in Bayreuth that once was the crown jewel in a group of distinguished cinemas but eventually had to make way to the big cineplex chains; today the Reichshof is used for selected events only. “To give people a chance to see our presentation in that historic setting in Bayreuth made the evening extra special,” recounts Fendler, who is also the Deputy Spokesperson of the Afrika Multiple Cluster of Excellence. “We aimed to combine old and new, modern and old-fashioned, German and African, in order to give people an extra incentive to come and join us.” The plan worked out just as the organisers had hoped and a total of 150 people came together to experience one, two, or all three of the movies presented at the renowned movie hall.

Broad spectrum of African storytelling

The movie Farming is not set in Africa, but in Tilbury, United Kingdom. When a black teenager is placed in a white British family by his Nigerian parents, he is faced with an identity crisis of enormous proportions. When Eni becomes a teenager, he finds himself a part of a group that he himself had victim to before – a gang of skinheads. Farming is a ruthless autobiographical account by the director Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje bearing witness to a questionable practice of the 1960s and 1980s. The film dramatically showcases the brutality of racial cleavages in the United Kingdom.

The last film of the night was Rafiki. The drama, directed by Wanuri Kahiu, tells the story of two young Kenyan women, Ziki and Kena, who fall passionately in love. However, with their relationship socially unacceptable in Kenya and their parents working as political enemies, their romantic journey soon becomes more and more difficult and dangerous.

Series on Afro-European identities

In spite of the pandemic, the series continued with a number of online screenings on Afro-European stories in 2021. “We are confident we will present more films with an audience in attendance as soon as the COVID restrictions are lifted,” explains Fendler. “In response to the feedback we received last year, the latest AfriKaleidoskop presentations will always be followed by a discussion, so the audience can share and debate the impressions that they have gotten from their viewing experience.”
On Worlds and Artworks
Mirrors Work of the Research Section Arts and Aesthetics

From 10 to 14 February 2020, the Research Section Arts and Aesthetics organised its first workshop, On Worlds and Artworks, at the Research Institute of Music Theatre (RIMT) in Thurnau and partly in Iwalewahaus, mirroring the broad range of arts represented in the Research Section.

The Research Section (RS) Arts and Aesthetics take a perspective on multiplicity that brings artworks, as multi-layered configurations which have their own way of relating to the world, to the forefront. Artworks constantly emerge through and in relation to each other, as do the material and social conditions in which they take shape and make alternative existences sensorially perceptible. In the RS Arts and Aesthetics, internal discussions on arts and their representations and her lived and working became a central concern during the winter semester. Drawing on a number of notions of worlds and worlding, particular interest was taken in approaches highlighting a processual notion of world(ing) as constantly coming into being and being itself multiple. Artworks can accordingly also appear in and call into being various worlds.

This major concern was explored further in the workshop. How do artworks relate to worlds? How do worlds emerge in configurations of artworks? Accordingly, contributions were invited which reflected on the ways in which artworks in a broad sense (literature, music, theatre, film, painting, performance etc.) and from various contexts imagine multiple worlds. Contributors were invited to reflect upon their own case studies/findings on aesthetic practices and artworks by addressing the following questions: How do artworks create and inhabit multiple worlds? Considering worlding as a performative act also invites for contributions which consider African cinema, music, literature, performance, and so on not as merely part of an essentially given and neatly delineated African continent nor as part of a Southern-Northern dichotomy. How are African films, music, and narratives circulated in and conditioned by sites, media, and structures in Europe and Asia? How do they make reference to, imagine, and emerge in relation to the material conditions of these various sites? Which role does the aesthetic nature of the arts, which emerges in concrete form, play in this regard?

Lastly, notions of ‘world’ have played a prominent role in discussion of the arts in recent years (world literature, world cinema, world music) – though in different ways and also drawing on various conceptual bases. Despite growing postcolonial criticism, African arts have been typically essentialised in these contexts. Thus, worlding also invited papers critically considering the politics of circulation, exclusion, and inclusion.

The Workshop
The workshop was attended by 27 participants from Europe, South America, and Africa, including our Cluster doctoral students. BIGSAS doctoral students also came to listen to specific lectures on the first day, the keynote by Erhard Schütte, unfortunately had to be cancelled due to sickness. Instead, the workshop participants had a first get-together in the restaurant Ponte in Bayreuth. On the second day, a bus shuttle picked the participants up in Bayreuth and took them to Thurnau. Originally, the whole workshop was supposed to underline the RS’s commitment towards music and its future expansion of collaboration with regard to music and performance by taking place in Thurnau. To save costs, however, the whole workshop could not take place there. However, a whole day in Thurnau, including a concert and an artist performance featuring the singer/primer Corine Kwami was arranged. Another artist and activist, Chinelo Enemu also enriched the programme on the first day by introducing her own form of artwork and community-based artist research in rural Nigeria. While C. J. Odhiambo (ACC Moi) considered theatre for development projects and their creation of alternative imagined worlds, Michaela Ott (Hamburg, project leader Davidizations) proposed new perspectives on aesthetic world-making. Later Sophie Lembcke, working in the same project and writing a PhD on alternative forms of curation, explored the limits and fantasies of ethnographic museum worlds. Marie-Anne Kohl (FIMT), who had professionally organised the day in Thurnau, shared her reflections about the curation of musical festivals, which she intends to explore in more detail in her new research project. Later Anno Mungen, Director of FIMT, gave the enthusiastic participants a guided tour through Thurnau.

On the second day, held in Iwalewahaus, a whole series of papers focused on Indian Ocean imaginaries, starting with Elena Brugioni’s (University of Sao Paulo) exploration of literature and photography of ruins, Kumari Issue’s (University of Mauritius) consideration of posthuman island narratives on Mauritius and Duncan Tarrant’s (University of Bayreuth) overview of his fieldwork findings on Zanzibar. The workshop participants enjoyed the diverse programme of the event.

In the afternoon, Ulf Vierke presented first reflections on his new project in the RS on artworlds. Fellow Samuel Ndogo (ACC Moi) presented findings from his own project on Kenyan popular art, which he had worked on during his stay in Bayreuth. On the last day, Ute Fendler, Gilbert Ndi Shang and Thierry Boudjekar, who all conduct research in the Cluster project on the Black Atlantic, added the view on worlds through another transoceanic lens. While Ndile Shang examined notions of identity and memory in Cartagena, Colomba, Boudjekar’s work in the slave trade West African Francophone prose. Fendler’s presentation on a performance and installation in Brazil (Quatélas), also reflecting links to Africa refracted by the history of slavery, attracted a lot of interest. The discussions were very lively, engaged, and productive. A publication of select papers will appear in the relatively new Africa-based and interdisciplinary Journal of Literature, Film and Theatre edited at the ACC Moi. An open access version will be worked out with the library at UBT. The editorial team consists of both scholars from Moi University and the University of Bayreuth.
The tenth anniversary of the Bayreuth Literature Festival of African and African Diasporic Literatures was held during the height of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The festival team, however, found new formats to present two interesting days of discussions, readings, music, and academic contributions on the topics of care, responsibility and solidarity.

Care, Responsibility and Solidarity: Narrating Resistance in African and African Diasporic Literatures was the theme of the 2020 Digital Literature Festival. Curated by Susan Arndt, Professor of English Studies and Anglophone Literatures at the University of Bayreuth, and Katharina Fink, Deputy Director of Iwalewahaus, the festival took place over the course of two days on 3 and 4 July 2020. Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the organisational team chose a Zoom room as the most fitting modus operandi for bringing together the participants and streaming the festival’s proceedings both on YouTube and Facebook. Chosen for its ongoing relevance in a changing society and an academic landscape affected by COVID-19, the guiding theme of ‘care’ wove together academic contributions, poetry, music, and book discussions. The contributions also included a presentation of the book Ghosts, Spectres, Revenants: Hauntology and book discussions. The clear highlights of each evening were the lectures given by very prominent contemporary intellectuals: Achille Mbembe and Alice Hasters. The researcher, educator and artist Naiuhlongweshwephe Mushaandja was in attendance throughout the festival, taking notes and collecting material for a possible zine publication with Iwalewabooks.

The festival had live audiences of 30 to 170 people during the event, while the documentation videos on social media and YouTube have received over 1,000 hits since then.

While the digital format was borne out of the necessity to find solutions for the challenges that the global pandemic entails, the festival team also considers the new format to be a blessing in disguise: “The new format posed a challenge but also brought beautiful new perspectives. During our first experience with a digital festival of this magnitude we were able to identify the possibilities the digital world has to offer. For the future, we intend to host the festival in a hybrid format, combining live and online events to broaden and diversify our audience,” Arndt explained.

Over the course of the two days, the festival featured three interesting panel discussions: BLM in the USA, Queer Care, and Decolonisation. This year, the festival also presented a mourning slot that focused on the victims and circumstances of anti-black police violence. Each day concluded with an evening concert, rounding up the heavy discussions and lending them an embodied depth. The festival also featured a dance event, as a playful inquiry into the somatic impact of holding events online. The clear highlights of each evening were the lectures given by two very prominent contemporary intellectuals: Achille Mbembe and Alice Hasters. The researcher, educator and artist Naiuhlongweshwephe Mushaandja was in attendance throughout the festival, taking notes and collecting material for a possible zine publication with Iwalewabooks.

The festival featured brilliant keynotes, and featured readings and performances by emerging and famous authors. Some of the many highlights of the festival were the appearances of the pan-African poet and novelist Véronique Tadjo and renowned Kenyan writer and scholar Ngugi wa Thiong’o. On day one, the keynote was delivered by Christine Vogt-Williams, Director of the Cluster of Excellence’s Gender and Diversity Office, who talked about intersectional responsibility in times of COVID-19. On day two, the audience was presented an interesting keynote by Amanda Gouws, Professor of Political Science at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, who discussed COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter movement in the context of the festival’s theme. A welcome address was also given on the first day by the Cluster's Vice Dean of Research, Ermudate Alber.
Mbongeni Buthelezi

– Art Meets Science

Art Meets Science was the motto of the artist residency of the South African Mbongeni Buthelezi at the University of Bayreuth. At the invitation of the Collaborative Research Centre 1357 Microplastics, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, Iwalewahaus, and Friends of Iwalewahaus e.V., Buthelezi was once again a guest in Bayreuth in February 2020, after first getting to know the city and the university in summer 2019.

27.02.– 06.03.2020

His spectacular painting style has attracted worldwide attention. Buthelezi processes collected plastic waste. By heating foil with a heat gun, he glues the soft material together to create a new work. At first glance, the works look like oil paintings. Buthelezi creates not only portraits, but also huge works on exterior walls that captivate viewers with the intensity of their colours and the characteristic way in which they are shaped artistically. The plastic waste used has an environmental message: not enough is being done about plastic waste worldwide.

A multi-day Science Rally and a series of Art Workshops took place from 27 February 2020. The event formats linked artistic, material-scientific, and environmental approaches to the material of plastic and thus built a bridge between art and science in relation to this highly topical subject. Buthelezi’s artist residency also included the first Bayreuth Microplastic Symposium, organised by the Collaborative Research Centre 1357 Microplastics, as well as a workshop of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence on the topic On Worlds and Artworks. During the events, a much-noticed pop-up gallery in a vacant space in Bayreuth’s city centre was realised. This was an impressive way of connecting the artists, the university, and the people of Bayreuth.

Public events provided insights into the artist’s work and at the same time into the natural and environmental science aspects of plastic as a material.

Networking and cooperation in very different directions could not have been more successful. Buthelezi’s artist residency was an ideal demonstration of how art and the natural sciences can work together, and at the same time this wonderful artist and mediator was able to build bridges to the local population and especially to Bayreuth students.

Text // Inken Bößert
Cooperation // Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, Collaborative Research Centre 1357 Microplastics, Friends of Iwalewahaus e.V., Iwalewahaus
In February 2020, Iwalewahaus experienced a special day in the history of its international cooperation: On 17 February, the estate of Iwalewahaus founders Ulli and Georgina Beier was ceremoniously handed over by Ulf Vierke, Alexandra Kuhnke, and Lena Naumann to the chairman of the Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding (CBCIU), Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola and his team.

The extensive collection of archive material, consisting of approximately 40,000 artefacts such as photographs, negatives, slides, documents, and personal records, finally travelled back to Osogbo, Nigeria after an intensive process of digitisation by Iwalewahaus at the University of Bayreuth. In 2007, the Beiers sold the archive to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, more precisely, the Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and National Orientation, to be included as part of the Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding under the auspices of UNESCO. The Beiers stipulated that the archive should find its new home in Osogbo after having been digitised and, as such, made accessible for future research by Iwalewahaus. Regionally, the main quantitative focus of the archival material lies on Nigeria, especially Osogbo, in the southwestern part of Nigeria, where the Beiers lived in the 1950s and 1960s, but other domiciles have also been documented extensively, such as Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; Bayreuth, Germany; and Sydney, Australia. Before the Beiers sold the estate to the CBCIU, they gathered all sorts of documents, from family photos to cooking recipes, texts from lecture series, newspaper clippings, drawings, letters, postcards, publications, and copies of artworks. It is striking how consistently Ulli Beier documented the environments where he and his family lived.

Besides the official ceremony, Alexandra Kuhnke and Lena Naumann opened the exhibition Existential Phantasies – The Monkey On Your Shoulder, which was conceptualised by Katharina Greven in Bayreuth and curated by research associates and curators Kuhnke and Naumann, together with assistant curators from the CBCIU, in Osogbo. The exhibition gives insight into the fragmented archive of Ulli and Georgina Beier. Their exhaustive gathering and production of images was not only a testimony to their artistic and political agenda, but also testimony to their personal search for a ‘new home’: a place of belonging and existence, where they could live out their dreams and fulfil their desires. Osogbo played a crucial role in this search; it determined concepts and modes of living, which they reprised later in Papua New Guinea, in Australia, and even in Germany (see exhibition text by Katharina Greven, 2016).

The cooperation between the CBCIU and Iwalewahaus includes not only the digitisation of the estate, but also an extensive scientific exchange and trainee programs in the field of archive and museum work. Osogbo and its artistic scene is today considered a brand within the discourses on modern Nigerian art, known internationally especially for the artists who emerged from the workshops organized by the Beiers, like Twins Seven Seven, Rufus Ogunde, Muraina Oyelami, Jacob Afolabi, Jimoh Buraimoh, and Bisi Fabunmi – their artworks comprise the core of the Iwalewahaus collection of modern art from Africa.

Osogbo and Bayreuth share a history that is almost 40 years old, which will be maintained through the cooperation between Iwalewahaus and CBCIU and which provides a significant contribution to current discourses within the future.

Text // Inken Bößert, Lena Naumann
Curator // Katharina Greven, Alexandra Kuhnke, Lena Naumann
Curatorial Assistance // Babatunde Akangbe, Oluwemil Gbeola
Project Advisory // Ulf Vierke, Augustus Ajbola
Project Coordination and Logistics // Lena Naumann
Cooperation // CBCIU
Sommerlabor — (Summer Lab):

the title says it all. In the lab, people experiment, investigate, research, and publish the results. Iwalewahaus, known for innovative and visionary exhibitions of African modern art, devotes itself to issues of the day together with artists and scientists. ‘Form’ was chosen as the overarching theme this year. Form as an external, sensually perceptible design and its relationship to content is a fundamental theme of art. In times of social movement, the language of form can anticipate upheavals. The “Sommerlabor” exhibition comprises several projects, including five independent exhibition areas.

Text // Inken Bößert
Curator Programme // Katharina Fink

Museum Visit via Poster
Iwalewahaus with first augmented reality poster in Bayreuth

The exhibition was ready and no one was allowed in: This happened to many museums. But many of them came up with an alternative, and Iwalewahaus in Bayreuth was one of them. The exhibition was called Sommerlabor (Summer Laboratory) and covered five topics. It was filmed, but not simply put on the internet: It could be experienced via poster. The curators went through the Sommerlabor with a cameraman and put together one- to two-minute video sequences. On the poster for the exhibition there was a reference to an app from ARTIVIVE. If an interested viewer downloads this app onto a mobile device, something surprising happens: The exhibit becomes tangible. It is the first poster in Bayreuth with augmented reality. Normally, this technology is used in museums themselves and creates a sensation. But when a crisis situation does not allow a visit to the art inside, the art has to come outside. New video sequences linked to the poster provided variety at regular intervals.

Text // Inken Bößert

African Stories on Metal
Iwalewahaus showed the exhibition Enchasing Yorùbá

The exhibition Sommerlabor (Summer laboratory) comprises five themed exhibitions. One of them is Enchasing Yorùbá, which shows artworks by Asiru Olatunde (Nigeria, 1918–1993). Olatunde was concerned with telling stories of the Yorùbá in Nigeria, clarifying beliefs, traditions, and lifestyles. The artist worked with aluminum plates on which he drove, hammered, and carved his pictures. This created artworks of unique aesthetics whose narrative character virtually invites visitors to “read” what is depicted. Olatunde leads the viewer through the world of the Yoruba with his folk inspiration deeply rooted in his homeland. He saw the country and its people through the eyes of a blacksmith who uses art techniques that had been almost forgotten. The working of the metal plates requires a vivid imagination and a lot of precision. The results are ingenious works of wonder. They all come from the art collection of Iwalewahaus, which houses artworks from the Osogbo art movement to which Olatunde also belonged.

Text // Inken Bößert
Curator // Francois Regis Hitimana
Susanne Wenger
Odin's Song

The creation of the world is ongoing. There is no beginning and no end, everything dies into reborn, everything is born to die. Life and culture grow like grass, life and its meaning never repeat.

