

Bayreuth Academy
of Advanced
African Studies

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BAYREUTH
FUTURE
ACADEMY
AFRICA
OF
— **VISIONS**
ADVANCED
IN TIME
AFRICAN STUDIES

**INTERDISCIPLINARY
RESEARCH
AT THE
BAYREUTH ACADEMY
2012–2016**

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Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies »Future Africa – Visions in Time«

INTRODUCTION

BY

PROF
SUSAN ARNDT

&

PROF
ACHIM VON OPPEN

Founded in October 2012, the »Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies« expands the horizon of the well-established field of African studies at Bayreuth University and beyond, both at national and international levels. It operates across a broad range of disciplines, notably in the humanities and social sciences. Concentrating its work on specific

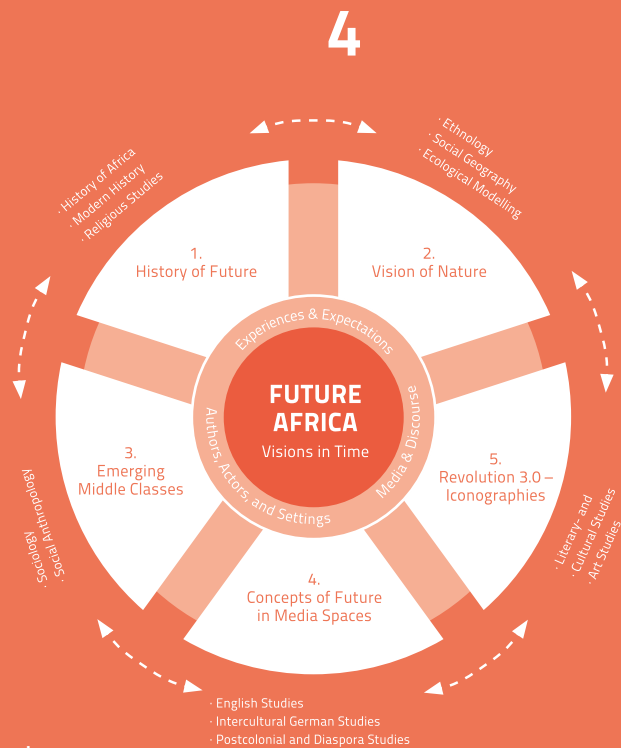
themes, the Bayreuth Academy opens innovative dialogues between Africa-related research as well as other regional foci and fields of research. In this way, the Bayreuth Academy demonstrates that African studies give valuable impetus to scholarly debates beyond the continent and beyond »area studies«, thus scrutinising and resituating the latter. In doing so, the Bayreuth Academy emphasizes that area studies work systematically, just as much as the »systematic disciplines« find their empirical evidence regionally. Moreover, the Bayreuth Academy discusses Africa in its global contexts. Here, entanglements with African diasporas matter as much as those with other regions. Entangled histories, presents and futures are read transculturally and globally, envisioning new futures within and beyond area studies.

»Future Africa – Visions in Time« is the first overarching research theme of the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies. This project is being funded for at least four years

(2012–2016) by the German Federal Ministry for Research and Education (BMBF), as part of its programme for strengthening and resituating area studies in Germany. The project starts off from the observation that visions and representations of »future« outside Europe and the West are particularly innovative and instructive. A basic assumption is that these visions and representations can be read as responses to particular challenges of a past and as interventions into a present that is strongly entangled in dynamics of very different scales, and hence matter not only in the contexts of particular areas, but potentially on the whole planet. This is particularly salient in visions of the future as developed in Africa and its diasporas, which are in the focus of this project.

The project is carried out on three levels.

Firstly, a total of five sub-projects are run over the entire project period by the research staff of the Academy. These



Organizational structure of the sub projects and overall topic.

currently comprise twelve sub-project leaders (employed in different departments of the University) and nine post-doc researchers (employed at the Academy), plus academic and student assistants as well as three associated scholars of Bayreuth University (Prof. Matthias Christen, Prof. Jeanne Cortiel & Dr. Rothemund). The sub-projects and their individual members, joined temporarily by invited guests who are experts in the respective

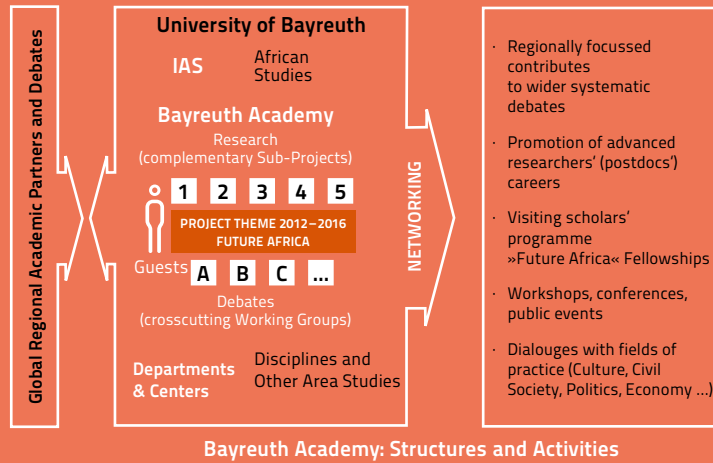
fields, pursue specific aspects of the general theme from different disciplinary perspectives. Subproject 1 studies the historical context and transformation of narratives of »future« in the 19th and 20th centuries. Models about time and future in nature as applied in conservation strategies or in ways of coping with climate change are examined by sub-project 2. Ideas about a better future among middle classes are explored as cultural

markers of their ambition for social mobility in sub-project 3. Sub-project 4 analyses fictional representations of »future« as entangled with technologies that are generated in Africa and its diasporas and as negotiated by artistic movements such as Afrofuturism or in new media such as the internet. Finally, iconographies of successive African revolutions are discussed and anthologized from the perspectives of cultural and art studies in sub-project 5. One common regional focus of all the sub-projects is Kenya and Kenyan diasporas. The work of these five sub-projects, from individual researches to joint activities (including workshops, guests and publications), will be explained in more detail below.

The second level of the Bayreuth Academy's work on »Future Africa« consists of a series of working groups that convene for one semester each between 2013 and 2016. Facilitated by the directors or one particular sub-project, they bring together the research staff of the Academy and a number of interna-

5
tional experts from Germany, Europe, and overseas, notably Africa and North America. The working groups provide wider platforms for intensive debates about transdisciplinary and cross-regional dimensions of the general research theme. In the working groups, research results from the sub-projects and guests are brought together under comparative and systematical perspectives, to stimulate encounters between concepts, terminologies and methodologies used in different disciplines and for different empirical subjects/regions, and to further critical debates beyond Africa and area studies. Apart from the regular sessions, workshops and conferences are held to concentrate and accentuate debates in the working groups – starting from the large opening conference of the Bayreuth Academy held in July 2013. More details on the working groups held so far are given below.

A third important field of activity of the project, as of the Academy in general, is to pre-



Organigram of BAOAAS
in relation to African Studies
at Bayreuth University.

sent its research and debates to a wider academic and general public. Congresses, workshops, panel discussions, readings, film screenings, literature festivals, artistic performances, exhibitions, round tables with experts actively involved in politics and economics as well as in cultural production and exchange and other events serve as forums for these dialogues with wider publics.