Susanne Wenger, born 1915 in Graz, Austria, came to Nigeria in 1950, where she lived as an artist and priestess of the Yoruba religion until her death in 2009. Her artistic work included sculptures, textiles, paintings, and drawings, in which she devoted herself especially to religious, spiritual, and mythical expression. Her credo: art is ritual. Odin's Gesang vor seiner mythischen Transformation depicts the self-sacrifice of Odin, the powerful father of the gods in Germanic mythology. In his quest for knowledge and insight, Odin not only sacrificed one of his eyes and thus half of his sight, but also hanged himself for nine days and nights on the world tree Yggdrasil in order to attain greater wisdom and absorb the knowledge of the runes, the ancient Germanic characters. On the back of the painting is an excerpt from the runic song of Odin as part of the Havamal Old Norse poem. Odin’s self-sacrifice is often interpreted as symbolic death, and his transformation as a resurrection, and for this reason is associated with Christian symbolism. Wenger, who often used her picture titles as reverse. Life and change, death and finitude, sacrifice and gain, knowledge and truth are the major aspects of this painting, which has been in the Iwalewahaus collection since the beginning of 2020 and was shown in Bayreuth for the first time.

Text // Lena Naumann
Curator // Lena Naumann

Stacey Gilian Abe
Indigogo

“Metamorphosis through Indigogo is a biological process by which the artist physically or virtually develops during hibernation, hatching, or rebirth, involving a conspicuous and relatively abrupt shift back and forth in its anatomy and mental state through cell growth, restructuring and differentiation... It’s a pause in motion.”

Stacey Gilian Abe

The tangibility of indigo and its significance within the African slave trade serves as a metaphor for the body as an organic form of identity. It becomes pivotal in exploring the tangible and physical properties of character and individuality, an acquired identity, or the state of being shifted or moved from one position to another in an alternate dimension.

Stacey Gilian Abe was the winner of the Iwalewa Art Award 2019. The Iwalewa Art Award is given to young, up-and-coming artists for outstanding artistic achievements, in particular for artistic engagement with the archive and art collection of Iwalewahaus. The award is linked to an artist residence and an exhibition co-sponsored by the International Office and Iwalewahaus.

Abe’s concepts highlight specific complex situations as autobiographical documentation drawn from earlier and ongoing experiences. They attempt to review conventional depictions of her as a black woman by drawing focus to the mind’s suppleness. These materialise into created imaginary spaces that instigate a surreal mystical feel to the work as it probes unsettling narratives on the subject of identity, gender, spirituality, and cultural mysticism, in both the past and present.

Text // Stacey Gilian Abe, Lena Naumann, Felicia Nitsche
Curator // Lena Naumann, Felicia Nitsche
Project Coordination // Katharina Fink, Lena Naumann, Felicia Nitsche
Hidden Persuaders
Works of art from the Iwalewahaus collection in the repository and public domain

Works from the Iwalewahaus collection have been snatched from their “hidden” existence in the repository and archive and made accessible to a wider public. The title Hidden Persuaders was chosen in reference to the 1957 documentary by the American publicist Vance Packard (1914–1996). In it, Packard refers to the “grasp for the unconscious in everyone” using the example of the advertising industry.

But what about the example of works of art – when are they considered secret, hidden, and concealed? In the storage facility of a museum or not? What makes them an object of the month or part of the Meet the Art series, both forums of Iwalewahaus to make artworks accessible outside of exhibitions? What role does their subject matter and/or the form of presentation play? And what do they do to the viewer? Do they allow recognition or even identification? Do the works change in their charisma and effect within the exhibition, and if so – how? These questions were explored in the exhibition.

Life Classes
An exhibition of works on paper from Uganda

Featuring Ugandan art works on paper recently added to the Iwalewahaus collection, the exhibition takes the form of an active thought laboratory. Through the graphic art collection of Klaus Betz, acquired in Kampala from the 1970s to the 1990s, the exhibit illustrates lesser-known aspects of the social fabric of Uganda and reveals how research serves as a vital form of exhibition-making.

Text and Curator // Sigrid Horsch-Albert
Cooperation // Oberfranken Stiftung

The Virtual Museum — as a Tactile Experience Space

To assert that the current challenges to museums and cultural institutions are limited to digitisation and hygiene concepts does not go far enough. The democratisation of the museum landscape began to pick up speed as the pandemic slowed this dynamic. Virtual tours and online tours may create alternative access – but for whom and at what price? The renaissance of the authorial narrative is not a phenomenon confined to museums.

After the digital metamorphosis, it takes place via social media, so it seems to be modern and innovative – and what museum doesn’t like that? The month of May contains not only International Museum Day but also the European Day for Inclusion. A good reason to think about the expanded possibilities of digitisation.

On 17 May 2000, the first virtual tour took place in Iwalewahaus. With the sonorous title Musée Imaginaire, the guests were received digitally. The format had little to do with the universal aesthetic fantasies by André Malraux and Aby Warburg. Rather, the current requirements with regard to the restricted analogue accessibility of the newly opened exhibition floor demand that the possibilities of digital accessibility be explored.

Primarily blind and visually impaired guests took part in the premiere of the ‘imaginary museum’. The tour with detailed picture descriptions was broadcast in an online conference. In a preparatory meeting, the technical requirements were tested and did not pose any insurmountable barriers.

The video conference also proved to be a useful medium for an audience with limited visual perception. Participants with residual eyesight can use the screen profitably. Exchanges about art can be made more open and communicative. This experience resulted in a series of virtual tours with museum content, despite the days of lockdown. A workshop enriched the Musée Imaginaire with tactile media. In 2020, this innovation was still experimental. As a vision for 2021, it sets new standards for our curatorial ambitions.

Text // Philipp Schramm
The 2020 Activities of the African Cluster Centres in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa

The international research community around the globe was simultaneously affected by the pandemic that swept over the globe in early 2020. Events had to be postponed or switched to another format and plans for research activities had to be altered. The Cluster’s African Cluster Centres (ACCs) at the University Joseph Ki-Zerbo in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), Moi University in Eldoret (Kenya), University of Lagos (Nigeria) and Rhodes University in Makhanda (South Africa) were no exception. However, all four ACCs soon resourcefully adapted to the challenges that COVID-19 imposed on their work and successfully continued with their endeavours as the reports on the following pages show impressively.

I n Burkina Faso, the pandemic im- mobilised the teaching and research activities from March to May 2020. In spite of this challenge, the ACC of the University Joseph Ki-Zerbo of Ouaga- dougou was able to conduct a series of activities including research, scientific days, and training seminars in 2020.

After the breakout of COVID-19 in Bur- skipNote />kipNote

kina Faso, the pandemic context quickly became part of the African Cluster Cen- tre (ACC) activities at the University Joseph Ki-Zerbo in Ouagadougou (UJKZ) in 2020.

Three Cluster of Excellence Research Projects

The first project, led by Fernand Bationo, focused on Screening, Care Pathways and COVID-19 in Ouagadougou. It mapped the screening centres in Ouagadougou opened during the first months of the epidemic to see which Ouagadougou inhabitants were being screened, for what purpose, and what the representations of COVID-19 and the screening entailed. The conclusion was that candidates for screening were mainly a few people planning to travel abroad.

The second study, conducted by the di- rector of the ACC at UJKZ, Yacouba Ban- horo, examined government measures, the reception of these measures among socio-professional categories, the rep- resentations of COVID-19, and the im- pacts of the epidemic control measures on the artisanal mining sector in Burkina Faso. After describing the representations within different professional categories, the study showed how the government decision to stop activities and travel (the lockdown) was interpreted differently and executed, but also how the economic contraction occurred and affected small- scale actors in the mining sector more compared to more affluent actors.

The third study, conducted by Natewonde Sawodogo, focused on Epidemics and Modernity in Burkina Faso: Professional Differentiation, Resilience, and Engagement. It focused on occupational differ- entiation in Ouagadougou, and how this has created categories of people who are more vulnerable than others.

Panel on Global Health

Around COVID-19 again, and reflecting on one of the research projects on Glob- al health and health policies in Africa, the ACC organised a panel around the theme: Institutions specialised in global health governance in the face of the corona-virus pandemic (COVID-19) in Burki- na Faso. Three panelists made presenta- tions: Banhoro introduced global health and its characteristics. Almata J. Diar- ra-Nama, the WHO representative in Burkina Faso, addressed the role of the WHO in the fight against COVID-19, including sharing new science-based in- formation with national health authori- ties, mobilising international partners to support Burkina Faso, raising funds to contribute financially and material- ly to the fight against COVID-19, and operationalising COVID-19 screening centres. Issaika Somba, who came from Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, made a presentation on the West African Health Organisation and its involvement and contribution in terms of health infor- mation, financial and material resour- ces, as well as support and advice to the Economic Community of West Afri- can States (ECOWAS). Yacouba Banhoro welcomes participants of Cultural Heritage Week.

Scientific Conference on COVID-19: Af- rican ACC/Africa Multiple - AREX - UJKZ

Still seeking an understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACC, joining its efforts to those of the UJKZ and the Belgian-Burkinabe cooperation project Higher Academy of Research and Educa- tion (AREX) co-organised a scientific conference on COVID-19. About fifty presentations were made on the ongo- ing research at the UJKZ and elsewhere. It was an interdisciplinary symposium bringing together families of sciences in- cluding mainly the humanities, medical and biological sciences, and mathematics. Not only did this colloquium provide an overview of the research conducted in Burkina Faso as well as the provisional re- sults, but it also showed the importance of interdisciplinarity and trans-disciplinari- ty in the face of the pandemic. Members of the ACC are working with their col- leagues on the editing of the proceedings.

Call for Papers COVID-19

Finally, COVID-19 mobilised research- ers from the five African Cluster Cen-tres. A collective volume coordinated by Susan Arndt, Yacouba Banhoro, Enocent Msindo, Talibat Lawanson, and Peter Si- mate who began in April 2020 is being edited. Nearly 30 articles have been se- lected and are currently being reviewed and corrected. COVID-19 was the global event in 2020 that had a special signifi- cance for all countries. It caused not only lockdowns, but it was also a source of inspiration for many researchers around the world. Thus, the research, the members of the ACC have gained more knowledge about pandemics, their soci- etal impacts, as well as policies and strat- egies to combat them.

ACC Call for Papers: The Problem of Illness in African Literature

Throughout 2020, members of the ACC have been working on several calls for papers for collective volumes. One of this series is on The Problem of Illness in African Literature. The articles select- ed for publication in this volume have been reviewed by the authors and in total, about ten articles by African and European authors of the Africa Multiple system will constitute the book which is ready to be published.

Cultural Heritage Week

The activities of the ACC were extended to various other events including a Cul- tural Heritage Week. Over the course of a week, cultural heritage specialists from the Ministry of Culture, universities, and other organisations such as the Nation- al Museum of Ouagadougou met at the UJKZ. The aim was not only to have a state of scientific knowledge on cultural heritage in Burkina Faso, but also to see the possibilities of future studies. An exhibition of Salô’s second artwork was held, a first at the UJKZ. This exhibition attracted many visitors, including Alkassoum Maiga, the Minis- ter of Higher Education, Scientific Research, and Innovation of Burkina Faso. An evening of mask dance perfor- mance also took place. This week allowed researchers, cultural professionals, and students to get to know each other and to exchange ideas on the management of cultural heritage in Burkina Faso.

Workshop of Knowledge of the Boutique des sciences

Under the supervision of Batono, a workshop on the discovery and knowl- edge of the science shop was organised by the ACC. It was punctuated with theoretical presentations on scientific knowledge and practical discovery of numerous tools based on the internet allowing research and bibliographic clas- sification.

Scientific Day on the African Continental Free Trade Area

A scientific day was organised on the African Continental Free Trade Area, which came into force in 2021. Presenta- tions were made by national and inter- national academic experts, practitioners from the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), the Min- istry and the Chamber of Commerce of Burkina Faso, among others. Partici- pants could learn and interact with the ACC team on the opportunities and challenges of this new zone for UEMOA countries.

Research Methodology Seminar

In preparation for a socio-anthropo- logical research project on endoge- nous community sources of dialogue and peace against terrorism in Burkina Faso, a methodological seminar was organised by the ACC in the nearby city of Koudougou. This allowed aca- demics and participants from different socio-professional categories to retreat and exchange on the issue of terrorism and insecurity in the Sahel, and to famil- iarise themselves with more tools and resource persons that can help in the collection of field data.

Financial Support for Doctoral Student and Early Careers

The ACC granted financial assistance to five doctoral students and eight post-doctoral students, some to com- plete their theses, others to conduct a research project for the publication of scientific articles.

The ACC has organised a training work- shop in project writing for the benefit of members and doctoral and post-doctoral students receiving financial support. Through these activities, the ACC of the UJKZ, in addition to the three projects acquired in 2020 and whose research ac- tivities are ongoing, has carried out many activities in an interdisciplinary frame- work. COVID-19 has been at the centre of concerns in terms of health security, but it has also been the locus of many scien- tific interests beyond the disciplines and research sections of the Cluster.
The African Cluster Centre (ACC) at the University of Lagos (UNILAG) looks back on an eventful and successful year 2020, strengthening its research focus within the Cluster of Excellence by organising a number of events and welcoming new researchers.

**PI Lecture Series**
To support the research focus and agenda of the Cluster, the Lagos ACC organised a monthly lecture series in 2020 featuring ten lectures by the ACC’s principal investigators (PIs) and the fellows of the Lagos ACC.

**Research Projects and Results 2020**
As part of the Lagos ACC projects, the ACC team organised two workshops and a month-long exhibition as well as a round table. The first workshop’s theme was “Methodology for Doing Cutting Edge Research in African Studies and took place from 10 to 11 December 2019. Most of the participants were doctoral students and postdoctoral scholars from the UNILAG. Facilitators came from various disciplines in UNILAG, with Peter Ndege from Moi University, Kenya as lead presenter.

The second workshop was woven around developing a curriculum at the level of basic education. The workshop, entitled Beyond Pedagogy: Purposeful and Sustainable Learning in Africa, was held between 24 to 27 August 2020. Participants were drawn from undergraduate students and scholars in all the faculties of UNILAG. Facilitators were drawn from UNILAG academia and practitioners in the industry, with technical personnel from the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC). The keynote was delivered by Rose Ruto-Korir from the Moi University ACC, Eldoret, Kenya.

The third project was a month-long exhibition, roundtables and documentary on Lagos: Ownership and Identities. It was organised in November 2020 by Lagos ACC PIs Taiabt Lawanson and Aboyele Eleshin, and co-sponsored by the Lagos ACC. The group of participants and facilitators were scholars from all sorts of specialities such as traditional historians, cultural enthusiasts, artists/photographers, and students.

**Cluster Research Grants**
Lagos ACC researchers and PIs were awarded five research grants from the ACC. The projects and lead PIs are:
- **Peju Layiwola** – Rethinking the Artistic Trajectory of African Women Artists
- **Muyiwa Falaiye** – Women as Sages: Exploring the Nature and Value of Feminine Wisdom
- **Ayodele Yusuff** – Digitising Yoruba Folktales for Animation and Value Education
- **Franco Attoh** – Intra-Africa Migration and Xenophobia: Imperative for African Integration
- **Patrick Oloko** – African Popular Arts and Entertainment.

At the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Lagos ACC funded research done by Akinmayaowa Akin-Ofok and Amedema Kazeem Fayanmi. The project was titled: The Informal Workers also Fight COVID-ID-19. The project was done between September and December 2020, and the output will be part of the Cluster’s COVID-ID-19 book project.

The African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights (African Court) at Tanzania held its 6th session from 14 to 16 September 2020.

**New Principal Investigators**
Lagos ACC added two new PIs to the team, bringing the total number of PIs to 16. The new PIs are Olufunke Adeboye, Professor of Social History and incumbent Dean of Arts, and Moses Yakubu, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos, Nigeria.

**Lagos ACC Awards (Fellowships and Scholarships)**
The Lagos ACC started a fellowship scheme in 2020, and awarded Ousseni Illy a two-month Fellowship (October–November 2020). Illy is an Associate Professor of Law at the Thomas Sankara University (formerly the University of Ouagadougou), Burkina Faso, and a Principal Investigator of the Ouagadougou ACC. Joseph Ki-Zerbo University, Burkina Faso. His research focus for the Fellowship was the re-examination of the mandate and mission of the African Court of Justice and the African Continental Free Trade Area. Obadélé Kambon of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana in Legon, was also awarded the Lagos ACC Fellowship for 2020.

In addition to the Fellowship scheme, Lagos ACC awarded two doctoral scholarships to Bamidele Alabi of the Political Science department, and Ayodeji Adeyinka of the English department, both at UNILAG. The scholarship scheme is aimed at supporting young promising researchers who are engaged in research related to African Studies and the overarching agenda of the Cluster.
The year 2020 started on a hopeful note for the Moi University African Cluster Centre (ACC). Establishing the ACC occupied much of 2019. By the end of the year, Moi University researchers had started participating in Cluster activities. A handful had joined teams undertaking research projects based in the University of Bayreuth; one researcher took up a Fellowship there. Peter Ndege was a Keynote Speaker in an ACC workshop at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. These developments had given Moi University faculty engaged in African Studies an indication of the possibilities in the Africa Multiple. Thus, when a Call for Project Proposals came up in March 2020, the response was enthusiastic.

February 2020 found researchers based in the ACC busy working away at project proposals they hoped would win funding by the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence. As this was happening, other activities of the ACC took off. The Africa Colloquium, the semiannual series of the ACC, kicked off on 6 February 2020. From 19 to 21 February 2020, the ACC held its first conference, Reconfiguring African Studies. Muyinya Falaye, Director of the ACC at the University of Lagos, and Enocent Msindo, Director of the ACC at Rhodes University, South Africa, gave keynote addresses at the conference. On 10 March 2020, Franz Kogelmann, Managing Director of Africa Multiple, and Maria Hennig, the Quality Assurance Manager, visited Moi University and held a talk with the university’s Vice-Chancellor, Isaac Kosgey, on the ongoing establishment of the ACC at the institution. All these ac-

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>06.02.2020</td>
<td>The Kenyan Writer and the Discourse of Development</td>
<td>Martina Kopf, University of Vienna, Austria</td>
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<td>27.02.2020</td>
<td>Towards the Democratisation of Knowledge Production: The “Shared Authority” Approach in Social Science Research</td>
<td>Daniela Waldburger, University of Vienna, Austria</td>
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<td>27.08.2020</td>
<td>Prospects and Challenges of East African Common Market Protocol</td>
<td>Henry Kibet Mutai, Kenya School of Law, Kenya</td>
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<td>03.09.2020</td>
<td>Nyanga Rides: Travel Imaginaries in Matatu Transport in Ongata Rongai, Kenya</td>
<td>Miriam Maranga–Musonye, University of Nairobi, Kenya</td>
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<td>10.09.2020</td>
<td>Strange Fruit: Election Violence as Ritual</td>
<td>Wandia Njoya, Daystar University, Kenya</td>
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<td>24.09.2020</td>
<td>The Evaluation of Learning in the Islamic Tradition and its Parallels in Other Ancient Traditions</td>
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<td>On the Aesthetics of Language</td>
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<td>15.10.2020</td>
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<td>Mary Getui, Catholic University of East Africa, Kenya</td>
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<td>15.10.2020</td>
<td>Conceptualizing African Studies in Shifting Theoretical Frameworks</td>
<td>Kembo Sure, Rongo University, Kenya</td>
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<td>22.10.2020</td>
<td>Academic Mobility for Sustainable University/Higher Education in Africa</td>
<td>Caroline Asimwe, Makerere University, Uganda</td>
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<td>29.10.2020</td>
<td>Mainstreaming Kiswahili in the East African Community Agenda for Regional Integration and Sustainable Development</td>
<td>Mary Nderitu, University of Nairobi, Kenya</td>
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<td>05.11.2020</td>
<td>Internationalisation of Academic Mobility in Africa: Annotated Experiences of North–North and South–South Academic Mobility</td>
<td>Yikunoamlak Alemu, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia</td>
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<td>12.11.2020</td>
<td>Debating Local Moralities: The Case of Land Inheritance in Burundi</td>
<td>Claire Medard–Amutebi, Institute of Research and Development – France</td>
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<td>26.11.2020</td>
<td>Imagining the Head of State as Poop: Stella Nyanzi’s Satirical Aesthetics in No Race from my Mouth</td>
<td>Danson Kahyana, Makerere University, Uganda</td>
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<td>03.12.2020</td>
<td>Knowledge, Learning and Teachings from the Friday Khutuba of Shaykh Al-Amin b. Ali Al-Mazrui, 1890–1947</td>
<td>Hassan Mwikimako, Pwani University, Kenya</td>
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The Cluster’s managing director Franz Kogelmann and Quality Assurance manager Maria Hennig at a visit at ACC Moi

Table 1: List of research project proposals submitted by researchers based in the ACC Moi

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Research Section</th>
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<tr>
<td>Regional integration in Eastern and Southern Africa: An appraisal of factors that influence regional integration in Africa: The case of East African community (EAC)</td>
<td>Ken Olouch</td>
<td>Affiliations</td>
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<td>East African Asian writing and the emergence of a diasporic subjectivity</td>
<td>Peter Simatei</td>
<td>Arts and Aesthetics</td>
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<td>Mediated and mediatization of Islamic knowledge in Kenya: Educational institutions, media technologies and performative aesthetics</td>
<td>Hassan Ndlovu</td>
<td>Learning</td>
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<td>Framing identities from human agency mobility on the Kenya-Uganda highway</td>
<td>Omar Egesah</td>
<td>Mobilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing life projects: African identities, moralities and wellbeing</td>
<td>Eunice Kamaara</td>
<td>Morailities</td>
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Table 2: Program of the Africa Colloquium 2020

ACC Moi: Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya

The year 2020 started on a hopeful note for the Moi University African Cluster Centre (ACC). Establishing the ACC occupied much of 2019. By the end of the year, Moi University researchers had started participating in Cluster activities. A handful had joined teams undertaking research projects based in the University of Bayreuth; one researcher took up a Fellowship there. Peter Ndege was a Keynote Speaker in an ACC workshop at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. These developments had given Moi University faculty engaged in African Studies an indication of the possibilities in the Africa Multiple. Thus, when a Call for Project Proposals came up in March 2020, the response was enthusiastic.

February 2020 found researchers based in the ACC busy working away at project proposals they hoped would win funding by the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence. As this was happening, other activities of the ACC took off. The Africa Colloquium, the semiannual series of the ACC, kicked off on 6 February 2020. From 19 to 21 February 2020, the ACC held its first conference, Reconfiguring African Studies. Muyinya Falaye, Director of the ACC at the University of Lagos, and Enocent Msindo, Director of the ACC at Rhodes University, South Africa, gave keynote addresses at the conference. On 10 March 2020, Franz Kogelmann, Managing Director of Africa Multiple, and Maria Hennig, the Quality Assurance Manager, visited Moi University and held a talk with the university’s Vice-Chancellor, Isaac Kosgey, on the ongoing establishment of the ACC at the institution. All these ac-

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The Cluster’s managing director Franz Kogelmann and Quality Assurance manager Maria Hennig at a visit at ACC Moi
African Studies around the Globe

Then COVID-19 happened. The disruption was massive. There was a complete stoppage of work at Moi University, as in all the educational institutions in Kenya.

The second quarter of 2020 thus had an inauspicious beginning. Over the quarter, the interactions with researchers in the other Centres in the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence – University of Bayreuth; University Joseph Ki-Zerbo, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso; University of Lagos; Rhodes University – would be severely curtailed. Logically, the programs planned from the ACC – like Fellowships, etc. – were put on hold. In the meantime, Moi University and the entire university sector in Kenya struggled to adapt to the new circumstances. The university explored ways to use the available digital technology to deliver curricula and run other university programs.

The most important activity at the ACC at this point was the writing of the project proposals. At the end of the second quarter, in June 2020, the awarding of proposals funding was announced. Five research project proposals by researchers based in the ACC had made it in the highly competitive bidding (see table 1):

Planning for the commencement of actual research was fine-tuned even as discussions continued whether the research projects that won funding could start in the social environment created to manage the spread of the virus. The team working on Framing identities from human agency mobility on the Kenya-Uganda highway saw an opportunity in the impact of containment measures on human mobilities that could extend their work. They went to the field in early August. Later that same month, the Africa Colloquium resumed in a new, hybrid (part face-to-face, part online) format whose reach enhances the kind of connections that the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence aspires to create and sustain. For the program of the Africa Colloquium see table 2. In conclusion, in 2020, the Moi ACC was, like other research – and generally all human – organisations, significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The effects were largely adverse. Fortunately, due to the digital technology available, some work got done at the ACC – work that ensured that the Centre kept its focus on its raison d’être.

Principal Investigators and the director of ACC Moi with visitors from the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence

Decision for self-care

The ACC Rhodes had planned a number of colloquiums, seminars, and workshops, which were cancelled as a gesture of self-care in the light of the sudden imposition of a prolonged lockdown for the greater part of 2020. In hindsight, the ACC was not quick enough to think of switching to online formats of conferencing, which has now become the norm.

Research proposals

In 2020, four colleagues from the Rhodes ACC submitted short-term research proposals for consideration for funding to the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence. The projects are at different stages of research and require different kinds of fieldwork and data gathering. Watkins could not travel outside of South Africa to conduct research on musical archives. He had to make do with request-
The African Studies Association of India (ASA) aims to foster the study, knowledge, and understanding of African affairs in India and Indian affairs in Africa. In pursuit of this goal, the organisation presented a web symposium series in 2020.

The 2020 web symposium series of the African Studies Association of India (ASA) aimed to map emerging 21st century approaches to African Studies in capturing global engagements of re-surgent African states under the African Union and its Agenda 2063. The symposium’s concept was developed in contrast to the traditional African Studies approach of treating African countries and the region as a dormant recipient of external policies.

The webinars were conducted under different regional segments. In the future there will be an Asian, European, North American, Latin American, Australian/New Zealand, Russian/Commonwealth of Independent States, and African regional segments. Within each region, an attempt will be made to have each webinar discussion on a recent research work on African engagement with the country under discussion. Each web discussion will include, besides the perspective of the country under discussion, a regional perspective, a global perspective, and, most importantly, an African perspective. So far, the South Korean, Japanese, and Danish perspectives were reflected.

ASA organised numerous webinars in collaboration with international universities, e.g., international webinars on Africa and India During Corona Virus Crisis: New Challenges and Opportunities in Cooperation organised by the Centre for African Studies (CAS), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, in collaboration with ASA India on 15 May 2020. A webinar on Options of Africa in Corona Crisis Under AFROCOM and Financial Clout of China: Comparative Challenges and Opportunities of Engagement with Global South for India, organised by ASA India, in collaboration with CAS-JNU, on 5 June 2020. CAS-JNU and ASA India hosted a webinar symposium series on Mapping Africa’s Global Engagement by Reconfiguring African Studies (Discussion Country: South Korea’s Africa Engagement). Jointly organised by CAS-JNU, and ASA India in collaboration with Institute of African Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (HUFS), South Korea, on 10 October 2020. CAS-JNU and ASA India hosted a webinar symposium series on Mapping Africa’s Global Engagement by Reconfiguring African Studies (Discussion Country: Japan) of African Studies, HUFS, South Korea, Nicodemus Fru Awassom, visiting professor, Department of History, University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana; Suweon Kim, assistant professor, Graduate School of International and Area Studies, HUFS, South Korea, Ben Katouka, assistant professor, Division of African Studies, HUFS, South Korea, Linaa Devdulkar, assistant professor, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania; Ruchita Beri, assistant professor, School of Global Studies, Chukyo University, Japan; Rachita Beri, senior research associate, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA), New Delhi and Vice-President, ASA India, Bijay Pratihar, associate professor, Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia University and Treasurer, ASA India.

The speaker list included lecturers from all over the world who participated in the ASA webinars. These included M. Jagadesh Kumar, Vice Chancellor, JNU, Ute Fendler, Chair of Francophone Literatures, Cultures, and Media in Africa, University of Bayreuth, Germany; Yongkyu Chang, Director, Institute of African Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (HUFS), South Korea; Ayub Dube, Chair, Centre for African Studies, JNU and Secretary-General, ASA India, New Delhi; Shaabank, former Ambassador of India to Denmark, former Foreign Secretary of India, and former visiting professor at CAS-JNU; Annette Skovsted Hansen, associate professor of History at the Global Studies Programme, Department of Culture and Society, Aarhus University; Karen Lau- terbach, associate professor and Director, Centre for African Studies, University of Copenhagen, Takuo Iwata, professor, College of International Relations, Ritsumeikan University, Japan, Oluayo C. Adesina, Department of History, Faculty of Arts, University of Benad, Nigeria; Scarlet Cornellissen, professor, Department of Political Science, Stellenbosch University, South Africa; Manoj Shrestha, professor, Konan University, Kobe, Japan and Chairman, Board of Directors of Japan Africa Asia Partnership Forum (JAAF), Jeong Kyung Park, Division of African Studies, HUFS, South Korea, Nicodemus Fru Awassom, visiting professor, Department of History, University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana; Suweon Kim, assistant professor, Graduate School of International and Area Studies, HUFS, South Korea, Ben Katouka, assistant professor, Division of African Studies, HUFS, South Korea, Linaa Devdulkar, assistant professor, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania; Ruchita Beri, assistant professor, School of Global Studies, Chukyo University, Japan; Rachita Beri, senior research associate, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA), New Delhi and Vice-President, ASA India, Bijay Pratihar, associate professor, Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia University and Treasurer, ASA India.

The ASA symposium series was held online. (Photo: Adobe Stock, ASA)
Pandemics have marked in history key moments of change in the structure of power and politics, either by restructuring the social, economic, and cultural foundations of society or by the development and spreading of new and more encompassing techniques of mass control. On the one hand, they enable and empower the processing of pre-programmed algorithms that determine the way in which people respond to the information that society presents to them, according to the dominant social hierarchies.

The attempts by governments to reduce or control the coronavirus have had a different impact in various domains of life: closing internal and external borders, quarantine, lockdown, curfews, social isolation, mandatory use of face masks in public spaces, mandatory testing for SARS-CoV-2, and digital surveillance. This pandemic has been experienced in an unequal manner according to class or ethnicity, race, gender, nationality, level of education, age, urban/rural condition and so forth.

The global pandemic unfolded in a global context already characterised by a significant transnational circulation of information and ideas. The feeling of knowing and information from new locations and from social statuses that had previously often been silenced. On the other hand, these technologies make possible the immediate capturing of population data, thus far segmented and dispersed, on people’s movements, social and digital interaction, opinions, taste, aspirations, and fears, which are

vulnerable at the global and local level, with a special emphasis on Africa.

21 years of experience: Factory of Ideas

On this topic, and inspired by the over twenty years of experience of the advanced doctoral school in Ethnic and African Studies Factory of Ideas, an intensive school was set up, jointly organised by the Factory of Ideas team in Brazil, based at the Faculdade de Letras da Universidade Federal de Bahia (UFBA), the University of Campinas, Sao Paolo (UNICAMP) and the Federal University of Maranhao (UFMA), and the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence. The planetary scale of the course contributes to make it a challenging and innovative activity, also in the field of digital humanities, because it proposes to rethink and experiment with technology by developing a prototype of a platform for virtual international, interdisciplinary, and institutional courses at a graduate level.

The XXI edition of the Factory of Ideas was developed around the themes of “Power and Utopia” and consists of two parts. The first part was held entirely online in November and December 2020, with a cycle of eight live sessions, plus a mini-course in three sessions, followed by question and answer sessions. The live series was organised on the platform StreamYard and broadcast to the public on the channel Fábrica de Ideias on the YouTube platform. Those who wanted to could register and, after attending the whole series, receive a certificate. The aim of the 2020 session was to reflect on the impacts of the pandemic from the point of view of the social reconfigurations imposed by social isolation, as well as the effective participation of the State in the management of this global crisis and the fabrication of new political and social agendas in the post-pandemic scenario.

The second part was scheduled for the period 6 May to 17 June 2021, again online as a series of eight live conference sessions plus a mini-course in three sessions on the history of pandemics in Africa. The first part was held exclusively in Portuguese, while the second part will be in English as announced.

The second session, given by Omar Ribeiro Thomaz (UNICAMP), dealt with the denial of the pandemics by the new forms of reactionary populism that we call bolsonarismo – a very hot issue given the tragic Brazilian situation. In closing, the format of the first conference, given by Jamile Borges (UFBA), Antonio Evaldo Almeida Barros (UFMA), and Livio Sansone (UFBA), showed that there are both ruptures and continuities in the way African countries have historically responded to pandemics, often with few means, but still quite efficiently. Fábio Baqueiro Figueiredo (University for International Integration of Afro-Brazilian Liberality (UNILAB) and presently visiting scholar at the University of Bayreuth), in the fourth session, talked about hygienist policies in colonial and post-colonial Angola. He showed that there had been more continuities between these two stages of Angolan history than most laypeople would expect. In the following session, Patrícia Guedes Gomes (UFBA) gave a panoramic view of the tense relationship between (illegal) immigration to Europe, the coronavirus pandemics and the production of discourse on illness and contagion. The sixth session, given by Jamile Borges (UFBA), was dedicated to the future of the digital world, and the relationship between racism, Blackness, and the new ‘dataarchy’ that is being constructed. Finally, in the seventh session, comped by Fábio Filho (UFBA) did a reading of the new language forms produced within and on account of the pandemics by right-wing populism, with ‘negotiations’ deeply entangled in the pain caused by the COVID-19 pandemics, and also, to a lesser extent and in a different fashion, by their left-wing opponents.

The Coordinating team of the Fábrica de Ideias is formed by:
Lívio Sansone (UFBA)
Jamile Borges (UFBA)
Omar Ribeiro Thomaz (UNICAMP)
Claudio Furtado (UNICamp)
Antonio Evaldo Almeida Barros (UFMA)
Fábio Baqueiro Figueiredo (UNILAB)
Felipe Fernandes (UFBA)
Patricia Guedes Gomes (UFBA).

The conferences are available on YouTube: [Link to YouTube]
I n 2020, the Tanzanian-German Centre for Eastern African Legal Studies (TGCL) proudly celebrated its twelfth anniversary. As the two phases of full funding by DAAD ended in 2018, and the third and final phase of partial funding will expire in 2023, the preparation for financial sustainability was one of the key focus points of the TGCL in 2020. For this reason, and also due to external circumstances like the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 represented not only a year of change and rethinking for the TGCL, but also a year of new opportunities.

At the beginning of 2020, the TGCL bade farewell with deepest gratitude to Ulrike Wanitzek after a decade of successful leadership. Wanitzek retired from her posts as professor at the University of Bayreuth and project leader of the TGCL, and handed over her role in the project to Thoko Kaimo, who was appointed Professor at the Chair of African Legal Studies at the University of Bayreuth. Wanitzek founded the TGCL, which earned her the name ‘Mother of the TGCL’, and during her years with the TGCL, she has been more than just a professor or a project leader. The whole TGCL wishes her God’s blessings, good health, and a peace-ful and joyful retirement. From 6 to 9 January 2020, Thoko Kaimo, who is original-ly from Malawi, made his first official visit to the University of Dar es Salaam in Tan-zania in his new position as project leader.