The Academy as a whole has a First and a Second Director (Professors Achim von Oppen and Susan Arndt). Management and

Administration are in the hands of Dr. Doris Löhrl (Academic Coordinator) and Ms. Renate Crowe (Secretary), assisted by other part-time staff. Important matters of strategy are discussed and decided in the Steering Group, with representatives from each sub-project and the post-docs.

(Information on events conveyed by the sub-projects and working groups is available in this section.)

An important role is also assigned to the Academic Advisory

Board of the Bayreuth Academy, which was established in an inaugural session in July 2013. Its current members are:

- > John Akomfrah, Smoking Dogs Films, London
- > João Paulo Borges Coelho, Professor of History at Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo
- > Ottmar Ette, Professor of Romance Languages and Comparative Literature, University of Potsdam
- > Thomas Krüger, President of the Federal Agency for Civic Education, Bonn
- > Elísio Macamo, Professor for African Studies in the Dept. of Sociology, University of Basel
- > Birgit Meyer, Professor of Religious Studies and Theology, University of Utrecht
- > Matthias Middell, Professor of Global History, University of Leipzig
- > Auma Obama, PhD, German and Film Studies, Director of Sauti Kuu Foundation, Nairobi
- > Gloria Wekker, Professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Utrecht

Advisory Board Member Dr. Auma Obama meeting with members of the Academy in the Seminar room, 2013. (© D. Löhrl)





DR DORIS LÖHR

DORIS.LOEHR@UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

**ACADEMIC COORDINATOR
OF THE BAYREUTH ACADEMY OF
ADVANCED AFRICAN STUDIES**

BACKGROUND

Doris Löhr has a background in African studies, social anthropology and education sciences, having written a PhD. in African Linguistics, Frankfurt University, with a thesis on: »The language of the Malgwa – the first grammatical description of this Central Chadic language spoken in North-eastern Nigeria«.

She held postdoctoral positions at the Universities of Hamburg (as a research fellow working on Kanembu dialectology at the Asia-Africa-Institute between 2009 and 2012), and Leipzig (as a lecturer at the Department of African Studies between 2003 and 2008). After 8 years as a research fellow for the Joint DFG research project »West African Savannah« at Frankfurt University, she obtained a qualification in project management (2003). Doris Löhr has organized various international conferences, such as the »5th International Biennial Chadic Colloquium« at Leipzig University in 2009 and the VAD Conference at Bayreuth University in 2014, as well as workshops in Hamburg and London in 2010 and 2011, for which she co-edited proceedings and the SFB 268's final report.

Research focus/
interests in general

She has published on various grammatical features of the Chadic and Saharan language families (Lake Chad region), mainly within the field of areal linguistics and language contact. She has specialized on tense and aspect systems in African languages; her most recent interest focuses on spatial and temporal metaphors.

Some of the important academic
events convened or supported by the
Bayreuth Academy of Advanced
African Studies as a whole (end of
2012 to summer 2014):

Conference of the German African Studies Association (VAD) »Future Africa«. University of Bayreuth, 11.–14.6.2014. (Conv. by Georg Klute.)

International opening conference »Conceptualising Future. Current Debates in Regional and Systematic Research«. University of Bayreuth, 4–7th July 2013. (Conv. by S. Arndt; A. v. Oppen.)

Project at BA

Doris Löhr works as the academic coordinator at the Bayreuth Academy, overseeing internal and external communications as well as being responsible for management, administration and exchanges of information transfer (including the budget, coordination of events, guests and meetings, editorials, finance, networking, public relations and staff matters).

Public lecture series »Diasporas in Past, Present and Future« – »Profilinie Diasporen« within »Emerging Field: Kulturbegegnungen und transkulturelle Prozesse«. University of Bayreuth, summer term 2013. (In cooperation with BIFAS; S. Lachenicht, U. Fendler et al.)

Opening event »Future Africa – Visions in Time«. University of Bayreuth, 3rd December 2012. (Org. by S. Arndt; A. v. Oppen.)

Beyond Europe: Narratives of the Future in Modern African History

PROJECT MEMBERS

PROF DR ACHIM VON OPPEN

PROF DR SUSANNE LACHENICHT

DR ANNALISA URBANO

DR CHRISTINE WHYTE

SUB-PROJECT **ONE**

Throughout the last two centuries, Africans as well as African diasporas have developed visions of a future for Africa that clearly differed from those dominant in the West. This history of visions is in the focus of sub-project 1. Compared to the rich and still growing research on the history of European projections of the future for Africa, focusing on

ideas such as »civilization«, »progress« and »development«, narratives about the future which have developed in Africa itself and in its diasporas are much less studied. One of the key aspects to examine here is how these narratives were entangled with, and contested, Western and other ideas, and how their authors appropriated and changed key terms and concepts in the process.

The sub-project also analyses how these ideas of future were related to ideas of space and time. Its research emphasizes the social and political situatedness as well as the connectedness of narratives of the future, their embeddedness in power relations, and their historical change. Particular attention is also paid to entanglements between religious and secular concepts, and to links between projections of the future and of the past (memory).

Research within the sub-project concentrates empirically on a number of specific aspects and phases: »The Pan-African School: Black Imperialism and Education

in Sierra Leone and Liberia, 1865–1926« (Christine Whyte); »In the pursuit of Greater Somalia: The Pan-Somali Movement and irredentist visions of the Somali future (1935–69)« (Annalisa Urbano); »Social Movements and Ideas of »Development« in Africa in the 20th Century« (Achim v. Oppen); »Connections between the Harlem Renaissance (USA), Panafricanism and African nationalism: The Case of John Locke« (Susanne Lachenicht).

Following this agenda, the sub-project also pursues a number of joint activities which contribute to the project as a whole, including:

- International conference titled »Catastrophe or catalyst? African and African Diasporas' visions arising from World War One«. (Convenors, October 2014.)
- VAD Panel 34. »Visions of the Future in the History of Africa and the Atlantic« and pre-Conference workshop with John Lonsdale, Bruce Berman, Bahru Zewde and Konstanze N'Guessan. (Convenors, June 2014.)
- Working group B of the BA. »Multiple Futures Through Time«



PROJECT LEADER

PROF DR
ACHIM VON OPPEN
 ACHIM.VONOPPEN@
 UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

BACKGROUND

Professor of African History,
 University of Bayreuth, since 2007

Research interests

Social and cultural history in rural and urban contexts; religion in history; spatial history; history of mobilities, transfers and translations; local and translocal histories; historical biography and cartography.

Areas of interest

South-Central and East Africa (Zambia, Angola, Tanzania, Congo); Indian Ocean; Sudano-Sahelian West Africa (Mali).

Research theme contributing to sub-project 1:

»Social Movements and Ideas of ›Development‹ in Africa in the 20th Century, with Case Studies from Zambia, Tanzania and the Great Lakes Region.«

Research on these topics draws together and revisits various earlier work on rural and religious movements in the late and post-colonial periods, and on histories of »development« as struggles about planned intervention. It scrutinizes the ideas of a better society and of »development«, »progress« etc. that often mobilised and motivated these movements or were developed in response to intervention by the colonial and post-colonial state. While situating these visions and practices in particular historical contexts, their translocal and transtemporal entanglements are also of special interest. Micro-level analysis and biographical approaches receive particular attention. The selected case studies are based on re-studies and new research of my own as well as on exchanges with other researchers and PhD students.