Pandemic Challenges

From March 2020, the TGCL was – just as all other areas of the world were – wide-ly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, the second semester of the 2019/2020 academic year had to be post-poned, which also affected the conduct of field research for the TGCL studies. Due to lockdowns administered in the six EAC countries in which the students car-ried out their research, some respondents as well as some of the resource areas tar-geted for interviews and research became physically inaccessible. Another challenge was the restriction of the free movement of persons, whereby some students faced challenges returning to Dar es Salaam from their home countries. Despite such struggles, students found their way back to the university to proceed with their studies. The lecturers were understand-ing of these challenges and did their best to ensure that no one was left behind in terms of classroom progress and perfor-mance of coursework. In addition, the University of Dar es Salaam fully ensured adherence to COVID-19 safety guide-lines, and precautionary measures were taken during the study program in the second semester. The 2019/20 academic year has been one of a kind but has been successful despite the hurdles which are sometimes bound to happen.

TGCL as member of DIGI-FACE

More often than not, such challenges bear even greater opportunities: In 2020, the TGCL proudly became a member of the Digital Initiative for African Centres of Excellence (DIGI-FACE) Project. DIGI-FACE is a three-year DAAD funded project with the possibility of a two-year renewal period after 2022. The project as-pires to support the digital needs and en-hance the digital capacities of all members and alumni of DAAD African Centres of Excellence and their networks via the development of e-learning modules and digital tools.

In retrospect, the year of 2020 deeply strengthened the cooperation and com-munication between the TGCL, the Uni-versity of Bayreuth, and the Univer-sity of Dar es Salaam, and the Univer-sity of Bayreuth. Due to the collaborative efforts of all institutions, the TGCL stu-dents as well as the TGCL alumni had the opportunity to thrive. Gilbert Hagabi-mana, one of the TGCL students attending their doctoral studies at the University of Bayreuth, successfully submitted his PhD in 2020. His thesis was titled ‘A Legal Analysis of the Relationship between State Sovereignty and Regional Integration: A Comparative Study between the European Union and the East African Community’. Veronica Buchung and Cecilia Ngasta, two other TGCL alumni, also success-fully carried out their research in 2020 and are expected to finish theirs soon.

Thanks to the cohesion of the TGCL staff, the lecturers, as well as the students, and their ability to quickly adapt to the given circumstances, the TGCL has managed to overcome the challenges of 2020 and con-fidently looks forward to the future and its independence beyond the year of 2020.

The International Fellowship Scheme during the Pandemic

The Fellowship scheme of the Cluster of Excellence successfully adjusted to the requirements that arose during the pandemic. In spite of these chal-lenges twelve new Fellows were still able to take up their Fellowship with UBf in 2020 and in addition to the Fellows that had already engaged in 2019 – contributed substantially to the Cluster’s underlying agenda.

Within the framework of the Interna-tional Fellowship scheme, international scholars of African Studies are invit-ed to the Bayreuth Academy in order to contribute with their projects to the theoretical and thematic agenda of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence. During their stay, the Fellows were inte grated into the Cluster’s research units and make their own contributions, in particular by offering a Fellow lecture, open to the public.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the Fellowship programme. The summer semester of 2020 was marked by the first lockdown: international travel was suspended and face-to-face meetings were no longer allowed to take place at the university. Most Fellows who had planned to come to Bayreuth in the summer semes-ter 2020 accepted the Cluster’s offer to postpone their stay to a later date. Four Fellows, however, did not postpone – they participated in online events from their home offices and worked virtually with the other Cluster members making them the first to successfully practice online Fellowships within the Cluster.

For the academic year 2020/21, 24 new International Fellows have been accept-ed and invited. With the postponed Fellowships of the previous year, a total of 38 Fellows have joined the Cluster, almost half of them during the winter semester 2020/21. The Cluster hoped that the Fellows were able to receive Fellows for the winter semester and meet for work-ing and discussion groups, but were soon reminded otherwise: the second wave forced the whole of UBf to once again renounce face-to-face meetings. Many Fellows again postponed their plans to stay, but the Cluster set a limit to the end of the term.

At the same time, Fellows were invited by the ACC directors to spend part of the Fellowship with the ACCs. In the end, however, the Fellows had to switch almost entirely to online Fellowships from their home offices.

Some Fellows found a time slot in which they could travel to Bayreuth. They are looked after by the team of the Research Portfolio and, since 1 January 2021, by Professor Gregor Gawor, who even guides the guests to their work-places in the Bayreuth Academy build-ing at Hugo-Rüdel-Straße 10 and does their shopping for them during their quarantine.

The pandemic does not make it easy for Fellows, academic hosts, and or-ganisers. The alternation of restriction and relaxation in Germany and in the ‘other’ countries of origin, the uncer-tainty regarding international travel, and the health risks make it difficult to plan responsibly and with foresight. Under these circumstances, the Fellow-ship scheme happily continues to run with virtual meetings and exchanges via screen. The International Fellows take up these offers with great commitment and their contributions enrich the Clus-ter more than ever.
Emerging Scholars

Emnet Tadesse Woldegiorgis: 01.01.2020–20.03.2020
Emnet Tadesse Woldegiorgis, Ph.D. is associate professor of higher education studies at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. His research focuses on internationalisation and regionalisation of higher education processes in Africa and South-South partnership models. In his project, Reconceptualising Academic Freedom: Perspectives from Ethiopian Higher Education System, he explores, reflects, and conceptualises the notion of academic freedom taking the Ethiopian higher education space as a case, and provides a comprehensive research approach that could accommodate more perspectives beyond the UNESCO indicators. Academic freedom, the freedom to pursue intellectual inquiry, is a core value and a key legitimising concept for academic communities and higher educational institutions. Yet, how can we claim our constant devotion not only on the philosophy and the practice of academic freedom but also on the very conceptualisation of the subject matter in academic research.

Paul Akinmayowa Akin-Otiko: 01.02.2020–31.03.2020
Paul Akinmayowa Akin-Otiko is a researcher in the Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, (IADS) University of Lagos, Nigeria. In his studies in African traditional medicine, he supports the idea that how traditional medicine impacts healthcare. His ideas on uncommon methods of diagnosis shed light on what the orthodox medicine needs to investigate and take advantage of. His current research interests include bifurcated issues in African traditional medicine. Akin-Otiko thinks it is important to distinguish religions from folk remedies, in order to identify and appreciate the science in traditional medicine. His recent research has shown that traditional medicine can be analysed and evaluated using general scientific categories. The essence of his contribution to science is its data-rich, and attention to the highly relevant but disparaged areas of study that is still largely not researched and requires efforts to excavate the value in African traditional medicine.

Matthew Sabbi: 01.01.2020–30.06.2020
Matthew Sabbi holds a Dr. phil. in Development Sociology and has been a postdoctoral researcher at the Chair of Development Sociology, University of Bayreuth. His main research fields are the sociology of development policy, political sociology of Africa (decentralisation and local political reforms), and organisational sociology (particularly how actors behave and relate to organisational reform). His research project for the Cluster of Excellence examines the everyday life of Ghanaian councillors with a focus on their relational networks. In former studies on decision making in decentralised structures in the Global South, little attention is paid to specific networks and the relations of councillors that exact decision-making influence. In his project, Sabbi applies social network analysis together with detailed empirical data from Ghana to re-interpret the agency in everyday, mundane, and mutually-conditioned strategies of councillors.

Susanne Mohr: 01.03.2020–31.07.2020
Susanne Mohr is associate professor of English Sociolinguistics at the Department of Language and Literature at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Trondheim. Her main research interests are language contact, linguistic diversity, and multilingualism and (cross-modal) language contact, as well as language and globalization. Her project investigates the acquisition of English, a global lingua franca frequently used in tourist spaces, and Kiswahili, the official language of Tanzania and Zanzibar, among tourists and hosts on Zanzibar’s Unguja island. The central aim of the project is to describe the different trajectories and modes of language learning, and to discuss them in light of recent theories of language learning in superdiversity frameworks. The analysis is based on ethnographic data from several fieldwork trips, including sociolinguistic interviews and observations at tourist locations, shops, schools, and NGOs, as well as Q-methodological data.

Ulrike Bergermann: 01.04.2020–31.07.2020
Ulrike Bergermann is professor of Media Studies at the Bremen University of Art in Germany, with main areas of research in gender and postcolonial studies and the history of knowledge. In her project she tells the chronicle of the cananga, a piece of printed cotton fabric, along the lines of appropriation and identity building. In the 19th century, South Indian women of the upper class in Zanzibar bought cotton cloth from Portuguese traders and made it into dresses that became popular fashion. They ordered their own designs to be printed, and became very inventive in using iconic motifs as well as proverbs or sayings. After independence, language and cultural identity became key political issues in the 1960s. Bergermann examines this language, property examining the UN or international trade organisations who have developed copyright laws for it. Postcolonial critics called these ‘white laws’ and advocate a ‘postcolonial copyright’ that includes practices which are not based on property but on sharing and commons.

Eleanor Tiplady Higgs: 01.01.2020–28.02.2021
Eleanor Tiplady Higgs is an interdisciplinary feminist scholar in the humanities. She completed her PhD in Gender Studies at School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, in 2018 and was postdoctoral research fellow in the Department of Religious Studies at University of Cape Town, from 2018 to 2020. Her research interests lie in gender, race, coloniality, ethics and narrative, Christianity and the histories of the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) movement in Anglophone African contexts (to date, Kenya and South Africa). She is interested in everyday or ordinary ethics in the context of Christian women’s activism at the YWCA in South Africa, with whom she conducted field research in 2019 and 2020. Her project addresses the textual and narrative organisation of institutional memory/history as ‘story-tale’, and tracks how this narratively organised knowledge grounds the YWCA’s ethical stance and conduct.

Landry-Wilfrid Miampaka Moundele: 06.10.2020–06.01.2021
Landry-Wilfrid Miampaka Moundele is associate professor of Francophone Studies at the University of Alcalá near Madrid, Spain. His main research interests lie in postcolonial African and Caribbean literatures and cultures in Spanish and French, postcolonial theories, migrations and cultures of the African diaspora, interconnections between art and literatures, and contemporary African art. His project, Migrant Identities and Representations of African Migrants in Contemporary Francophone Romance is part of a long research effort on the theme of migration and its interrelations with Francophone, transnationalism, integration, and living together in Europe. From comparative postcolonial and literary studies on the one hand, the research focuses on analysing the reflections on migrants produced in francophone thought (Africa).

Tabea Scharrer: 26.10.2020–25.01.2021
Tabea Scharrer is research partner at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle, Germany. She is interested in social anthropological research about (forced) migration, socio-economic inequality, and religion, with a focus on Eastern Africa. During her time at the Cluster of Excellence, she worked on building a theoretical framework for a project dealing with social class in the context of forced migration. Her work explores the relationship between spatial and social mobility and therefore discusses the multiple relations in and through which phenomena emerge. In her research with Somali migrants, she makes multiple connections encompass transnational family networks, various regional migration regimes, as well as the flow of different sorts of capital and their potential conversion in and between the various localities migrants live in.

Susanne Gehrmann: 01.11.2020–20.02.2021
Susanne Gehrmann is a professor of African literatures and cultures at the Institute of Asian and African studies, Humboldt University Berlin. Her research focusses on representations of violence, intermediality, autonomy, gender, and genre innovation in African literatures with a regional focus on West and Central Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, and Togo in particular. Her project, Genre, Decolonial Innovations, Intermedial Aesthetics and the Circulation of African Literatures: Togo in a Comparative Perspective, takes the rich Togolese literary/cultural production as a starting point for further comparative research and is based on research questions that unfold on the levels of writing, of the reception of literature, and of comparison. The three levels are intertwined and will not be dealt with separately, but through an integral approach.

R. Benedito Ferrão: 07.11.2020–04.02.2021
R. Benedito Ferrão is assistant professor of English and Asian and Pacific Islander American Studies at The College of William and Mary, Virginia, USA. His scholarly and teaching interests are in Afro-African connections between Portuguese and British postcolonialities, as well as diaspora and transnational fiction with a focus on race, gender, and sexuality. His current research interests focus on literary works that use Goan diasporic lives, displaced between pluricontinental locales, to demonstrate the schism between these characters and the nations they find themselves in or expelled from. What this research suggests in its study of the embodied and cultural coloniality. Ferrão examines written and produced such works in the contexts of the European and postcolonial, as the nation and postcolonial. As a fellow of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, he concentrated on the influence of the short history of German colonialism in East Africa, especially given its connections and contexts with British and Portuguese colonisation.
Nevertheless, 2020 has been a difficult year for the doctoral candidates, their supervisors, and the administrative team. The high level of interest in the graduate school is also reflected in the large number of applications. In 2020, BIGSAS received 112 applications, most submitted by candidates interested in one of the DAAD Graduate School Scholarship Programme (GSSP) scholarships for female scholars based on the African continent. At the end of 2020, BIGSAS published another call for applications for two scholarships to be awarded in 2021 to female scholars from Africa.

BIGSAS alumni network

The BIGSAS alumni network, which provides a platform for the graduates to exchange ideas and make use of synergies, is steadily growing. Thanks to 14 successful doctoral defences, the number of alumni grew to 156 from 34 different countries, out of which 24 countries are in Africa. Furthermore, BIGSAS alumni Abraham Brahma, Irma Turner, and Emnet Tesse Woldegorgis are congratulated on the publication of the book Decolonisation of Higher Education in Africa: Perspectives from Hybrid Knowledge Production, for which the panel session Indigenous Knowledges and Decolonisation in Higher Education: Current Discourses, Pertinence, and Prospects at the BIGSAS Alumni Conference 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, was one initiating factor.

The pandemic did not hinder BIGSAS from further improving the framework conditions for successful doctoral completion. The focus of the work was on a revision of the Doctoral Regulations, effective from February 2021. The revised regulations take into consideration issues that were raised with the integration of BIGSAS into the Cluster of Excellence. Among other things, it allows for a cumulative doctorate by publishing a number of papers in peer-reviewed journals and by adjusting to the aptitude assessment process for applicants as well as to the doctoral examination procedure. Active participation in a BIGSAS Colloquium will be a requirement for admission to the doctoral examination. The colloquia are an essential pillar of the doctoral programme in BIGSAS. They are a unique platform for all Junior Fellows to present their research projects, engaging junior and senior researchers in an interdisciplinary dialogue of mutual benefit. For the first time in the BIGSAS history, two purely online colloquia were conducted in 2020.

Awards

In 2020, BIGSAS scholars attracted attention beyond university boundaries through awards and publications. Hanna Diman received the DAAD Preis (DAAD Award), honouring exceptional academic performance. In addition, the BIGSAS alumni Gemechu Adimassu Abeshu and Sabrina Maurus were awarded the Preis der Stadt Bayreuth (City of Bayreuth Award) in recognition of their outstanding dissertations: Abeshu on emerging forms of political power in Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti, and Maurus on the dilemmas of schooling young people in southwest Ethiopia.

Moreover, ten alumni published their dissertations in 2020. Three published in the series Beiträge zur Afrika- forschung from LIT Verlag, three published online, and one each with Springer Verlag, Ledizioni, Nomos Verlag and UHarmattan.
Emerging Scholars

Voices of current and former BIGSAS Junior Fellows following article aims to highlight some
challenges into collective ones by sharing
ourselves, telling them is not redundant.

During all of this, we do not know when things will
go back to ‘normal’ whatever that term
might mean by then.

In camera – the new normal
Anything but normal was also the pro-
cess of defending a thesis in times of
COVID-19. Alžběta Šváblová was the
first Junior Fellow to defend her PhD pro-
ject in camera. “The preparation for the
disputation was a bit complicated due to
my family situation. Schools were closed,
so we had to home-school our daughter.
This, together with my husband working
in a system-relevant job, meant that I had
very limited time for my work,” Šváblová
says. But luckily on that day everything
went well, and she successfully defended
her thesis. “Although I imagined it in a
different way, I will always remember my
defence as a part of this extraordinary
time,” Šváblová adds.

No exchange with peers
“What is certainly missing in these
COVID-19 times is the mutual exchange
among peers – our ‘Leidensgenossen’,
or fellow sufferers, as Germans jokingly
like to refer to each other in similar sit-
uations,” says Frederik Wild. The biggest
loss for him is the connection and col-
laboration between Junior Fellows and
like-minded people. This exchange has
inexcessably decreased even if most meet-
ings continue online. “This [exchange] is
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demic component of our respective doc-
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Times of crisis like these are often clutter-
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framing the public discourse. It seems
easy to forget the profound stories of
struggle, challenge, and success. Stories
of cancelled trips and changed plans,
of conquering new online territories or
giving up recovering corrupted record-
ings; and stories of being ‘stuck’ at home
– lonely or conversely, unable to get
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Tove Sofie Reini, Dina Sodiadjan

While the COVID-19 pandemic is taking its toll everywhere, this article explores how the coronavirus has particularly changed the lives and research of the BIGSAS Junior Fellows.

Junior Fellows who have had and often still must overcome one or the other kind of obstacle due to the pandemic.