Selected Publications/ Activities

- Public Symposium. »Zukunft Africa« (»Future Africa«). »Zukunftsforum/ Forum for the Future«, Bayreuth University, 11th–12th November 2011

- Freitag, U.; von Oppen, A.. »Introduction: »Translocality«: an approach to connection and transfer in Area Studies«. In: »Translocality. The study of globalising processes from a southern perspective« (Freitag, U.; von Oppen, A.). Leiden: Brill, pp. 1–24.
- Convening workshops for sub-project 1 in June 2014 (see above)
- Teaching courses on social movements and visions of the future in 20th century Africa; on the history of »development« in Africa since the 18th century; and others.
- Various presentations in the media and at public events regarding the Bayreuth Academy research project.



PROF DR

SUSANNE LACHENICHT
 SUSANNE.LACHENICHT@
 UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

PROJECT LEADER

BACKGROUND:

Professor of African History,
 University of Bayreuth, since 2007

Research focus

A specialist of early modern Europe and the Atlantic World, my research to date has focused on migrations, diasporas, cultural encounters and exchange, and nation-building. I am currently working on the links between the Harlem Renaissance leaders such as John Locke with future leaders of pan-African and national African political movements.

Selected Publications/ Activities

- Lachenicht, S. »Migrations and Diasporas«. In: Oxford Bibliographies in Atlantic History, Burnard, T. (ed.), New York, Oxford University Press 2011.
- Lachenicht, S.. »Ethnicity«. In: Oxford Bibliographies in Atlantic History, Burnard, T. (ed.), New York, Oxford University Press 2011.
- Lachenicht, S. & Heinsohn, K. (eds.). »Diaspora Identities. Exile, Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism in Past and Present«. Frankfurt/Main, New York, Chicago 2009.



DR ANNALISA URBANO
ANNALISA.URBANO@UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

BACKGROUND:

PhD thesis (University of Edinburgh)
on »Imagining the nation, crafting
the state: the politics of nationalism
and decolonisation in Somalia«.

Research project

In the pursuit of Greater Somalia:
the Pan-Somali Movement and irre-
dentist visions of the Somali future
(1935–69)

This project examines the socio-
political and cultural processes of
conceiving a Pan-Somali Movement
and its vision of Greater Somalia,
starting with the outbreak of Second
World War until the movement's de-
mise in the late 1960s. It scrutinises
which options and possibilities were
available at the time as well as the
ways in which these intertwined with
the Second World War, the change
of regime and the process of decolo-
nisation. It focuses on how these
opportunities were seized and used
by some sections of Somali society
and political activists, in particular
by looking at the work and interacti-

POST-DOC RESEARCHER

on of three significant political
organisations: the Somali Youth
League of Somalia, the Somali
National League of Somaliland,
and the Union Démocratique
Somalis of Djibouti. These orga-
nisations made use of the plat-
forms created by the post-war
critical historical juncture to
foster socio-political activism,
to develop irredentist claims,
and to promote their vision of a
future Greater Somalia. In ana-
lysing these issues, the project
aims at assessing the extent to
which this interplay shaped the
features of the Somali political
space, developing a useful histo-
rically-nuanced overview on
nation and state-building and
enhancing a broader and deeper
understanding of post-colonial
developments in the Horn of
Africa.

Selected Publications/ Activities

- Urbano, A. »Between liberation and
occupation: Somalia under British
rule (1941–49)«, A. Jackson (ed.)
In: The British Empire and the Second
World War, Ashgate (forthcoming).

- Urbano, A. »Contesting the past: Issues
on the use of oral memories and the
revival of colonial past in Somalia and
Somaliland«. Presentation for the panel
»Media of Memory: Between the Oral
and the Digital«, GIFOHS, Potsdam, 7–10
September 2014 (forthcoming).
- Urbano, A. »Visions of the future and
socio-political activism in British-
occupied Somalia«. Presentation for
the panel »Postwar Empires in Africa«,
UW-Madison African Studies Program,
10–11 April 2014.
- Urbano, A. »Beyond the Allied Wartime
Propaganda: British Labour Policies
in Somalia during the Second' World
War« Presentation for the panel
»An Imperial World at War«, Kellogg
College Oxford, September 2013.



POST-DOC RESEARCHER

BACKGROUND:

PhD thesis (ETH Zurich) on »Whose Slavery? The language and politics of slavery and abolition in Sierra Leone 1898 to 1956«.

DR

CHRISTINE WHYTE

CHRISTINE.WHYTE @
UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

Research project

The Pan-African School: Black imperialism and education in Liberia and Sierra Leone, 1865–1926

The Pan-African School analyses the ways in which Pan-Africanists and Africans envisioned a future for African diasporas as settlers in West Africa through colonization and educational schemes between 1865 and 1926. Flows and counter-flows of knowledge about education between Liberia and Sierra Leone, the United States and Europe, will be analysed through the study of educational schemes, including schools, colleges and training institutes. The project examines these Liberian and Sierra Leonean sites of learning in a study that connects the politics of education policy to wider imperial missions and ulti-

mately to transatlantic exchanges about Pan-Africanism, race and education.

In the 19th century, Pan-Africanist thinkers and activists abroad envisioned an African Empire, based in West Africa, at the same time as Americo-Liberian and Sierra Leonean settlers were expanding their territorial reach and incorporating new settlers into their communities. Various people saw education as the key to »blending« the best of African and Western traditions, cultures and languages to develop and popularise a pan African culture and identity. But education also served a role in an imagined »African Empire« of the future. Educational missions beyond the frontiers of the existing settlements of Liberia and Sierra Leone, some thought, would serve to build bridges into neighbouring territories for the expansion of the colonies into a grand pan-African empire in West Africa. The project will examine the exchange between Liberia, Sierra Leone, the US and Europe of ideas, material culture and people into and out of these schools.

Selected Publications/ Activities

- Whyte, C. »Empires on the verge of a nervous breakdown: panic and anxiety in imperial settings«. In: *Between Colony and Empire: Pan-African colonialism and American imperialism in Liberia. National Identities*, Fischer-Tine, H. (ed.), Cambridge University Press, 2015 (forthcoming).
- Whyte, C. »» Everyone knows that laws bring the greatest benefits to mankind: The global and local origins of anti-slavery in Abyssinia, 1880–1942«. In: *Slavery & Abolition*, April 2014.
- Whyte, C. »Dear friend Mr. Adams, you have children«: West African children and transnational adoptions in the 19th century. Presentation at the conference »Hard & Soft Colonialisms«, Kent University, Canterbury, 7–8 July 2014.
- Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, Gilder Lehrman Centre, Yale University, October–November 2014.

Visions of Nature: Concepts of Appropriating and Conserving Nature in Africa

PROJECT MEMBERS

PROF DR MICHAEL HAUHS

PROF DR GEORG KLUTE

PROF DR DETLEF MÜLLER-MAHN

DR SYBILLE BAURIEDL

DR CORINA BUENDIA

KUPAKWASHE MTATA

SUB-PROJECT TWO

Nature and culture have been widely used as central categories for organizing research on Africa. We are, however, sceptical about the appropriateness of this distinction. The nature-culture distinction is widely criticized because of its essentialist and universalist implication (Descola, 2005, Latour 1995, Haraway 1990). It is traditionally used as a spatial delineation: culture on one side,

nature on the other. Hence management issues predominantly deal with mutual dependencies in space. In order to preserve nature, for example, a national park is separated from the realm of human culture. Here, we are concerned with temporal relationships between humans and their (natural) environments. Nature is conceptualized as an interface at which some situations can be actively repeated (e.g. as sustainable utilization) and some appear as a series of unique historical events. The sub-project questions approaches, presumptions and models of knowledge on nature, ecology and environment and examines different epistemologies and cosmologies of nature with regard to past, present and future human/environment-relations. We study how different stakeholders in fields such as national park conservation or climate adaptation conceptualize their respective notions of »nature« as historical narratives relative to their own experiences of participating in this history. Methodologically, firstly we look at the roles of models

in the various relevant case studies and disciplines, secondly we study the ideas of nature and future in scientific and indigenous knowledge systems, and thirdly we analyze technologies and rationalities of knowledge production and transfer within national adaptation programmes. Our case studies are in Kenya, Niger, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe. The sub-project members organised the summer term working group »Concepts of nature and future: Africa and beyond« with weekly sessions, several public lectures and a international conference in June titled »Negotiating concepts of nature and future in Africa« at Bayreuth University.



PROF DR MICHAEL HAUHS
MICHAEL.HAUHS@UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

PROJECT LEADER

BACKGROUND:

Ecological Modelling,
University of Bayreuth

Research interests: ecosystem models, water and nutrient exchange of hydrological catchments, forest growth, theoretical foundations of modelling, information and complexity measures of time environmental series.

Research Project

Concepts of Nature in Africa and beyond

National Parks in Africa are a »Western« export to Africa and contain implicit models of nature. We study abstractions behind various models of nature and seek to classify these into a few packages, which can be regarded as modelling paradigms. Analogies with the four cosmologies proposed by the anthropologist Philippe Descola in his classification of human »cultures« are sought.

Selected Publications/ Activities

- Trancón Widemann, B. and Hauhs, M. »Algebraic-Coalgebraic Recursion Theory of History-Dependent Dynamical System Models«. In: Electronic Notes in Theoretical Computer Science, 2014 (forthcoming).
- Hauhs, M. and Trancón y Widemann, B. »A Critique of Agent-Based Simulation in Ecology«. In: 26th European Conference on Modelling and Simulation, Troitzsch, K., Möhring, M. and Lotzmann, U., eds., 2014.
- Lange, H.; Rosso, O.A.; www.bayceer.uni-bayreuth.de/mod/de/mitarbeiter/mit/mitarbeiter_detail.php?id_obj=5468 Hauhs, M. »Ordinal pattern and statistical complexity analysis of daily stream flow time series«. In: European Physics Journal Special Topics, no. 222, pp. 535–552, 2013.

**PROJECT LEADER**

**PROF DR
GEORG KLUTE**
GEORG.KLUTE@
UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

BACKGROUND:

Georg Klute has been Professor of African Anthropology at Bayreuth University since 2003. He also works as a lecturer for the ENA master's programme at Strasbourg/Paris, is a member of the executive board of ABORNE and is a principal researcher for as well as a member

Research Project

Visions of Nature: Concepts of Appropriating and Conserving Nature in Africa

The project adopts a comparative and interdisciplinary approach. Research is done in some of the national parks in Africa, namely in Ethiopia, Niger and Zimbabwe. We assume the African national park to be an export from the West, imposed upon colonial Africa. It is based on the epistemic division of the world into the spheres of »nature« and »culture«, and represents one of the most concrete manifestations of the dichotomist divide characterizing »modern« thinking since the time of enlightenment. We further assume that the parti-

cular epistemic division of the world into the spheres »nature« and »culture« meets other epistemologies, articulating with them in specific ways. Here, we take Philippe Descola's proposition as a starting point. Descola suggests the classification of epistemologies into four ideal-types, which can be represented according to the criteria of internality vs. externality and the criteria of continuity vs. discontinuity.

The nature-culture distinction is traditionally used as a spatial delineation: culture on one side, nature on the other. Hence management issues predominantly deal with mutual dependencies in space. In order to preserve nature, for example, national parks are separated from the

of the Academic Committee of BIGSAS. His main geographic and thematic areas of research interest are the Southern and Central Sahara, bordering the West African Sahel; Algeria, Mali and Niger as well as Guinea-Bissau and Ethiopia; the state in Africa; nomadism, nomads and the state; Islam in Africa; NGOs and the state; work in pre-industrial societies; ethnicity;

anthropology of the state, of violence and of war; ethnic conflicts; new forms of political domination (para-sovereignty); sociology and anthropology of development; and anthropological research into monetarization.

realm of human culture. In our research, we are interested in temporal relationships between humans and their (natural) environments. Nature is conceptualized as an interface at which some events can be actively repeated or appear as series of unique historical events. We study how different stakeholders in national parks conceptualize their respective notions of »nature« as historical narratives relative to their own competences of participating in this history.

Selected Publications/ Activities

– Klute, G. »Tuareg-Aufstand in der Wüste. Ein Beitrag zur Anthropologie der Gewalt und des Krieges«. Köln: Köppe, 2013.

- Klute, G. »Africa's future environment: concepts of appropriation and conservation of nature«, Workshop des europäischen Forschernetzwerkes ABORNE (African Borderlands Research Network) »Bewildering Borders, Transnational Conservation and Resource Governance in Africa«. University of Vienna (September 2013).
- Klute, G. 2013, »African Political Actors in »Ungoverned Spaces«: Towards a Theory of Heterarchy«, Klute, Georg / Peter Skalník (eds.), *Actors in Contemporary African Politics*, Berlin, Münster, Wien, Zürich: 1–24.
- Klute, G. 2013: »Post-Gaddafi Repercussions, Global Islam or Local Logics?«, in: Koechlin, Lucy / Till Förster (eds.), *Mali – Impressions of the current crisis Mali – impressions de la crise actuelle*, *Basel Papers on Political Transformations* No. 5, Basel: 7–13.



PROF DR DETLEF MÜLLER-MAHN
MUELLER-MAHN@UNI-BONN.DE

PROJECT LEADER

Research Project

Ongoing research activities undertaken by myself and my working group include the following projects:

In a project on »Adaptation as a travelling idea« as part of the DFG priority programme 1448 (»Adaptation and creativity in Africa«) we are focusing on the translation of the »adaptation to climate change paradigm« into national politics and local development in Ethiopia and Uganda.

In another DFG-financed project in Kenya we are studying the structure of the global value chain in cut flower production and its effect on the dynamics of the local social-ecological system of Lake Naivasha.

BACKGROUND:

University of Bonn, Department of Geography, previously: University of Bayreuth (April 2001 – March 2013).

A study on the pastoral Afar in Ethiopia is primarily concerned with the changes of local livelihoods and the way how the pastoralists are managing different risks and conflicts.

A German-French-Sudanese study is exploring the role of water and changes of water distribution systems at different spatial levels in Khartoum in the course of ongoing social and political changes.

Selected Publications/ Activities

- Weisser, F.; Bollig, M.;
Doevenspeck, M.; Müller-Mahn, D.
»Translating the ‚adaptation to climate change‘ paradigm – the politics of a travelling idea in Africa«. In: Geogr. Journal 180 (2), pp. 111–119, 2013.