Some doors closed ...
Many doctoral projects depend heavily upon on-site research in the field, relying on interviews, participant observation, and rummaging in local archives. Needless to say, most of this was made almost impossible in 2020. “I was supposed to start my fieldwork six months after I arrived in Bayreuth. But now I have been in Bayreuth over a year without being able to go to the field. It is a difficult situation,” says Abdoulayye Ibrahim Bachi, who arrived at the University of Bayreuth in January 2020. He tried to use this time to his advantage to develop his project and focus more on the literature review. This allowed him to better frame his project and to restructure his research questions. Even though Bachi was able to conduct some interviews online, it was not enough for his thesis. “To frame my project and to restructure his

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An EIMASter’s Journey

Part One: Migration and Learning

EIMAS student Edidiong Ibanga

Shares with NAB her thoughts and personal experiences during her first semester at the University of Porto in Portugal.

It was a warm afternoon in March 2020, and at the time, COVID was only the 'stuff' you watched in movies. I was in the hair salon reinforcing my stance on natural hair by soliciting beauty treatments for my lovely, kinky black hair. When the mail notification rang out loud, it was with wariness that I looked at my phone, expecting that it would be another random advertisement of unneeded products by an unyielding marketer, or even worse, a tweet notification. Disappointment never felt so good because when I looked at my phone, what I saw turned out to be an opportunity that impacted me and continues to do so in many ways. My application for a scholarship to study for an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree in the fields of African Studies was considered favorably and I was being invited for an interview. Needless to say, I was filled with a cocktail of emotions, like every person who prays for rain yet wonders how to handle the soaking wetness that comes with it. Those feelings explain most of my experiences to date.

Growing up in Nigeria and undertaking undergraduate studies in both Nigeria and Ghana, I had developed a passion for the study of the continent. In fact, a few topical considerations in African Studies were mandated for my undergraduate studies. It was from those classes that I began to get the sense that Africa had been both underrepresented and misrepresented, and that if change was to occur, I needed to play an active part in it. Ignorance was no longer bliss, and knowledge would be the first thing to acquire. So, when I got into the EIMAS program, I trusted that it was a step in the right direction.

When I left my home country to study in Portugal, Germany, and France, the irony of learning about my continent from another continent was not lost on me. Beyond this, however, I was intrigued by the opportunities that my travel and study would bring. The chance to interact with students and facilitators from different academic and cultural backgrounds, and the hopes for an expanded view on many issues were foremost on my mind. Fun was somewhere at the bottom of the list (if you believe that).

With gusto then, I set off and arrived in my first country of mobility, Portugal, beginning my journey towards another 'phasal' growth.

My first challenge was linguistic. I had been socialised to believe that English was a language spoken and understood everywhere. As I continued through the course of formal and informal education, and interacted with the world through new and traditional media, I realised it was not so. The degree to that truth, however, was lost on me till I arrived at the airport and needed to communicate. Needless to say, my attempt to converse nearly led me lost, and in tears. My interaction with my colleagues since then, as well as the inner promptings from my experiences so far, have allowed me to demystify the English language. This demystification opened me up to a new level of appreciation of linguistic diversity, devoid of the trappings of inaccurate rate narratives of an inflated superiority of one language over the other.

My EIMAS experience so far is replete with tales of growth that are often not formal but tend to occur mostly in the seemingly mundane expressions of life. The main catalysis for this growth so far has been the unification of diversity, a characteristic feature of the EIMAS program. Together, we have shared meals, dances, and songs from our different cultures. We have shared thoughts, ideas, orientations, beliefs, and experiences. Neither of these things have been about determining which culture is better. It has rather been an impactful learning experience that has been beneficial in more ways than one. Our formal learning experiences so far have not been about swooping in to save a continent that is often erroneously portrayed as helpless and dying, but to understand its history, systems, and processes in order to frame a pathway for better global relations, among other things. Since I began my EIMAS journey, every act or conception has been an experience. I have come to learn that diversity exposes the limitations of our own views, and offers us the opportunity to see the world from multiple perspectives.

Diversity necessitates dialogue, which is a principle often overlooked. Our academic activities, for instance, often involve aspects of group work. This being so, the need to enter into dialogue by communicating through differing views, temperaments, perspectives, and opinions, often presents itself. The value of mutual respect becomes highlighted in the knowledge that everyone’s perspective and views are valid. It proves that with a little more understanding and proper communication, a lot more can be achieved. How important this is in the world we find ourselves. Replete with strife and conflict of different sorts, this approach to learning not only allows for reorientation and personal adjustments, but also provides a peephole into the possibilities that abound should our shared humanity be factored into our diversity. The EIMAS program is my chance at more than just academic earnings.

In the midst of the desire to be politically correct in today’s climate, we have lost our common humanity. The basic humanity we share has been overriden by the desire to outdo or altogether silence the other. Conflicts arise where there is little or no communication. Development campaigns are initiated where there is little understanding of what the needs of a community are, which leads you to question the true intentions: Are they for publicity and self-aggrandisement, or to create true and lasting change? To reinforce the perceived notions of superiority or to create a mutually beneficial partnership? While these may seem idealistic to most, the truth remains that the values learned from experiences such as what the EIMAS offers are not lost. An Ibibo proverb states that “Etoño ke idap ekpeb mkpa,” to wit, “To learn to die, we start by sleeping.” Perhaps these are the very beginning steps that we need to learn to redirect the course of political, economic, and social affairs in the societies we find ourselves.

Or perhaps it is in the recognition of the truth that I am one with the Nigerian photographer who expresses her views without fear or favor, the ‘conceptual’ Ethiopian whose love for his country can be heard in every sentence, the sunny and cheerful Italian, the interrogative Malagasy, the funny and expressive Nigerian, the entrepreneurial Greek, the adventurous Filippino, the soft-spoken South African, the caring and thoughtful Malawian, the intense but intelligent Kenyan, the interesting and soulful Brazilian, and the articulate Ghanaian, that I can begin to harness the power of diversity and understand what true partnership and collaboration requires – mutual understanding and respect.

This is the kind of knowledge that the EIMAS reinforces, and that knowledge in itself is Power! The EIMAS students are a close-knit group frequently embarking on joint activities.
EIMASTers’ Retrospections on Their First Semester at the University of Porto

NAB asked the EIMAS students about their impressions on the first station of the four-part programme.

Abiod Bosire (Kenya)
I am beyond thrilled to have received the Erasmus Mundus scholarship for my Master in Africa studies. The EIMAS programme has made me realise that there is enormous potential in people that they themselves do not know. It goes without saying that my experiences and exchange of ideas with my lecturers and colleagues has enriched my perspectives. Living in Porto, Portugal and currently without saying that my experiences and MAS programme has made me realise that they themselves do not know. It goes

Kenene Lebalo (Lesotho)
My experience in Porto for the first semester was generally very good. I was mostly excited to learn a new culture and language. I was also excited to get new learning perspectives. My expectations were highly met. The first semester was filled with a vibrant teaching staff that were not only there to teach but were also eager to engage and open up a great platform to learn about their students’ experiences and innovative ideas. Although there were a number of regulations put in place due to the current situation, we were still able to fully appreciate the beauty of Porto and immerse ourselves into the environment.

Lucas Novaes (Brazil)
The first semester at Porto was truly special. The people are one of the most educated that I’ve met and to experience it first-hand was a delight. It was also quite intriguing and interesting to see how some of the issues that tie Portugal, Brazil, and the African continent were handled and presented. But most of all, the best part was to meet diverse professors and content that much enriched my knowledge. Muito obrigado!

Razanoelison Ny Aina (Madagascar)
In Porto, I not only discovered an experience of a lifetime and met new people, unique and amazing people in EIMAS, but I also discovered myself. This person heard and learnt from one of the EIMAS colleagues that the only way to start is to start, so one day, he just decided to rent a bike and cycle from Porto to the north of Portugal.

Diana Takacsova (Slovakia)
Thought-provoking discussions, a university where I have felt at home since day one, a special winter by the ocean... There are just too many details that made the first semester in Porto special.

Lawrence Edward Katunga (Malawi)
I liked the classroom interactions through which everyone became conscious in using the word ‘Africa’ to avoid making generalisations in studying about Africa.

Timothy Earl Mateo Castillon (Philippines)
From Sino-African studies to death and mourning culture of Yorubas in Nigeria, EIMAS provides me an avenue to explore and debate a variety of African social issues. The diversity of my fellow EIMASTers’ geographical and disciplinary backgrounds creates a stimulating environment.

Silvia Diazzi (Italy)
For me EIMAS is a learning experience at 360 degrees and the Porto semester has paved the way for improvement and continuous discovery. The wonderful inputs from the faculties and my colleagues is a breath-taking view of the Atlantic Ocean. Meanwhile, seeing historic monuments dotting the alleys and the strategic corners of the street: ‘fascinating’ will be an understatement. Anyways, my experiences will not be complete without EIMASTers. Coming from different corners of the world, nothing about us was the same - nationality, culture, at best, not even discipline. Yet, the bond of seven months and counting is a testament that, irrespective of who we are, where we come from, or what we believe, humanity is a global unit.

Odunola Alexander Oladeji (Nigeria)
In the class of beauty, the ancient city of Porto has no match, and down the hilly masterpiece is a breath-taking view of the Atlantic Ocean. Meanwhile, seeing historic monuments dotting the alleys and the strategic corners of the street: ‘fascinating’ will be an understatement. Anyways, my experiences will not be complete without EIMASTers. Coming from different corners of the world, nothing about us was the same - nationality, culture, at best, not even discipline. Yet, the bond of seven months and counting is a testament that, irrespective of who we are, where we come from, or what we believe, humanity is a global unit.

Muluneh Aragaw (Ethiopia)
In the hands of thoughtful and good-hearted professors, amiable colleagues, and casting my worries on a solutionist coordinator, the first semester of EIMAS in Porto was a momentous journey!

Yaw Acheampong (Ghana)
It’s not every day that one gets a fine blend of colourful and brilliant colleagues, each a dayen in their own fields; to live in three different cities while studying the same program; to meet outstanding professors, a program coordinator in a class of her own, and the challenge of polyglotism. This EIMAS programme is cool sensational!

General Information on EIMAS
- EIMAS – European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies
- Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree (EMJMD
- Partner universities: University of Porto, Portugal; Bordeauz Montaigne University, France; and University of Bayreuth, Germany
- Funded by the European Union with 2,916 million Euro (2020-2025, four cohorts of students)
- 58 EMJMD student scholarships

1st Cohort of EIMAS: 13 students (nine male, four female) from twelve different countries: Brazil, Ethiopia, Ghana, Greece, Italy, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, Philippines, Slovakia
- 1st semester: University of Porto, November 2020–March 2021
- 2nd semester: University of Bayreuth, April–August 2021
- 3rd semester: Bordeaux Montaigne University, September–December 2021
- 4th semester: field research/internship
- EIMAS Winter School in December 2021

www.eimas.eu
T he Association Model Union Bayreuth e.V. (MAU) had to cancel its annual conference due to the pandemic. However, African Stories – a new online workshop series – was established instead.

After the unprecedented events of a year that was challenging for all, the MAU Association was forced to think outside the box. Renowned for its annual BAY-MAU Conference, members of MAU set out to plan a series of events under the theme of ‘African Stories’. The aim of this series was to explore the African world in a way that would be as engaging, informative, and entertaining as the conference that the association has become synonymous with. With everything going digital, MAU was definitely going into uncharted waters. However, with a determined and dedicated team and with the support of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, MAU was sure to take on the challenge.

African Stories – an Event Series by the Model African Union

The digital age has certainly provided a platform for many more people to share their stories and the African continent is no exception. However, the information we consume can often be distorted and African stories have often unfortunately fallen victim to this phenomenon. MAU believes that African stories are best told by their protagonists, and African stories have often been unfruitful. However, the information we consume can often be distorted and African stories have often unfortunately fallen victim to this phenomenon. MAU believes that African stories are best told by their protagonists, and African stories have often been unfruitful. However, the information we consume can often be distorted and African stories have often unfortunately fallen victim to this phenomenon. MAU believes that African stories are best told by their protagonists,

The workshop SKAnning Space from Africa: Seeing and Becoming that took place in Bayreuth from 10-14 February 2020, marked a milestone in the becoming of an interdisciplinary network called AOKEN. The respective cluster Postdoc Working Group was the culmination of the multilateral Postdoc Cluster Working Group, SKAnning Space from Africa: Seeing and Becoming, focusing on the largest radio telescope on earth, the Square Kilometre Array (SKA). The SKA enables not only cutting-edge science but also new ‘becomings’ of things and people. Existing radio dishes are converted into astronomical instruments and a new generation of experts and scientists such as astrophysicists, bioinformaticians, and geographic information systems specialists are currently being trained and celebrated as Africa’s bright future. In the workshop, the participants analysed and discussed processes and organisation for these ‘becomings’, entangled with temporalities and spatialities of socio-technicolivery, University of Bayreuth colleague Adrian Rosner. In the history of the Fichtelgebirge, the most interesting part, with respect to the workshop theme, was the lingering absence and inaccessible of knowledge about the former military use of the radar tower on Schneeberg mountain. The workshop participants were unable to visit the tower because the regulations for the surrounding nature reserve prohibit using the roads, the storm prevented passage through the mountain forest, and, above all, entry into the compound of the tower is highly restricted due to the sensitive instruments and information stored on site. The significant absences and questions of access were experiential reminders of similar dynamics within the SKA mega science project.

Becoming Each workshop day opened with a public lecture. Presenters were James Chibuze, Professor of Astronomy at North-West University South Africa and SKA specialist; Davide Chinghi, postdoctoral social science researcher from Stellenbosch University in South Africa and co-editor of Karoo futures: Astronomy in Place and as a research tool; and Charles Latifzamadana, Professor of Astronomy in Madagascan: the days continued with closed workshop sessions where participants shared ideas for future collaboration in strategic and systematic ways.

Beyond Becoming: Africa Off-Earth Network Emerging from an inspiring group spirit and the tangible benefits of a transdisciplinary exchange, the network that manifested in Bayreuth subsequently started to work in several sub-groups to collaborate on publications and conference presentations. With the support of the Cluster, the Working Group eventfully established the Africa Off-Earth Network and accompanying website to reflect its networking activities and provide a virtual gathering place for new projects around astronomy in Africa. To find out where the group is going with this, watch this space: www.africa-off-earth.net.

Towards Becoming: How the SKAnning Workshop Constituted the Africa Off-Earth Network

The lively discussion was followed by a surprise music performance complete with a talk and a discussion about the richness of African stories. The participants also appreciated the diversity of these perspectives on ‘becomings’, partakers from several sub-groups to collaborate on publications and conference presentations. The workshop made abundantly clear that there is a lot more serious collaborative research to explore through the SKA than can be discussed in three days. The meeting helped in carving out common lines of interest and drafting ideas for future collaboration in strategic and systematic ways.

From top left to right bottom: Samyukta Manikumar, Noluvuyo Mati-wane, Susanne Ludwig, James Chibuze, Hannna Nieber, Tadej Pirc, Siri Lamnamoera, Iris Turner, Basil Bucher, Davide Chinghi, James Merron

Davide Chinghi during his presentation “Becoming with the Square Kilometre Array”

Zoey the Storyteller (left) and Chengetai Choto

New possibilities 2020 might have thrown MAU a curveball but it also opened up many possibilities. It was exciting to have hosts and audiences from all over the world, something that is usually only possible at the annual conference. MAU experimented with a new concept which turned out to be a great success. What started as a replacement for the cancelled 2020 BAY-MAU conference ended up being a standalone series of events with its own unique feel. It also amplified the MAU team’s ability to navigate the digital space, a skill that will most definitely come in handy in the 2021 BAYMAU Conference under the theme Made in Africa – Innovations, Concepts, and Solutions for the Challenges of Our Time.

Coming Despite delayed arrivals from cancelled flights and trains due to the storm Sabine, eventually all participants arrived safely. The workshop started with an excursion into the nearby Fichtelgebirge mountains guided by the local expert and media celebrity, University of Bayreuth colleague Adrian Rosner. In the history of the Fichtelgebirge, the most interesting part, with respect to the workshop theme, was the lingering absence and inaccessible of knowledge about the former military use of the radar tower on Schneeberg mountain. The workshop participants were unable to visit the tower because the regulations for the surrounding nature reserve prohibit using the roads, the storm prevented passage through the mountain forest, and, above all, entry into the compound of the tower is highly restricted due to the sensitive instruments and information stored on site. The significant absences and questions of access were experiential reminders of similar dynamics within the SKA mega science project.

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Emerging Scholars

One of the Cluster’s Postdoc Working Groups examined the dialogical and diachronic intersections between Shakespearean works and their African (Diasporic) appropriations.

At the core of the research in the Postdoc Working Group Shakespearean Pasts, African Futures: Entanglements of Memory, Temporality, and Knowledge(s) during winter semester 2019/2020 is the concept of ‘literary afterlives’. The group understands literary afterlives as being constituted by complex interactions between ‘local’ processes, media factors, and subjectivities, and these literary afterlives take the form of different modes of rewritings and (re)appropriations that enable past stories and texts to have future lives in different cultural, political, and temporal contexts. The notion of a literary afterlife does not signify a break from antecedent texts and subsequent temporal contexts. The notion of a literary afterlife does not signify a break from antecedent texts and subsequent temporal contexts. It enables a profound dialectal intersection between antecedent texts and subsequent temporal contexts.

The working group sought to provide answers to the above question through regular group discussions, two public lectures by Michael Stepput, Professor emeritus of English Literature (University of Bayreuth), and also participated in the workshop. The workshop fostered the exchange of ideas between the conveners and the guest participants on the research theme of the working group.

Talento analysed two Swahili translations of Shakespeare’s play The Merchant of Venice. She illustrated how the Swahili translations – Mabepari wa Venesi (The Capitalists of Venice) translated by Julius Nyere in 1969, and Milariba (The Usurer) translated by Francis Warick, a British resident of Kenya, in 1993 – were transformed and adapted to the new contexts of reception.