POST-DOC
RESEARCHER



DR SYBILLE BAURIEDL
SYBILLE.BAURIEDL@
UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

Research Project

Translation of international climate discourse into national climate adaptation and development policy in Kenya

The sub-project focusses on nature-culture relations and perceptions within the climate change debate and the idea and protection of national parks. My research project examines the »Translation of international climate discourse into national climate adaptation and development policy in Kenya«. Translation of global climate goals into national programmes is contested. It tends to legitimize trade liberalisation, deregulation and volunteerism within environmental protection and sustainable development. The study examines international climate discourses and adaptation and development policies in East

BACKGROUND:

Human geographer holding a PhD in natural sciences (Dr. rer. nat.) from the faculty of Geosciences at Hamburg University, with a thesis on »Playgrounds of sustainable development: The power of urban development discourses«. She is undertaking a habilitation project on the political ecology of climate change. Further research topics are energy transition, gender discourses and gentrification. Lecturer in human geography at Bonn and Hamburg universities.

Africa with an empirical focus on practices of territorialization in Kenya. It shows that the idea of »climate neutrality« in industrialized countries can only be realized within an economic system of carbon colonialism with forestation projects in the Global South. At a national level these climate protection projects are being used to validate the re-emergence of past unpopular social policies such as resettlement for large scale infrastructure projects and industrialized agriculture

Veränderungspotenziale durch Geschlechterperspektiven, Katz, C., Thiem, A., Heilmann, S. and Hofmeister, S. (eds.) 2014 (forthcoming).

- Organisation of the international conference »Political geography of development, risk and securitization« in cooperation with Detlef Müller-Mahn and Paul Reuber at Bonn University, 30th September – 2nd October 2014.

Selected Publications/ Activities

- Bauriedl, S. »Geschlechter im Klimawandel: Soziale Differenzierung als Kompetenz sozialwissenschaftlicher Klimaanpassungsforschung.« In: GAIA 22(4): pp. 8–10, 2014.
- Bauriedl, S. »Klimapolitik.« In: Handbuch Kritische Stadtgeographie, Belina, B., Naumann, M., Strüver, S. (eds.), 2014 (forthcoming).
- Bauriedl, S. »Geschlechterkonstruktionen in Umweltdiskursen: Verfestigen und aufweichen von Geschlechterdualismen.« In: Nachhaltigkeit anders denken



POST-DOC
RESEARCHER

DR CORINA BUENDÍA
CORINA.BUENDIA-GRIGORIU@
UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

BACKGROUND

Mathematician PhD
in Earth Systems Sciences
from Frankfurt University

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Concepts of nature in Africa and beyond; sustainable development from a theoretical perspective; methods for including local knowledge in the study of agro-ecosystems; the Amazon Basin; modal logic and category theory; and the biogeochemical cycles and their interaction.

Research Project

Concepts of Nature in Africa and beyond

National parks in Africa were created as an expression of the »Western« conception of »nature« as an autonomous system that can be preserved simply by removing humans from it. However, pollen and anthropological records provide evidence that the ecosystems which Western scientists initially classified as natural or wild have a long history (thousands of years) of human management. Because the Western knowledge system divides the cultural realm from the natural, there are no well-established scientific methods for dealing with human environmental relations. Therefore, together with Michael Hauhs and Baltazar Trancón, we are developing a dialogue tool for

stakeholders in national parks based on recent mathematical theories, which we hope can also be used in other transdisciplinary problems.

Selected Publications/Activities

- Buendía, C.; Arens, S.; Hickler, T.; Higgins, S. I.; Porada, P. and Kleidon, A. »On the potential vegetation feedbacks that enhance phosphorus availability; insights from a process-based model linking geological and ecological time scales«. In: BGD, 10(12), pp. 19347–19407, 2013.
- Buendía, C.; Kleidon, A.; Manzonie, S.; Reu, B. and Porporato, A. Presentation »Can phosphorus redistribution by animals fertilise Amazonian lowlands?« BIOGEOMON conference, Bayreuth 15th July 2014.
- Buendía, C.; Mtata, K.; Bogner, C. and Hauhs, M. Presentation »Nature Inside and Outside Matobo National Park (Zimbabwe)«, VAD conference, Bayreuth, 12th June 2014.



DOCTORAL
RESEARCH FELLOW

KUPAKWASHE MTATA
KUPAKWASHE.MTATA@UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

Research Project

Concepts of Appropriating and Conserving Nature in Africa

This project brings together experts from religious studies, anthropology, geography, ecology, and mathematical modelling to focus on cases of encounters between Western conceptualizations and African autochthonous ontological designs of human-environment relations in and around national parks in contemporary Africa, and to come up with a model of the different visions of nature. Social Evolution on the Zimbabwean Plateau (a contribution to the Historical Database of Sociocultural Evolution).

Religions, sacralities, cosmologies
and models of »nature« in Matobo
District, Zimbabwe

BACKGROUND

Doctoral researcher,
Bayreuth Academy of
Advanced African Studies (BA);
junior fellow, Bayreuth
International Graduate School of
African Studies (BIGSAS);
doctoral candidate
in religious studies,
University of Bayreuth.

Selected Publications/ Activities

- Buendía, C., Bogner, C., Hauhs, M., & Mtata, K. »Nature Inside and Outside Matobo National Park (Zimbabwe)«. Presentation at VAD Conference, Bayreuth, 12th June 2014.
- Mtata, K.: »Whose sacred space? Perceptions of rural and urban dwellers regarding the Matobo National Park and adjacent landscapes«. Presentation at Oslo International Graduate Students Conference: »Space, Culture, and Religion: Considering Implications of The »Spatial Turn««. Oslo University, Norway, 19th May 2014.

Middle Classes on the Rise - Concepts of the future among freedom, consumption, tradition, and morals

SUB-PROJECT THREE

In Europe, Asia and Latin America, as well as in Africa, the middle class or the bourgeoisie played a key role in shaping the future of societies throughout social upheavals. The middle class is often described as innovators, carriers of new political and social values as well as a driving economic force, and hence change-makers in a social arena. For our sociological and anthropological study

PROJECT MEMBERS

PROF. DR. ERDMUTE ALBER,

PROF. DR. DIETER NEUBERT

DR. DES. LENA KROEKER

DR. FLORIAN STOLL

we focus on concepts of the future of Kenya's middle class. In contrast to many other African countries, Kenya has a significant middle class population which has grown in importance and size since about the 1950s. Today, it is estimated that about 45% of the Kenyan population have escaped poverty and 17% belong to the middle class (cf. African Development Bank 2011). However, the middle class is far from being a homogeneous social group. We are therefore collecting original empirical material from Kenya to examine interdependencies between lifestyle patterns and plans for the future.

The question at the heart of the sub project relates to the role of members of the middle class: to what extent is the formulation of various concepts of the future related to a heterogeneous socio-cultural context of the middle class?

More precisely, we discuss the following questions: Are there internal (socio-cultural) differentiations of sub-groups

within the middle class? In how far are they distinctive? Would it be more adequate to speak of middle classes instead?

How do middle class people envisage their future and what impact do differences in milieu or life style have on their plans?

The ethnological sub-project works on a micro level and captures the consumption and attitude of the middle class. In addition the sub-project studies intergenerational negotiation of plans, hopes and aspirations within selected families in Nairobi. The sociological sub-project is primarily focused on a meso level. This sub-project relies on a mix of quantitative and qualitative methodologies and thereby differentiates between middle class groups by analysing their living conditions, consumption, and attitudes. This project compares milieus in Nairobi and Mombasa.



PROJECT LEADER

PROF DR ERDMUTE ALBER
ERDMUTE.ALBER@
UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

Research Project

Negotiating concepts of future in the context of inner-familiar processes of differentiation

BACKGROUND

Erdmute Alber holds the chair of Social Anthropology at the University of Bayreuth. Her research areas include political anthropology as well as the anthropology of kinship, processes of social differentiation, conflicts, social change, rural-urban relations, migration and inner-familiar dynamics. Her regional research focus is Africa, particularly West Africa, with a special focus on Benin and Togo. She recently carried out comparative research in Kenya. She has also conducted research in Latin America (Peru).

The social-anthropological part of our research is a joint work with Lena Kroeker, who works among middle class families in Kenya. My special focus lies on families in the republic of Benin who perceive themselves as part of the middle class. I am particularly interested how they negotiate emerging inner-familiar economic differences. What effects result from wide differences in income, educational level and future aspirations among siblings and their offspring? How do these differences influence inner-familiar relations, and what does this mean for class theory and class formation processes? In how far do aspirations and

plans for the future interlink with inner-familiar differentiation processes and the (re-) negotiation of kinship relations?

By analyzing biographies, inner-familiar relations and conflicts within families, I seek to contribute to the understanding of class formation processes by carrying out research on a micro-level. In a second step my findings from Benin shall be compared with those of Lena Kroeker from Kenya.

Selected Publications/ Activities

- Alber, E. »Soziale Elternschaft im Wandel. Kindheit, Verwandtschaft und Zugehörigkeit in Westafrika«. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2014.
- Alber, E with Coe, C. and Thelen, T. »The Anthropology of Sibling Relations – Shared Parentage, Experience and Exchange«. Palgrave MacMillan, New York, 2013.
- Alber, E. »The transfer of belonging: Theories on child fostering in West Africa reviewed«. In: »Child fostering in West Africa – new perspectives on theories and practices«, Alber, E. Martin,

- J. and Notermans, C. (eds.), Brill: Leiden, Boston: pp. 79–107, 2013.
- Organization of the workshop »Doing Politics – Making Kinship: Back towards a future Anthropology of Social Organisation and Belonging«, Berlin, February 2014.

PROF DIETER NEUBERT
DIETER.NEUBERT@
UNI-BAYREUTH.DE



PROJECT LEADER

BACKGROUND

Dieter Neubert is professor of development sociology at the University of Bayreuth. His research areas include sociology of Africa (including social structure), sociology of violent conflicts, social change, and development policy. His regional research focus is Africa, particularly East Africa. He has also conducted research in Southeast Asia (Vietnam and Thailand).

Research Project

Concepts of the future among freedom, consumption, tradition, and moral

The sociological part is a joint project with Florian Stoll. The research is situated on a meso level and tries to situate the different everyday lifeworlds of middle class people in a wider setting of social structure. The focus is on different lifestyles or lifeworlds. The research focusses on Nairobi and Mombasa. The identification of different milieus is based on everyday life practices, plans and discourses that represent and have affected and affect visions of the future. The analysis of the relation between visions of the future and lifestyles and lifeworlds lead to a reconstruction of distinct milieus. These milieus are »...sub-cultural

entities inside of a society that capture people with a similar view of life and way of life...« (Flaig, Meyer and Ueltzhöffer: Alltagsästhetik und politische Kultur. Bonn 1991: 55). This socio-cultural understanding of social differentiation goes beyond solely socio-economic approaches of strata or classes and underlines the interplay between economic and cultural influences in the creation of social differentiation. The first preliminary results show that social differentiation goes far beyond classes. We identify distinct differences concerning the expressed aims in life, the concepts of a good society, employment and performance, family, partnership and gender roles, leisure and communication, everyday life aesthetics and ideals and role models.

Selected Publications / Activities

- Neubert, D., Stoll, F. »One or many middle class(es) in Kenya? Towards an analytical frame for distinguishing subgroups«. In: Conference Papers of the 5th European Conference on African Studies in Lisbon, ECAS 2013:

African Dynamics in a Multipolar World (forthcoming).

- Neubert, D: »What is ›middle class‹? In search of an appropriate concept«. In: Middle East – Topics & Arguments, vol. 2: 23–35, 2014.
- Neubert, D. »Middle Class As Driver of Change? Normative Orientations and Visions of the Future« and »Middle Class As Driver of Change? Between Democracy, Conservatism and Self-Interest«. Panels at the conference of the International Sociological Association in Japan, July 2014.
- Neubert, D. Panel (together with Dominique Darbon) »Middle classes in Africa: the making of social category and its social meaning and uses«. Panel at the 5th European Conference on African Studies in Lisbon, ECAS 2013: African Dynamics in a Multipolar World.



POST-DOC RESEARCHER

DR DES LENA KROEKER

LENA.KROEKER@UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

BACKGROUND

Lena Kroeker is associated with the chair of Social Anthropology at Bayreuth University (Prof. Dr. Erdmute Alber). Her research interests include middle classes in Africa; future/time; architecture in Africa; medical anthropology, in particular HIV/AIDS; and uncertain situations. Geographically her focal points are in Eastern Africa (Kenya) and Southern Africa (South Africa and Lesotho). Lena Kroeker is an alumna of the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) and her PhD thesis focused on medical counselling for the prevention of mother-to-child-transmission of HIV in Lesotho.

Research Project

Planning for the time to come – concepts of the future of Nairobi's middle class(es)

Within the sub-project on middle classes and their future concepts in Kenya I focus on various formulations of plans for the future. With a biographic approach, which captures processes that started in the past but prosper and sprout in the present and future, I investigate current personal interests, aims and motivations of middle class people in Nairobi. Following Ernst Bloch, I assume that the present is »pregnant« with future. With that Bloch meant that everything people plan, aspire to and imagine for their future is already (prepared in the) present. Hence, people sow the seeds of what they are going to harvest in the time to come.

In biographic narratives interviewees spoke about their past experiences, current roles, and professional positions. Following these lines interviewees also discussed their ideas on how to improve their situation. Some people, for instance, combined phases of wage labour and phases of further education, and indicated they had aspirations and hopes for better jobs. Besides education and professional career aspirations four other fields are of interest: family and partnership, housing, social security, and everyday practices.

Empirical material indicates already that sub-groups within the middle class show differences in their planning for the future. Basic distinctions can be found in the time span (i.e. few weeks; 3–5 years; for the next generation) as well as who is involved in such plans (i.e. only the individual; close family and friends; one's ethnic group; Kenyans as a nation). For instance, new members of the middle class, i.e. social climbers, who came from poorer families,

expressed an interest in giving back to society and teaching others how they had managed to raise their standard of living. Yet, they were hardly able to make long term plans due to the risk of equally rapid downward social mobility.

Selected Publications/ Activities

- Kroeker, L. Presentation at the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI), Bonn, 25th June 2014.
- Kroeker, L. »Future Visions of the Kenyan Middle Class«, Presentation at the Junges Kolleg der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, München, 6th February 2014.
- Presentation at Münchner Volkshochschule, January 23, 2014 on »Alltag in Afrika - Verwandtschaftsbeziehungen im Wandel«
- Field research in Nairobi, Kenya, July–October 2013.

BACKGROUND

Florian Stoll is a member of the developmental sociology department at Bayreuth University (Chair: Prof. Dr. Dieter Neubert). His main areas of research are: developmental sociology (regional foci: Kenya and Brazil); analysis of social structure and social inequality (e.g. social milieus, classes, etc.); urban sociology and sociology of space; Pierre Bourdieu's sociology; sociology of the body; and sociology of culture/cultural sociology. He wrote his PhD thesis on social milieus in the Brazilian city Recife and their use of time.