Aboluwade explored Osofisan’s Wesoo, Hamlet! as a product of transcultural re/memorization rather than one of simple adaptation or interlingual transfer. Through comparative analysis of Shakespeare’s Hamlet (1623/2007) and Osofisan’s Wesoo, Hamlet! by the theatre duo, Mahlatsi Mokgoyana and Billy Langa. The rehearsed reading was a form of public outreach to create awareness and a forum for discourse on the forms of interventions between a European canon, such as Shakespeare, and African authors, most especially within the realm of performance. Most people have read or at least heard about Shakespeare’s Hamlet, but extremely few know of Osofisan’s version of this play, Wesoo, Hamlet!

Chiangong investigated how the processes of interrogation and archiving are enacted by looking at how Aimé Césaire and Esaba Irubu respond to Shakespeare’s The Tempest in their adaptations of the play as A Tempest (1969) and Sycorax (2013), respectively.

Nyambi engaged critically with postcolonial notions of the ‘global Shakespeare’ with special interest not only on how Shakespeare’s political plays, philosophy, and aesthetics have influenced conceptions and/or practices of power in postcolonial Africa, but also what Shakespeare’s influence tells us about the state and condition of decolonising power in the ‘post-colony’.

The workshop presentations highlighted points of intersections between the research foci of the working group conveners and those of the workshop guests. The issue of translating/adapting Shakespearean texts across time and space in African contexts which was focused on by three of the conveners (Talento, Aboluwade, Chiangong) was also taken up by Sandra Young (University of Cape Town, South Africa). In her presentation, Young explored the problematics of deploying African adaptations of Shakespearean plays to address essentialist racial ideologies. Nyambi’s examination of politicised appropriations of Shakespearean topoi to address African nationalist concerns resonated with Sam Ndo go’s (Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya) analysis of the appropriation of the figure of the Shakespearean fool in Kenyan comedy as a potent way of subverting local hegemonies.

Chiangong delivered a paper at the Postdoc working group conveners workshop. The paper was delivered by Sandra Young (University of Cape Town, South Africa). In her presentation, Young explored the problematic of deploying African adaptations of Shakespearean plays to address essentialist racial ideologies. Nyambi’s examination of politicised appropriations of Shakespearean topoi to address African nationalist concerns resonated with Sam Ndo go’s (Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya) analysis of the appropriation of the figure of the Shakespearean fool in Kenyan comedy as a potent way of subverting local hegemonies.

Lekan Balogun’s (University of Lagos, Nigeria) investigation of the hermeneutic politics of translating Shakespearean texts to address African nationalist concerns resonated with Sam Ndo go’s (Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya) analysis of the appropriation of the figure of the Shakespearean fool in Kenyan comedy as a potent way of subverting local hegemonies. Lekan Balogun’s (University of Lagos, Nigeria) investigation of the hermeneutic politics of translating Shakespearean texts to address African nationalist concerns resonated with Sam Ndo go’s (Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya) analysis of the appropriation of the figure of the Shakespearean fool in Kenyan comedy as a potent way of subverting local hegemonies.

Closing discussions with Theatre+du’s Mahlatsi Mokgoyana and audience members at the rehearsed reading of Wesoo Hamlet! (Photo: Serena Talento)

Onuh in a scene from Wesoo Hamlet! (Photo: Joyce Abla Sango, Annetta Kopas and Patrick Onuh in a scene from Wesoo Hamlet! (Photo: Serena Talento)
Research

Twelve more Projects Expand the Cluster’s Research Portfolio

Text Sabine Greiner

In addition to the 25 existing research projects, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence approved another twelve research proposals in 2020. While being anchored in one of the Cluster’s research sections, the majority of these new projects is conducted within the African Cluster Centres. Artivism, Social Justice & Epistemic Revolution Ruth Sambou (Rhodes University) – Arts & Aesthetics In light of the urgent need to respond to growing social inequality, citizens have become impatient and activism has given rise to critical artist-citizens or activists. While recent studies on activism and the arts tend to frame activism globally and draw from world events of 1989, this project complicates this starting point and emphasizes contextual and situational forms of resistance and activism.

Sounding Africa on the Indian Ocean Lee Watkins (Rhodes University) – Arts & Aesthetics This project engages with a variety of entertainment forms and processes of mobility, and explore their interactions with climatic variations, environmental processes, and cultural and socio-economic drivers.

Of Art Worlds – Collecting and Archiving Modern and Contemporary Art on the African Continent UP Yiente, Kathryn Green (University of Bayreuth) – Arts & Aesthetics This project takes inspiration from a perspective on multiplicity that brings art collections and archives as multi-layered configurations to the forefront. Starting with the art works as a such, carving out their formal qualities, moving on to the respective object biographies, these are related to form and histories of the collections and the respective institutions.

Women as Sages: Exploring the nature and value of Feminine Wisdom Ayobowo Faluyi (University of Lagos) – Knowledge This agenda-setting work the research team seeks to investigate the possibility of woman sages, the nature and content of the knowledge they produce, and the value of such knowledges to the contemporary African and others.

Regenerating Non-Formal Learning in Africa: Digital Yoruba Folktales for Animation and Value Education Apolde Yauffi, Ayobowo Ede (University of Lagos) – Learning This research, which aims to produce African content, specifically Yoruba, for children’s entertainment and moral learning, is an attempt to create an indigenous alternative to oriental and occasional animations using Yoruba folktales.

Spatio-temporal variability in the environment and mobility characterizes socio-ecological systems in large regions of tropical Africa, especially in savannah ecosystems. Steve Hoggins, Cyril Samways, Dina Li, Martin Stowen, Český Armin Quain, Janne Gamba, John Twine, Cullen Young, Helga Latz-Schicko – Mobilitys This project will investigate the patterns of movement and processes of mobility, and explore their interactions with climatic variations, environmental processes, and cultural and socio-economic drivers.

Intra-Africa Migration and Xenophobia: The Implications for African Integration Frances Aitoh, Oludapo Enusola – Arts & Aesthetics This research project focuses on migration-xenophobia nexus in Nigeria and Burkina Faso with implications for African integration. The combination of Francophone and Anglophone experiences over intra-African migration promises to enrich literature, promote inter AEC cooperation, as well as raise new debates and theories especially towards the integrationist visions and missions of the AU and the ECOWAS.

Politics and Societies of the Marginalised Emamet Rahim (Rhodes University) – Mobilitys This project examines how communities, or peoples on the geographical margins of African states (historically) organized agency by creating alternative centres of power and by engaging in some unusual, unpredictable, and at times ‘irrational’ practices (from a statist point of view) in order to circumvent the state that often fail to service their needs.

Globalization and health policy in West Africa Nicola Barhorst (University Joseph-Klébert) – Mobilitys The project’s goal is to understand not only the impact of global health on regional and local health systems reforms, but also to produce knowledge from a Global Health governance perspective that will help to grasp the shifting movement in international relations towards the globalization.

Changing Life Projects: African Identities, Moralities and Wellbeing Ewine Karsma (Rhodes University) – Mobilitys The project explores and analyzes identities, moralities and materialities in contemporary East Africa towards understanding how these are (re)defined, communicated, contested, (re)negotiated, (re)presented, and practiced through rites of passage, such as initiation rites and marriages.

For a more detailed overview of all current 37 Cluster projects, please visit.

Getting Out of the COVID-19 Misery

Text Raymond BOADU Fремпопг, David Stadelman, Frederik Wild

In their article published by the Economics Bulletin, Raymond Frempong, David Stadelmann and Frederik Wild discuss the secondary effects of lockdowns in Sub-Saharan Africa and show which strategies might help with the challenges that subsequently arise.

The COVID-19 crisis is one of the most critical health challenges of the last century. In many ways, the pandemic has brought about severe hardships on citizens. The development and introduction of vaccines promise to restore societies back to normality. The article Coronavirus-Lockdowns, Secondary Effects and Sustainable Exit-Strategies for Sub-Saharan Africa written by Raymond Frempong, David Stadelmann and Frederik Wild from the University of Bayreuth and published in Economics Bulletin 40 (3) highlights the side-effects of lockdowns imposed in many Sub-Saharan African countries based on a set of distinctive characteristics that make the region unique. Above all, comparatively skewed demographics (young populations) and the lack of substantial financial resources render the direct health consequences of COVID-19 different than in older societies. Over the course of the pandemic, the death rates have remained relatively low compared to countries in Europe, even though health systems in many African countries are underfunded.

The negative side-effects of lockdown While lockdowns help curtail the disease, they carry negative side-effects in the form of economic, social, political, and even other medical hardships, which matter in developing economies. Among the most severe side-effects of lockdowns in Sub-Saharan African countries are disruptions to food- and vital medical (treatment) supply: Disruptions to the therapy of other widespread and infectious diseases, such as HIV, tuberculosis and malaria, have been estimated to potentially exceed the direct health consequences of COVID-19. Also, increased incidences of domestic violence against the weakest members of society have been reported. And education opportunities are only available with difficulties, carrying burdensome private expenses in several countries. Tendencies to weaken economic and political institutions have also been documented.

Hence, as it stands, the problem of many developing countries in dealing with the pandemic is not only the number of infected people but weak health systems and the unintended secondary impacts of lockdowns that carry on in the future.

A healthy population is a ‘good’ with a high value, but a strong economy has been closely linked to the health of its citizens and their life expectancy. General sociatal effects of lockdowns and recessions are vast, and they disproportionately affect societies’ most vulnerable. Educational systems have not been brought back to normal everywhere, which will entail costs for society in the long-run, especially in developing countries where human capital is highly relevant.

Possible exit strategies Countries in the region have begun vaccination rollouts. The infection rates reported by the number of cases underestimate the actual cases by an order of magnitude. The exact number of convalecent, i.e., people who have recovered and required some natural immunity to the disease, is unknown. Current evidence shows that naturally acquired immunity can last for at least a year, and it is broadly comparable to vaccine-induced immunity. An effective and efficient immunization strategy in poorer regions should also consider convalecents who have obtained natural immunity. This helps to avoid an unduly prolongation of economic and social restrictions, especially for the poor and for countries whose budgets and economies are suffering the most. Sub-Saharan Africa countries depend on the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) initiative for their vaccination campaigns. Governments in the region may investigate other innovative and equally effective, but less costly ways out of the current situation. Recognizing convalecescence may be a cost-effective means to relax restrictions and gradually bring society back to the total pre-Corona capacity.

from left: David Stadelmann, Raymond Frempong, Frederik Wild
COVID-19 Taking the Centre Stage in a Cluster Project that Investigates Health Discourses as Privileged Spaces for Moral Communication

Text: MARTINA DRESCHER, OUMAROU BOUKARI

A

lthough the pandemic hindered the activities of the Cluster project on health discourses, the project team still managed to advance in their endeavours.

The project Health discourse as moral communication? Linguistic case study from Côte d’Ivoire and Cameroon was carried out by Martina Drescher and Oumarou Boukari together with the project partner and external cluster member Jean-Benoît Tsoufack from the University of Dschang, Cameroon and BIGSAS doctorate Laura Guadagnano, started in October 2019. It is part of the research section ‘Moralities’, and thus explores the different facets of doing ethics in the realm of health.

Initially meant to investigate different diseases, and more generally health-related issues and their discourses, the outbreak of the pandemic in early 2020 led to a refocusing on COVID-19 discourse. With the exception of the PhD project dedicated to questions of reproductive health and particularly to early pregnancy in the Ivory Coast, all project members agreed to concentrate on COVID-19 discourse. Due to travel restrictions, Bayreuth-based researchers were and are still unable to do field research on their own. Thus, in summer 2020, Carline Liliane Ngawa Mbafo, a former BIGSAS Junior Fellow and now researcher at the Université des Montagnes (Bangangté, Cameroon), joined the team. In charge of the data collection for the Cameroonian part of the project, Ngawa Mbafo organised focus group discussions and conducted interviews with about one hundred people of different social backgrounds who talked about their perception of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on their lives. These audio-taped conversations include currently more than 25 hours already partly transcribed and analysed. A similar and thus comparable database has been compiled for the Ivorian part of the project. These two large databases are now waiting for a close and systematic analysis. A first pilot study on moral talk in a Cameroonian health discourse. Valentín Feussi, a Senior Lecturer in Sociolinguistics and Didactics of Languages at the University of Erlangen, presented a pilot study on verbal violence against Latin American migrants in Erlangen and Nuremberg, that, although not directly connected to our research agenda on health-related discourses, touched on different aspects of moral communication and offered valuable comparative elements.

The project’s outlook

A second workshop planned for the end of the summer term 2020 had unfortunately to be cancelled due to the pandemic. Hence, the COVID-19 crisis has had very ambivalent consequences for the Cluster project. On the one hand, it provided the team with new and interesting examples of health discourses. On the other hand, it blocks their work in various ways since the project members are not able to do field research by themselves, or to participate in conferences. In the future, the team plans to investigate further aspects of COVID-19 discourses by focusing on inclusion/exclusion phenomena and on counselling activities. In this perspective, Drescher and Ngawa Mbafo are preparing a paper on ‘Nous sommes beaucoup plus forts que les Européens:馨mic Positioning and Moral Reasoning in Cameroonian Discourse on COVID-19 that will be given at the 2021 conference of the International Pragmatic Association. In addition, some project members will consider the role of interjections and discourse markers for doing ethics by focusing on its linguistic and communicative aspects and second to advance its empirical study by means of a comparative data-based analysis which targets its most prominent forms and functions in specific media and face to face settings.

The project zooms in on moral communication in Ivory Coast and Cameroon. It adopts a comparative perspective and engages with everyday moral talk in the domain of health. Since the articulation of ordinary ethics and language is still under-investigated, the project team aims to contribute to this rather new intersectional field of study by bringing forward a specific linguistic understanding of moral communication. They refer to constructivist and phenomeno- logical conceptualizations of ethics assuming that there are no moral phenomena, but only moral communica- tion about phenomena. According to such a view, conversationalists constantly and co-constructively bring about the moral meaning of a state of affair or an event. The paramount aim is to investigate the interactive processes by which moralities emerge and are negotiated in communication. In order to study these relational and interactional aspects, the team tackles two main, closely interlinked research questions: 1. Which are the forms of moral communication? In order to integrate both aspects we prioritize an empirical approach and resort to qualitative and interpretative methods. For this purpose we draw on theoretical insights from Discourse Analysis, Conversation Analysis and Interactional Linguistics. The team expects to contribute first to a better theoretical framing of doing ethics by focusing on its linguistic and communicative aspects and second to advance its empirical study by means of a comparative data-based analysis which targets its most prominent forms and functions in specific media and face to face settings.

Insights with a broader audience that included also Master students in Francophone Studies. Finally, Joe Spencer Bennet, a Senior Lecturer in Applied Linguistics at the University of Birmingham, UK, who specialises in research on moral and ethical talk, gave an insightful and well-attend- ed lecture on ‘Moral talk: debates on its forms, functions and value in political life’ in the Cluster’s Knowledge Lab. Author of a monograph on ‘Moral Talk’, published 2018 (London, Routledge), Spencer-Bennett is one of the few scholars interested in ethics from a linguistic and discourse analytic perspective and thus has a privileged cooperation partner whose work contributed in a crucial way to the conceptualisation of moral communication. The vibrant Q&A session showed that the issues he raised in his talk were of great interest not only to the members of our project and the ‘Moralities’ research section, but also to a broader cluster audience. Finally, Silke Jansen, chair of Romance languages at the University of Erlangen, presented a pilot study on verbal violence against Latin American migrants in Erlangen and Nuremberg, that, although not directly connected to our research agenda on health-related discourses, touched on different aspects of moral communication and offered valuable comparative elements.

Health discourses as moral communication? Linguistic case studies from Côte d’Ivoire and Cameroon

The project zooms in on moral communication in Ivory Coast and Cameroon. It adopts a comparative perspective and engages with everyday moral talk in the domain of health. Since the articulation of ordinary ethics and language is still under-investigated, the project team aims to contribute to this rather new intersectional field of study by bringing forward a specific linguistic understanding of moral communication. They refer to constructivist and phenomeno-logical conceptualizations of ethics assuming that there are no moral phenomena, but only moral communication about phenomena. According to such a view, conversationalists constantly and co-constructively bring about the moral meaning of a state of affair or an event. The paramount aim is to investigate the interactive processes by which moralities emerge and are negotiated in communication. In order to study these relational and interactional aspects, the team tackles two main, closely interlinked research questions: 1. Which are the forms of moral communication? In order to integrate both aspects we prioritize an empirical approach and resort to qualitative and interpretative methods. For this purpose we draw on theoretical insights from Discourse Analysis, Conversation Analysis and Interactional Linguistics. The team expects to contribute first to a better theoretical framing of doing ethics by focusing on its linguistic and communicative aspects and second to advance its empirical study by means of a comparative data-based analysis which targets its most prominent forms and functions in specific media and face to face settings.
A time, when mobility was limited on a global scale, it seemed inevitable that the Clusters of Excellence’s Research Section Mobilities was especially affected. But the research team found new ways to bring forward its topics.

The year 2020 did not go as planned, and this had a lot to do with mobility. Mobile people spread a virus around the globe, leading to mobility restrictions like closed borders, compulsory quarantine, stay-at-home orders, and lockdowns. In ways that were unthinkable before, mobility was hindered or severely slowed down. Measures to contain the pandemic led to a reconfiguration of the possibilities for people to move. This situation spoke directly to the thematic core of the Research Section ‘Mobilities.’ Additionally, this enforced immobility impacted the activities of the research section.