DR FLORIAN STOLL
FLORIAN.STOLL@
UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

and Mombasa and which imaginations of the future these milieus have. To analyse the social groups I go beyond a class concept which cannot grasp cross-cutting influences and cultural specifics like urban-rural ties or the influences of ethnicity, the extended family or religious affiliation. My study even examines the specific urban effects of the two biggest Kenyan cities. There are large local differences between Nairobi and Mombasa due to historic, economic and cultural factors. So my research aims at reconstructing locally specific social milieus and future visions in Nairobi and in Mombasa with special attention to commonalities and differences. Nairobi is an economic and political center for East Africa. Mombasa is

Research Project

Social milieus and their imaginations of the future in Nairobi and Mombasa

My sociological research is a close collaboration with Prof. Dr. Dieter Neubert. It examines which milieus/lifestyles exist in the middle classes of Nairobi

an old port city with different cultural influences (e.g. Arab, Indian and Muslim). Thus one can find specific groups with certain future visions like the yuppie-like Young Professionals (Spronk 2012) in Nairobi or local Swahili groups in Mombasa which cannot be found in a relevant quantity in the other city.

The study transfers and adapts methodologies and theories to examine an exemplary African context from a sociological point of view. So the research represents a test for Euro-American concepts (like the class analysis of Bourdieu) to see how well they fit to the social structure of African societies. The first results of three exemplary milieus in Nairobi give a preview of the analysis: the milieu of (Neo-) Traditionals is strongly determined by ethnic affiliations and rural-urban ties. In contrast social climbers focus on work and social mobility which makes sociocultural influences less important. Young urban professionals are a milieu in which certain jobs and a consumer-oriented lifestyle are prevalent.

These groups have specific future visions which are connected with their living conditions in Nairobi.

Selected Publications/ Activities

- Neubert, D., Stoll, F. »One or many middle class(es) in Kenya? Towards an analytical frame for distinguishing subgroups«. In: Conference Papers of the 5th European Conference on African Studies in Lisbon, ECAS 2013: African Dynamics in a Multipolar World, 2014 (forthcoming).
- Stoll, F. »Future visions in social milieus among the middle-class of Nairobi and Mombasa – Empirical results and theoretization of future concepts«. Presentation on the Panel »Sociological Images of the Future« (RC07) 18th World Congress of Sociology of the International Sociological Association, Yokohama, 13–19th July 2014.
- Stoll, F. »Connecting the study of social structure with a meaning-based analysis – An exemplary reconstruction of milieus in Nairobi's ‚middle class‘«. Presentation at the Ten-Year Anniversary Conference of the Center for Cultural Sociology, Yale University, New Haven, 25–27th April 2014.

Concepts of Future in Mediaspaces of Africa and its Diasporas

Our sub-project is dedicated to fictional conceptualisations of the future in the intersection and overlapping of internet, imagination and Africa and its diasporas. In doing so, literary and media studies are mobilized as (trans)cultural »life science« (Ottmar Ette). Consequently, fiction, diaspora and internet are approached as spaces with entangled histories that generate entangled futures, which

PROJECT MEMBERS

CORE MEMBERS

PROF DR SUSAN ARNDT

DR GERD ULRICH BAUER

DR HENRIETTE GUNKEL

PEGGY PIESCHE

ASSOCIATED

NADJA OFUATEY-ALAZARD

RENZO BAAS

MARIAM POPAL

FADI SALEH

SUB-PROJECT

FOUR

promise creative solutions for global challenges. It is our aim to identify the effects of conceptualisations of the future on global archives of knowledge, transcultural dialogicity and translocal conceptualisations of futures in Europe, Africa and the U.S. In doing so, the relationship between future and technology in general and future and the internet in particular is the core subject of this research project.

Terms

»Fiction« does not exist in a vacuum; rather, given constellations of knowledge, power and visions are negotiated polyphonously – affirmed, and/or subverted. »Diasporas« transgress borders between languages and nations just as much as fiction transgresses conventional boundaries of genres and media. The »internet« has become a haven and home for these kinds of intersections and interactions of both Africa and its diasporas as well as media and genres. Weblogs, informational as well as social fora (to mention just the

most obvious), are mediaspaces that are informed by given geopolitical power constellations and yet offer scopes of intellectual and aesthetic mobility that transgress them. Here, poetics arises that (re)invents itself for the future, coping with history and negotiating the present.

Questions

This research project focusses on (fictional) knowledge about future, pursuing comparative analyses of various and intersecting media, genres and regions in synchronic and diachronic perspectives: 1) Which visions and projections of the future are negotiated in African and African-diasporic fictional texts, how is history remembered into the future in them – and with which implications? 2) How do these African and African-diasporic fictional texts represent and use technology in general and the internet in particular? 3) Which visions and projections of »future« – with particular reference to Africa and its diasporas, Europe, and the USA – are negotiated in fiction, above

all in Afrofuturism, Africanist science fiction and African-diasporic Net-Art? 4) How have Afrofuturism, Africanist SF and African-diasporic Net-Art intervened and generated visions of histories that are remembered into »futures«? (How) do they influence conceptualizations of the future and intervene in contemporary processes? What are the implications of such interventions? 5) What are the impacts of visions of »future« on global archives of knowledge, on transcultural dialogicity, and on local and translocal conceptions of »future« in Europe, Africa and the USA? 6) How do various genres interact in the internet, how are their stakeholders and/or agencies cross-linked on local and/or transregional levels, and how do their literary-aesthetical visions of »future« influence political activism in »real« (local) settings, especially in urban agglomerations (understood as contact spaces between Africa/Europe/Northern America/Asia, and Africa/diaspora(s)) respectively? 7) (How) can research on new literary representations of future

(e.g. »Afrofuturism«, SF, African-diasporic Net-Art) determine coordinates for the future of a »Literary Study in Motion« (Ottmar Ette), contribute to new paradigms and mappings, and thereby result in the advancement of both literature and literary studies?

Methodology and theory

Literary studies facing trans-medial and transcultural fiction has to reinvent itself and resituate its structures, concepts and agendas. The various projects will rely on an expertise in African and African-diasporic literature and film, English and German studies as well as cultural and Media Studies. Yet, conventional pigeonholes such as national literatures and one-language-one-nation-only frames of literary studies as well as static genre-distinctions between literature here and (new) media there are likewise transgressed. As a result, the project undertakes transcultural Literary studies, relying on postcolonial theory and critical whiteness studies, diaspora

studies, gender, sexuality studies, and queer studies.

Selected Publications/Activities

- Workshop. »Technology, Internet and its Effects on Diaspora, Notions of Race and Conceptions of the Future«. (Convenors, 12–13th January 2014.)
- Workshop. »Anton Wilhelm Amo between Enlightenment and Slavery. Contexts, Visions and Memory«. (Convenors, 22nd–23rd November 2013.)
- Workshop. »Queer Temporalities«. (Convenors, June 2013.)
- Workshop. »Media as Space for Future: Internet & Literatures in African Diasporas. Textual Representations of Future. Challenging Notions of Literature, African Diasporas and Web«. (Convenors, 1st–2nd February 2013.)
- Film series. »Future Films«, April–July 2013, and »Movement in Film«, October 2013–February 2014. (Organisers.)
- BIGSAS. Festivals of African and African-diasporic literature: »Remembering Flash-forward«, 14.–16. June 2012; »Intertextuality«, 20.–22. June 2013; and »Memory«, 2014. (Convenors/organisers.)