The workshop Understanding Africa’s Mobility Struggles planned for the end of March 2020 in Uganda had to be cancelled on short notice. Field research was mostly impossible, especially if it involved international travel or access to archives. Many colleagues could come only virtually to Bayreuth, and cooperation with the African Cluster Centres had to rely on electronic communication without real face-to-face engagement. Nevertheless, the research section came up with new, innovative formats like the virtual Sprint Lecture series to reach a broader audience. These short lectures on planetary mobility struggles are publicly available as podcasts on the Cluster’s website.

A workshop in Kampala that was not

In March 2020, researchers of the Cluster’s Research Section ‘Mobilities’ were busy finishing the preparations for an international interdisciplinary workshop titled Understanding Africa’s Mobility Struggles to be held at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. The research team had invited some 20 scholars from 14 countries to reflect and discuss struggles around the differential mobility of people, things, and ideas. The workshop covered a wide range of issues around mobility struggles within, into, and out of Africa, from great variety of disciplinary perspectives. Among other things the concept read: “The mobility of the people of the ‘majority world’ is actively controlled, contained, and restricted” and “African scholars are more likely to be denied visas to attend international conferences – which not only implies restrictions to their own mobility, but also the mobility of their knowledge.” In contrast, “A European traveling to Africa in most cases only needs a plane ticket, and without much interrogation, is privileged to enter a country by use of the so-called visa-on-arrival.”

One of the reasons to locate this workshop in Uganda was to ease the mobility and access of African scholars. We were well aware of the problems and difficulties that African scholars have to go through to get permission to take part in a workshop in Germany. In contrast, boasts a comparably liberal immigration regime. Traveling to Uganda is visa-free for citizens of nearly 20 African countries. And except for South Africans, citizens of all countries in the world are allowed to enter after filling in a simple e-visa application form and paying 50 USD. This is a far cry from the difficult and laborious process of getting a visa to Germany or another European country.

Reconfiguring mobility struggles

As we all know now, mobility profoundly changed over the last year. On 7 March 2020, the Ugandan Minister of Health, Jane Ruth Aceng, announced that to contain the spread of COVID-19, travellers from seven countries had to undergo 14 days of self-quarantine. Germany and France were among the seven countries on the list, directly affecting two organisers and the sheer endless possibility of participation. After three days of discussions, the organisation team decided with a heavy heart that it was necessary to postpone the workshop to an unknown future date. On 22 March 2020, Uganda confirmed its first COVID-19 case. Directly thereafter, Entebbe airport was closed for nearly half a year as the Ugandan government declared a strict lockdown. The research team thought of postponing to June, then September, until they gradually thought in-person workshops with participants from 14 countries would not happen any time soon.

While most of the time European immigration authorities categorise Africans and other non-Europeans as potentially dangerous, now Germans had become the dangerous group. Still, it was only a 14-day quarantine and not the complete ban that most people face when they try to enter the European Union. Moreover, postponing a workshop in parallel with the plight of people who were briefly detained, created Europe’s southern borders at the same time. Despite the gloomy prognosis of the pandemic’s impact in Africa, the continent recorded only a few COVID-19 cases in 2020. Victims of the disease were mainly in Europe, the Americas, and India. Accordingly, the last year saw a temporary reconfiguration of mobility regimes happening around the world.

During the last year, COVID-19 traveled with the movement of pandemic hotspots, travel restrictions were constantly changing. While people from the Global North are still privileged in their international mobility, COVID-related travel restrictions have changed this somewhat. Some of the passports that have hitherto given their owners the privilege of unfiltered international mobility have become red flags for immigration officers in less-affectected countries. According to the Henley Passport Index, German passport holders have the third-best passport in the world. The index shows the number of countries that passport holders are able to enter without a visa. Looking at the constantly changing list of travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 outbreak, it became clear that something was changing in international mobility – at least temporarily.

And there were also reconfigurations and struggles over mobility within countries. In some places, people were not allowed to leave their houses, villages, or districts. This situation produced new forms of mobility transactions by creating polarised mobility spaces where power became fundamental to determine who moves, who does not move, and how, where, and at what time. Containing people thus became not only a necessity to contain the spread of the virus. For those charged with the power of restricting mobility, ‘trading mobility’ became a way to extract resources from people in need of moving. The spaces for struggles and restrictions changed into transactional spaces where the population struggled to find the ‘resources’ to entangle in or strategies to bypass the new restricted spaces of mobility transactions.

Going online: Sprint Lecture Podcasts

The pandemic confirmed that mobility – as a context-specific ensemble of movement, representations of this movement, and concrete mobile practices – is political. Realizing that it would take a long time until in-person meetings were possible, members of the research section were developing new formats to continue engaging with these issues. The Sprint Lectures on African Mobilities are a forum to discuss who moves furthest, fastest, most often, and who does not move, and for what reasons. We are interested in understanding (in)mobility as a privileged and what (forced or voluntary) mobility and immobility means for various groups and why.

The main advantage of a virtual format – apart from the impossibility of transmitting the virus – is the ease with which scholars from elsewhere can be invited to present and discuss their work. There is no need to organise visas, airplane tickets, hotel accommodation, catering, project, and the like. Some email communication, online advertisement, and an internet connection suffice. Another advantage is the opportunity to record and make discussions available online. The most notorious drawbacks are the lack of direct personal interaction during the event, and before and after it. There is no informal chatting during dinner, over a beer, or a coffee. Other drawbacks are the limited timespan people are able to mentally focus in video conferences and the sheer endless possibilities to partake in online seminars and lectures. The Sprint Lecture format is a way to tackle some of these problems. It follows a 20-20 time schedule: 20 minutes of presentation followed by 20 minutes of discussion. And it is made available as a podcast. Interested listeners can stream or download the audio file of the lecture and listen to it while doing the laundry or the dishes.

In November 2020, the research group started with the series and welcomed geographer Parvati Raghuram from The Open University, UK, as our very first guest. She presented a talk entitled Democratising, stretching, entangling, transversing: Four moves for reshaping migration categories. Next was a lecture by the research section member and political scientist Nadine Machikoa from the University of Yaoundé, Cameroon, presenting her project Invisible Intellectuals focusing on African academic mobility and the situation of endangered scholars from the Global South. In this session, we came full circle from the cancelled Kampala workshop. The research section’s spokesperson Martin Doerfliger and migration tutors Paddy Kinyera analysed the politicised impact of COVID-19 on (im)mobility in Uganda. When the travel restrictions started, Kinyera had been on field research in Uganda and was preparing the workshop on the spot. Stuck in Uganda, he made the best of this challenging situation, and a new set of mobility struggles: the ways in which the Ugandan government restricted mobility and how people navigated this restrictive environment. In the last lecture of the winter semester, sociologist Larissa Schindler engaged with the impact of restricted mobility on discussing digital methodologies. The Sprint Lectures are an ongoing project and a great example of how the pandemic accelerated the development of innovative formats. All the podcast episodes – and the upcoming talks – are available on the Cluster’s website.
A group of researchers led by Eric Anchimbe scrutinises colonial correspondence between British Southern Cameroons-Nigeria-Britain. Now, one year into the project, the group shares its preliminary findings.

It has been one full year since the project Colonial Letters and the Contact of Knowledge started as part of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence at the University of Bayreuth. With ten members and a doctoral researcher working from four countries (Germany, Cameroon, Nigeria, and Ghana), this predominantly linguistic research examines the instantiations of colonial contact and postcolonial heritages that are embodied in, and transmitted through, letters written during British colonisation of Southern Cameroons (1916–1961). It focuses on the construction of multiple identities and the discursive enactment of (social, political, hereditary) power. The colonial correspondences collected from archives in Cameroon, Nigeria, and Britain serve as lenses into these processes, and are studied from sociolinguistic, critical discourse analysis, literary, historical, and postcolonial linguistic perspectives.

Two major events were carried out in this first year. These are the inaugural workshop (5 to 7 March 2020), and the lecture series (July–September 2020). Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the fieldwork trips planned for 2020 were postponed.

Inaugural workshop: Data and Theoretical Perspectives on Colonial Letters

Organised under the theme Data and Theoretical Perspectives on Colonial Letters, the aim of the inaugural workshop that took place on 5–7 March 2020 was to identify and consolidate data sources and to streamline interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives for analysing the data. It was attended by all members of the project team as well as members and guests of the Cluster and the University of Bayreuth. The workshop kicked off with a welcome speech by the Dean of the Cluster, Rüdiger Seesemann. He thanked the team members for coming to Bayreuth and encouraged them to join the rest of the Cluster in achieving its major goal of reconfiguring African Studies through its key concepts of multiplicity, relationality, and reflexivity. In his introduction, the project coordinator, Eric Anchimbe, outlined the aims of the project, central to which is to study instantiations of colonial contact and postcolonial heritages that are embodied in, and transmitted through, the colonial letters.

Workshop participants had the opportunity to explore the university library under the guidance of Vera Busz. This specialised tour focused on the historical holdings and specifically on colonial exchanges. After introducing participants to various catalogues of the library, Busz narrowed down the shelves, compartments, and digital resources relevant to British colonialism and colonial correspondences.

The three disciplinary perspectives involved in the project, namely linguistics, history, and literature, were discussed extensively with focus on how the data could be analysed through interdisciplinary approaches. Gratien Atindogbé from the University of Buea, Cameroon, explained how the linguistic perspective could, among other things, identify and examine strategies of multiple identity construction and power structures. The discussant of the session, Valentine Ubanako, from the University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon, added other aspects, including colonial and indigenous repertoires, patterns of knowledge production, and the question of authorship of colonial letters and the choices of words, expressions, and text types of letter writing.

The historical perspective was presented by Emmanuel Kengo from the University of Buea, Cameroon, who provided a detailed account of political events, political stratagisation, and political manoeuvring during the British colonisation of Southern Cameroons. He traced the trajectory of the transportation of these letters through Nigeria to London and the administrative relevance of each step, hence adding more meaning to the discourses produced in the letters. As discussant of this session, Uche Oyali of the University of Abia, Nigeria, accentuated the impact of British indirect rule, in which indigenous administrators were recruited to exact power over the subjects. The issue of authorship of colonial letters is also significant from a historical perspective given the role played by trained letter writers, translators, or interpreters.

The literary perspective treats colonial letters as authentic sources of colonial storytelling. Pepetual Mforbe Chiangong from Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany, explained that colonial letters could be classified as life-writing and read using a literary lens: the authors acting as characters, narrating events in their lives, and in the lives of those around them. The letters contribute immensely to the understanding of the colonial context which depicts power imbalance between the sender and receiver. The discussant, Sarah Marjie from the University of Ghana, added that the literary perspective could allow for the assessment of possible linguistic creativity and innovations of ordinary or standard use of the English language in the letters – a significant step in the development of African epistemologies.

The PhD session was dedicated to the work of the project’s doctoral researchers. Glory Essien Otung of the University of Bayreuth, Germany, after presenting her PhD research project, Identities and power in colonial letters: British Southern Cameroons (1916–1961), Otung received feedback from the participants. As some of the participants had done initial fieldwork in archives in Cameroon and Nigeria, they gave her advice on how to deal with the archives.

A highlight of the workshop was the presentation of the Cluster’s Digital Research Environment (DRE) by the Cluster’s Digital Solutions team made up of Anja Dreiser, Myriel Fichtner, and Philipp Eisenbuth. They explained how the corpus of the project could be stored, annotated, and used for research from different locations. Their input was timely and highly commendable because the research project will put together a corpus of colonial letters searchable through the DRE of the Cluster.

The quest for change and its implications as evidenced in colonial letters from British Southern Cameroons; Otung traced the project’s doctoral researchers’ I was brought up to ask questions: Narrative voice and identity in colonial correspondence? Atindogbé’s lecture was titled Linguistics in the colonial world: Speech Acts, orality and epistolarity. Oyali dealt with Legitimitising and resisting colonial power structures in the Mbang William letters; and Ubanako described Observingness in colonial writing: Evidence from selected colonial letters from British Southern Cameroon. The lectures offered an insight to the rich data collected so far, and will form the basis for the edited volume envisaged.
Monika Christine Rohmer the new Research Associate at Chair of Afrikantistik II

Monika Christine Rohmer was appointed Research Associate at the Chair of Afrikantistik II in November 2020. Rohmer holds a BA in Social Sciences and Philosophy with a focus on Political Science from the University of Leipzig and an MA in African Verbal and Visual Arts from the University of Bayreuth. In her Master thesis, she approached non-migration from a literary perspective. The thesis centred on Senegalese women waiting for the return of an emigrated loved one. Currently, Rohmer is working in the context of ecolinguistics. In her dissertation, she explores the idea of a fluid ecocopy encoded in the Wolof language. Rohmer succeeds Rémi Armand Tchokothe, who accepted a tenure-track professorship at the University of Vienna.

Text: Monika Rohmer

Sabrina Maurus Receives Preis der Stadt Bayreuth for her Dissertation

BIGSAS alumna Sabrina Maurus won the Preis der Stadt Bayreuth (City of Bayreuth Award) for her dissertation entitled Battles over State Making on a Frontier – Dilemmas of Schooling, Young People and Agro-Pastoralism in Hamar, Southwest Ethiopia. The city of Bayreuth honors outstanding dissertations across all disciplines of the University of Bayreuth. In 2020, one of the prizes went to Maurus’ dissertation written in the field of Social Anthropology and graded with summa cum laude.

Based on ethnographic fieldwork in southwest Ethiopia, Maurus shows how the implementation of compulsory schooling created a literal battlefield in the Hamar district that is widely overlooked. Maurus analyses the violent conflict from the perspective of first-generation students to show and conceptualise the dilemmas of making a future between the expectations of agro-pastoral parents and the developmental state. The dissertation demonstrates how hierarchical political actors use children and education to fight over power on the frontier of the state.

Before being appointed to BIGSAS, Maurus studied Comparative Studies in Cultures and Religions in Marburg and Social and Cultural Anthropology in Bayreuth and Bordeaux, France. She taught in Social Anthropology at the University of Bayreuth. As a postdoctoral researcher in the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, Maurus continues to study the educational trajectories of youths in and beyond schools, but now in Benin. Due to the pandemic, the prize money was awarded but the public celebration has been postponed.

Text: Monika Rohmer

Gemechu Adimassu Abeshu Receives Preis der Stadt Bayreuth for his Dissertation

BIGSAS alumnus Gemechu Adimassu Abeshu has been awarded the City of Bayreuth Award (Preis der Stadt Bayreuth) 2020 for his dissertation New Forms of Power in the Afar Region of Ethiopia: The Rise of Big Men near the Ethiopia and Djibouti Border.

“We learn from Gemechu’s work how Afar’s new Big Man has constructed political power through the assertion of monopoly over land and natural resources in the area. While the rise to power has undermined traditional authorities (clan elders), the Big Man nonetheless operates within the Afar moral universe,” said Georg Klute, Abeshu’s doctoral supervisor. Abeshu’s dissertation is an important contribution to anthropology and has been distinguished with the highest grades.

Abeshu joined BIGSAS in April 2015 after having completed two Master degrees. Since then, he has been highly motivated and engaged profoundly in the scientific discourse. Abeshu’s field research took him to the ‘zone of danger’ – the Afar region in northeast Ethiopia, where he faced the risk of arrest and death threats from the Big Man. Nevertheless, he succeeded in compiling valuable data and defended his dissertation in 2019. Abeshu is now a policy consultant working in Canada on several projects.

Text: Juliane Fender

DAAD Prize 2020 Awarded to Hanza Diman

For his excellent academic performance and notable extracurricular activities, the University of Bayreuth awarded Hanza Diman with the DAAD Prize in 2020. Diman, born in Comé, Benin, first came to Germany in 2011, conducting literature research in Bayreuth for his studies at the University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin. Following this six-month stay, he decided to do his Master’s degree at the University of Bayreuth with a focus on African history and Francophone studies.

Diman has been a Junior Fellow of BIGSAS since 2016, doing his doctorate on the history of the use and supply of kitchen wood in urban households in West Africa. In BIGSAS, he also served as a Junior Fellow Representative for two semesters and has been an integral part of the BIGSAS football team. Furthermore, Diman was actively engaged in the project BIGSAS@school for several years and became the coordinator of the follow-up project Afrika@school.

In addition to his doctoral studies, Diman is involved in a wide range of social and socio-political activities. He is co-founder of the Model African Union Association in Bayreuth, as well as founder of the think-and-do tank Africa Politicum that brings together the expertise of African intellectuals and researchers, especially those based in Bayreuth and enrolled at BIGSAS. Diman’s engagement in German-African institutions is rounded off by his work in the Farahina Institut e.V. and the Central Council of the African Community in Germany.

Text: Juliane Fender

Omar Egesah – A Passion for Academic Collaboration

With profound sadness the African Studies community of the University of Bayreuth received the news about the passing of Omar Egesah, Professor of Anthropology at Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya, in March 2021.

His manifold expertise and contributions enriched BIGSAS as much as the Africa Multiple Cluster. As a founding member of AMAS (Academic Mobility for African Sustainable Development), Egesah vastly contributed to the successful applications of the BIGSAS Partner University’s network within the EU-Intra-Africa Mobility Scheme in 2016, which he guided with dedication. Apart from his commitment to building institutional bridges, Egesah had great passion for anthropological research. He became one of the most active researchers in the Cluster, forging ties with the ‘Mobilities Research Section, connecting with scholars at the other ACCs, leading a project on mobility on the Kenya-Uganda highway, while participating in other research projects.

During his collaboration with colleagues at the University of Bayreuth, Egesah became an instrumental member of the research community and also a friend to many. He died on 18 March 2021.

Text: Rüdiger Seesemann, Christine Scherer
Doris Lörh Appointed Chair of CrossArea e.V.

In November 2020, Doris Lörh, the Academic Coordinator of the Internationalisation and Pub- lic Engagement department of the African Multiple Cluster of Excellence, was appointed chair of CrossArea e.V., the Association for Transregional Studies, Comparative Area Studies, and Global Studies in Germany.

Lörh succeeds Andreas Mehler (Director of FRIAS and the Africa Centre for Transregional Research, Freiburg), as whose deputy she acted from 2018-2020. Funded by the Federal Ministry of Research and Education (BMBF), CrossArea e.V. was founded in 2014 as a result of an initiative, and its project

With a doctorate in African linguistics, Lörh was a postdoctoral researcher at universities in Frankfurt, Leipzig, and Hamburg, engaging in several interdisciplinary DFG projects. Her regional focus includes Nigeria and the Lake Chad area, where she conducted research on language contact, Central Chadic languages, and the dialectology of Kanuri-Kanembu. In 2012, she joined the University of Bayreuth as Coordinator and Managing Director of the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies (funded by the BMBF as part of the initiative Strengthening and further development of the Area Studies), and its project Future Africa – Visions in time a position she held until 2019.

Text: Sabine Greiner

Jamil M. Abun-Nasr First Holder of the Chair of Islamic Studies with Focus on Africa

Jamil Abun-Nasr, the first holder of the Chair of Islamic Studies with Focus on Africa at the University of Bayreuth, passed away on 10 April 2021. Born in 1932, in al-Bassa, Palestine, he was forced to flee to Lebanon along with his family in 1948. After a stint at Beirut University College he moved to Oxford in 1958, eventually becoming a true citizen of the world while re- maining Palestinian at heart. At St. Antony’s College he embarked on his first research, which focused on the history of the Tinijara Stuh order in the Maghreb and West Africa and earned him his Ph.D. in Near Eastern Studies in 1961. Thereafter, Jamil Abun-Nasr worked as Assistant Professor at the Center of Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University (1962) before moving on to the University of Ghana. Further teaching positions followed at American University Beirut (1963–1966), Fourah Bay College in Free Town/Sierra Leone (1966–1967) and at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria (1968–1974).

In September 1974, Jamil Abun-Nasr came to Berlin, where he first worked as an Alexander von Humboldt research fellow and later received a Volkswagen grant. In September 1980, he was invited to teach Islamic Studies at the then emerging University of Bayreuth and asked to set up a teaching programme for this discipline. In 1985, he was appointed to the newly established Chair of Islamic Studies with Focus on Africa at the University of Bayreuth, where he acted as managing director from 1991 until 1993. Through the emphasis on empirical research in various projects initiated at his Chair, as well as through the focus of African studies that was long marginalized in German Islamic Studies, Jamil Abun-Nasr was instrumental in opening up a field that was formerly dominated by text-based approaches and a Middle Eastern bias.

Text: Roman Loimeier
**February 2020**

- **Intersectionality Symposium:**
  - **Title:** Theory, Approach, Activism
  - **Organizers:**
  - **See report on page 86.

- **Postdoc Working Group:**
  - **Title:** SK:erging Space from Africa
  - **Organizers:**
    - Basil Bucher, James Chibueze, Davide Chiningò, Siri Lamoureux, Susann Ludwig, Samyukta Manikumar, Noluvuyo Matiwane, James Merron
  - **See report on page 83.

- **Workshop:**
  - **Title:** On World and Artworks
  - **Organizers:**
    - Elena Brugiioni, Chinelu Jenifer Enemuo, Rajcoomaree Issur, Corinna Shika Kwami, Venkat Mani, Joseph Christoph Odhiambo, Michaela Ott, Justin Ouoro, Peter Simatei Tirop, Ruth Helen Simbao
  - **See report on page 38.

- **Workshop and Lecture:**
  - **Title:** Art meets Science: From Plastic to Microplastic
  - **Organizers:**
    - Mbongeni Buthela
  - **See report on page 42.

- **Workshop:**
  - **Title:** Religious engineering: The making of moralities, development and religion in Niger
  - **Organizers:**
    - Mahaman Tidjani Alou, Abdoulaye Sounaye
  - **See report on page 32.

- **Knowledge Lab:**
  - **Title:** Pluralism, Human Rights, and Corporate Social Responsibility
  - **Organizers:**
    - Keebet von Benda-Beckmann
  - **See report on page 32.

- **Cluster Project:**
  - **Title:** Making a living (Ola)lekan Balogun, Billy Langa, Mahlatsi Moselotla, Femi Ososfan, Jane Plastow, Sandra Young
  - **See report on page 76.

- **Workshop and theatre presentation of the Postdoc Working Group:**
  - **Title:** Shakespearean Pasts African Futurities: Entanglements of Memory, Temporalities and Knowledge(s)
  - **Organizers:**
    - Yekeunoamlak Alemu, Messay Mulugeta Tefer
  - **See report on page 76.

**March 2020**

- **Workshop of the Cluster’s Research Project:**
  - **Title:** Perspectives on Colonial Letters
  - **Organizers:**
    - Pamela Gupta, Emmanuel Kengo, Sarah Marije, Glory Essien Otung, Uche Oyulu, Gratien Atindogbe, Boniface Mhah, Stephen Mortheh, Julius Eyoh, Valentine Ubanako
  - **See report on page 86.

**April 2020**

- **Lecture Series:**
  - **Title:** African Literature: Histories, Pillars and Visions
  - **Organizers:**
    - Ifeoluwa Aboluwade, Shirin Assa, Weeraya Donomokukuti, Maroou El Naggare, Oliver Nyambi, Tomuepeishie Maphosa, Shaban Mayanya, Alena Rettova, Gilbert Shang
  - **See report on page 86.

- **Workshop:**
  - **Title:** Negotiating Conflict in Africa
  - **Organizers:**
    - Mark Anstey, Olivier Faure, Paul Meerts, Florence Mpaayei, Oshita Oshita, Rudolf Schuessler, Mikhail Troitskiy, Eckart Woertz, William Zartman

**May 2020**

- **Guest Lecture:**
  - **Title:** Zanzibari tourist space: Some considerations on the concept of ‘grassroots’
  - **Organizers:**
    - Basil Bucher, James Chibueze, Davide Chiningò, Siri Lamoureux, Susann Ludwig, Samyukta Manikumar, Noluvuyo Matiwane, James Merron
  - **See report on page 38.

- **Colloquium:**
  - **Title:** Investigating the Nexus between Animals and Basotho’s identities in Epitaphs as Death Discourse
  - **Organizers:**
    - Taofik Adesanmi
  - **See report on page 36.

- **Guest Lecture:**
  - **Title:** Identities: the relational image of a People in selected Epitaphs
  - **Organizers:**
    - Taofik Adesanmi
  - **See report on page 35.

**June 2020**

- **Guest Lecture:**
  - **Title:** Relationality and the Work of Adornment in 19th-20th Century Zanzibar
  - **Organizers:**
    - Lekan Balogun
  - **See report on page 83.

- **Guest Lecture for the Cluster Project:**
  - **Title:** Travelling Knowledge and Trans*textuality. African Sources in Shakespearean Drama
  - **Organizers:**
    - Akinmayowa Akin-Otiko
  - **See report on page 83.

- **Public Lecture:**
  - **Title:** Religious Exclusivism and Logical Implication of Religious Pluralism: The Nigerian Context
  - **Organizers:**
    - Thomas Kirsch, Eureta Rosenberg
  - **See report on page 83.

**Events and Guests**

- **Sarah Marije:**
  - **Title:** Glory Essien Otung
  - **See report on page 38.

- **Oluwatomi Makinlu:**
  - **Title:**かなりの数
  - **See report on page 37.

- **Valerie Rosoux:**
  - **Title:** Research Ethics
  - **See report on page 32.

- **Doudou Sidibe:**
  - **Title:** Negotiating Conflict in Africa
  - **See report on page 31.

- **Susanne Mohr:**
  - **Title:** Religious engineering: The making of moralities, development and religion in Niger
  - **See report on page 31.

- **Ifeoluwa Aboluwade:**
  - **Title:** Investigating the Nexus between Animals and Basotho’s identities in Epitaphs as Death Discourse
  - **See report on page 30.

- **Ifeoluwa Aboluwade:**
  - **Title:** Investigating the Nexus between Animals and Basotho’s identities in Epitaphs as Death Discourse
  - **See report on page 30.

- **Susanne Mohr:**
  - **Title:** Religious exclusivism and logical implication of religious pluralism: The Nigerian context.
  - **See report on page 30.

- **Valerie Rosoux:**
  - **Title:** Research Ethics
  - **See report on page 30.

- **Doudou Sidibe:**
  - **Title:** Negotiating Conflict in Africa
  - **See report on page 30.

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  - **See report on page 30.

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  - **See report on page 30.

- **Valerie Rosoux:**
  - **Title:** Research Ethics
  - **See report on page 30.

- **Doudou Sidibe:**
  - **Title:** Negotiating Conflict in Africa
  - **See report on page 30.
Kole Ade Odutola: Passionate online guest in spite of COVID

Kole Ade Odutola's interdisciplinary background spans three continents: Africa, Europe, and the Americas. He holds a BA degree in Botany from the University of Benin, Nigeria; an MA degree in TV/Video for Development from the University of Reading, UK; a MSc degree in Communications from Ithaca College, New York; and a PhD in Media Studies from Rutgers University, New Jersey. He is currently a Senior Lecturer at the University of Florida, Gainesville. His intellectual interest and practice cover a range of interlocking disciplines, from ecology and genetics to social sciences, media studies, and media production (radio, TV, and movie-making) and language teaching. Odutola is bringing his profound knowledge of the intersection of the Yorùbá language with traditional curative medicine and its underlying religious belief systems. His expertise in media production has helped in the creation of important audio-visual materials in this respect. Furthermore, Odutola is a renowned storyteller who has been invited to different events as a performer and as a workshop participant.

Odutola was expected in Bayreuth as a guest of the IAS in the summer term 2020. Due to the pandemic, the exchange occurred digitally. As a passionate teacher, he even participated in the Bayreuth Yorùbá course that took place during his summer vacation on Fridays from 10 am, which was 4 am in Florida! In addition to his expertise and knowledge, Odutola brought much vigour and enthusiasm to the course. Odutola is expected in Bayreuth in summer 2021.

Text: Dmitri Ibriczmow

### Guests of the Institute of African Studies in Bayreuth (IAS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lamine Doumbia</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Deutsches Historisches Institut Paris (DHIP), France</td>
<td>04.11. – 19.12.2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salabary Doumbia</td>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Faculté des Lettres, des Langues et des Sciences du Langage (FLSL), Bamako, Mali</td>
<td>02.03. – 29.06.2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faisal Garba</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>University of Cape Town, South Africa</td>
<td>11.01. – 26.01.2020</td>
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**August 2020**

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rufus Akinyele, Deji Akimpelu, Adekunle Ali, Patrick Dele Cole, Sunmi Smart Cole, Erelu Abiola Dosunmu, Habeeb Sanni</td>
<td>Workshop series and photography exhibition at the ACC Lagos: Ownership and Identities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peju Layiwola</td>
<td>Opening Artist Lecture: Ownership and Identities Spread Out the Cloth: Exploring Yoruba Fashion and Textile Modernity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yekunoamlak Alemu</td>
<td>Guest Lecture Ownership and Identities: Academic Mobility in Africa Annotated Experience of South-North and South-South Academic Mobility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santiago Fernández, SN Nyeck, Dianne Shober</td>
<td>Summer School, Bahia Brazil: Fábrica de Ideias</td>
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**September 2020**

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<th>Event</th>
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**October 2020**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boubacar Haidara, Juliane Müller</td>
<td>Roundtable: Learning beyond the classroom: Coping with illiteracy in literate urban environments in Benin and Bolivia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franca Attoh</td>
<td>Guest Lecture: ICT Aided Mobility and Migration in West Africa: Imperative for Integration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Akosua Adomako Ampofo</td>
<td>Online Guest Lecture: Exploring Young African Men Living and Performing Blackness in the Diaspora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline Asiimwe</td>
<td>Lecture: Kiwahili in the East African Community Agenda for Regional Integration &amp; Sustainable Guest Lecture Development</td>
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**November 2020**

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<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nadine Siegert</td>
<td>Guest Lecture, Johannesburg, South Africa: Career opportunities outside of academia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yvonne Dausah, Melina Kalfelis, Redson Kapindu, Lydia Mugambia-Ssali, Joan Nanyuki</td>
<td>Online Discussion Series: Everyone’s human rights – A series of debates on human rights in Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feyi Ademola-Adeoye</td>
<td>Online Lecture: Cultural Referencing in Selected COVID-19 online Jokes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Henry Mutai</td>
<td>Guest Lecture, ACC Moi: Prospects and Challenges of East African Common Market protocol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santiago Fernández, SN Nyeck, Dianne Shober</td>
<td>Lecture Series: Intersectionality Studies and Diversity Competence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michaela Ott</td>
<td>Lecture Knowledge Lab</td>
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<tr>
<td>Claire Medard Amutebi</td>
<td>Online Guest Lecture: The Case of Land Inheritance in Buganda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dianne Shober</td>
<td>Online Lecture: Silencing the Abuser: Marriage and Death in African Women’s Writi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anne Jung, Nene Morisho</td>
<td>Guest Lecture: Learning From Ebola</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ousseni Illy</td>
<td>Online Lecture: The African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights: An Electoral Court?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omar Egesah, Danson Sylvester Kahyana, Patrick Oloko</td>
<td>Project presentation of ACC members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline Asiimwe</td>
<td>Lecture: Democrtatising, stretching, entangling, transversing: Four moves for reshaping migration categories</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Dec 2020

Klaudia Dombrowsky-Hahn

**Events and Guests**

- **Akinnayowa Akin-Otiko**
  - Presentation of the research project: Nigeria COVID-19 Alternative Treatment and the Nigeria Government

- **Hassan Mwakimako**
  - Guest Lecture:
    - Knowledge, Learning and Teachings from Friday Khutubah of Shaykh Al-Amin b. Ali al-Mazruoi, 1890-1947

- **Marilyn Strathern**
  - Guest Lecture:
    - Regeneration and its hazards: A commentary on our times

- **Miampika Moundele Landry-Wilfrid**
  - Guest Lecture:
    - Images and representations of African migrations in contemporary francophone narratives

- **Festus Boamah, Elise Onsongo**
  - Conference:
    - Critical Perspectives on Energy Transitions in Africa

- **Anthony Okereke**
  - Online Lecture:
    - Beyond Synergetics to Acquiring 'Faith-skill': Exploring Religious Hybridism for Survival

- **Yacouba Banhoro**
  - Presentation ACC Ouagadougou: Globalization and health policy in West Africa

- **Robert Stockhammer**
  - Guest Lecture and Discussion:
    - Welt, Ede, Globus – aus afrikanischer Perspektive?

- **Eric Masee, Eunice Kamara**
  - Presentation ACC Moi University Eldoret: AIMWolf Project

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Salabary Doumbia was an alumnus of the University of Bayreuth, where he received his doctorate in 1987 from the Chair of African Studies I (Faculty of Linguistics and Literature). His thesis was titled Investigation of the Phonological Structure of Two Manding Variants (Bambara of Samakp and Wozolokhan). Doumbia came to Bayreuth after having studied German language and literature at the National Superior College of Education (ENSup) in Bamako, Mali, and at Saarland University in Saarbrücken. Following his doctorate, Doumbia was an adjunct lecturer of Bambara (Bamanankan). After returning to Mali, Doumbia taught at the German Department of ENSup and the Faculty of Linguistics and Literature at the University of Bamako for over ten years before joining the Friedrich Ebert Foundation as a research associate in 1999.

Doumbia felt closely connected to the University as well as to the city of Bayreuth. He also supported activities related to the teaching of Bambara. In February and March of 2019, he organised a language course at the University of Bamako for advanced students of Bambara from Bayreuth, Berlin, and Mainz. In March 2020, Doumbia came to Bayreuth at the invitation of the IAS. During his stay, he worked on a paper about Wozolokhan, a hitherto little-known Manding variety spoken in southwestern Mali. Another aim of his stay was to participate in a joint project on updating the teaching materials of Bambara (Bamanankan). These have since been used in language courses at the UBT Language Centre. Doumbia passed away in Bamako on December 17, 2020 after a short illness.

*Text: Klaus Dombrowsky-Hahn*

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**The Online Publication Series**

The Institute of African Studies (IAS) promotes and coordinates the multi-disciplinary field of African studies at the University of Bayreuth. It facilitates research, teaching, and training of Bayreuth-based scholars, and promotes the exchange of information between persons and institutions engaged in research and teaching in or on Africa and beyond. Moreover, it provides scholars with an opportunity to publish their work conducted in the field of African studies. Contributions from Bayreuth-based scholars as well as from guests and partner institutions are equally welcome.

IAS Online Publications are chronicled on the EPub document server at the university library. They are open access and connected to all common search engines on the internet.

**University of Bayreuth African Studies Online**

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

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

Editor in chief is Dr. Lena Kroeker (Lena.Kroeker@uni-bayreuth.de).

**University of Bayreuth African Studies Working Papers**

University of Bayreuth African Studies Working Papers presents insights into ongoing research projects in the field of African studies at the University of Bayreuth.

In addition to the main series, there are three sub-series: Africa Multiple connects, Academy reflects and BIGSAS works!

IAS members, scholars from the University of Bayreuth, their guests and cooperation partners are all cordially invited to submit their work to this series. Submitted documents are subject to internal peer review.

Editor in chief is Sabrina Maurus (Sabrina.Maurus@uni-bayreuth.de).

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