PROF DR. BACKGROUND**SUSAN ARNDT**SUSAN.ARNDT@
UNI-BAYREUTH.DEProfessor of English and Anglophone Literature.
Research foci: Methodology/theory: Transcultural English
Studies, Critical Race Studies/Critical Whiteness Studies,
Postcolonial Studies and Gender Studies; Empirical focus:**PROJECT** British, African and African-diasporic literatures,**LEADER** African-American civil rights movement.Research Project

Between Fascination and Fears,
Conservatism and In(ter)vention.
Representations of Technology
and/as Visions of Future in
Anglophone Literatures.

The imaginary offers unique
options to invent, probe and
even meet the future. Indeed,
nowhere is it simpler to pay the

future flying visits than in the
worlds of fiction. Fiction deals
with what was, what is, and
what might be coming our way.
Fiction in general and literature
in particular has always been
both a space of memory and a
laboratory for visions of the
future. Consequently, literature
is a rich medium when attempt-
ing to revisit and analyse (past
and present) visions of the
future in a historical perspective.
Utopias and dystopias just as
much other fictional represen-
tations of the future are made
of visions that project futures,
reflecting upon the past. In
doing so, they intervene into
the present in order to shape
the future. An exploration of
this thesis with respect to the
literary imagination lies at the
heart of my research project.

Selected Publications/ Activities

In a second step, this thesis is
probed and mobilized by analy-
zing representations of (then
latest) technologies or fantasies
about (possible) future techno-
logies in order to deconstruct
the respective visions of the
future. This is the core question:
(how) is technology negotiated
as topos of the future? Empiri-
cally, I will focus on representa-
tions of technology and (visions
of) the future in English and
Anglophone literatures. Relying
on the methodological frame of
transcultural English Studies,
I discuss literatures in English
(and beyond) in a comparative
approach that works both dia-
chronically and synchronically.
In doing so, I will focus particu-
larly on the representation of
both the industrial revolution
and/in Victorian literature as
well as the digital revolution
and/in the late 20th/early 21st
century.
In complementary fashion, I,
moreover, contribute to recent
debates about the future of
literary studies, looking at
transformations in literature as
caused and moulded in/by the
digital age.

- Arndt, S. »Die 101 wichtigsten Fragen.
Rassismus.« München: C.H.Beck Verlag,
2012.
- Arndt, S. »Europe, Race and Diaspora.«
In: Brancato, Sabrina. Afroeuropa@n
Configurations: Readings and Projects,
pp. 30–57. Cambridge: Cambridge
Scholars Publishing, 2012.
- Arndt, S. with Ofuatey-Alazard, N.
»Afro-Fictional In(ter)ventions.
Revisiting the BIGSAS-Literature
Festival. Bayreuth 2011–2013«.
Münster: assemblage, 2014.
- Arndt, S. with A.v. Oppen: inauguration
of the Bayreuth Academy: »Future
Africa – Visions in Time«, 3rd December
2012; Working group A »Conceptualising
Future. Current Debates in Regional and
Systematic Research«, May–July 2013
and international conference »Concep-
tualising Future. Current Debates in
Regional and Systematic Research«,
4–7th July 2013.



POST-DOC RESEARCHER

DR HENRIETTE GUNKEL
HENRIETTE.GUNKEL@UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

BACKGROUND

Henriette Gunkel received her PhD from the School of Social Sciences, Media and Cultural Studies at the University of East London, UK. She is the author of the monograph »The Cultural Politics of Female Sexuality in South Africa« and co-editor of »What Can a Body Do? Praktiken und Figurationen des Körpers in den Kulturwissenschaften«, »Undutiful Daughters. New Directions in Feminist Thought and Practice« and »Frieda Grafe. 30 Filme«. She is a member of the international advisory board of the online journal »darkmatter. in the ruins of imperial culture« and co-editor of the online journal »Body Politics. Zeitschrift für Körpergeschichte«. She is also co-curator of the African Film Festival Cinema-meu in Inhambane, Mozambique.

Research Project

The Chronopolitics of Africanist Science-Fictional Interventions

Tentatively titled »The Chronopolitics of Africanist Science-Fictional Interventions,« the research project shifts its focus onto the specific genre of science fiction in cultural and media productions such as feature and experimental films, multi-media installations, photography, literature and sound, and investigates questions of space, temporality, technology and sociality. Addressing the African continent in both its historical and contemporary contexts, the project looks beyond questions of representation and identity to explore and theorize the conjunction of experience and technology/the digital within futuristic imaginations. In this vein, I understand science fiction not as

an attempt to predict the future (an understanding I am borrowing from Samuel R. Delany), but rather as offering a (political) distortion of the present. This project consequently takes as its point of departure cultural and media texts that seek to imagine the world differently, while simultaneously being attentive to the experiences of cultural dislocation, estrangement and alienation – as articulated in the concept of Afrofuturism – that continue to define the African and African-diasporic present. The investigation thus contributes to current theoretical debates on the questions of (feminist) theories of science and technology as well as queer temporality and African philosophy.

Selected Publications/Activities

- Gunkel, H. »»We've been to the moon and back« – das afrofuturistische Partikulare im universalisierten Imaginären. In: Total. Universalism und Partikularismus in postkolonialer Medientheorie, Bergemann, U. and Heidenreich, N. (eds.). Berlin: Transcript, as part of the series »Post_koloniale Medienwissenschaften«, forthcoming, 2014.«
- Gunkel, H. »The Politics of Appearance in Global Petitions – Some Reflections on Postcolonial Homophobia, Local Interventions and Queer Solidarity Online.« In: African Studies Review, No. 56/02, pp. 67–81, 2013.
- Autumn 2013: Visiting Scholar at the Tisch School of the Arts at NYU, USA.
- Gunkel, H. with Matebeni, Z. and Raissiguier, C. (eds.) In Movement: Women in Africa and the African Diaspora. Special Issue of JENdA: A Journal of Culture and African Women Studies, forthcoming, 2014.

BACKGROUND

Peggy Piesche is a literary and cultural studies scholar, having studied German Literature, Philosophy and Ancient History (Eberhard-Karls-University Tübingen). She is the editor of the internationally well-known anthology on Audre Lorde and the Black Woman's Movement in Germany and an active member of the Black German community and its transnational network in the Black Diaspora. Her PhD thesis is on »The Enthusiasm of Absence: Conceptualizing subjectivity through travel in Christoph Martin Wieland's philosophical novels« at the University of Paderborn. Peggy Piesche's research focus is on the Black Diaspora in Germany and Europe. She is a founding member of the transatlantic research project »Black European Studies (BEST)« and has written widely on Critical Race and Whiteness Studies.

**POST-DOC
RESEARCHER**

PEGGY PIESCHE
PEGGY.PIESCHE@
UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

Research Project**Diaspora on the Move: Negotiating Notions of Race and Digitalized Collective Identities in Media Spaces**

This research project studies new and evolving virtual spaces and investigates which challenges these spaces pose for collective identities within the African diaspora. Emerging new literary genres offer spaces to renegotiate black identity between Africa and the African Diaspora. With an emphasis on the notion of future already inscribed in the concept of Diaspora this research project analyzes how relevant categories (i.e. the future of race, notions of public space) are newly conceptualized by and in virtual spaces.

If digital spaces are indeed »laces« without borders, geographies and

borders as defined in the physical world seem to be dissolved. This paves the way for a digital Diaspora, which seems to transcend Marshall McLuhan's definition of cyberspace as a »global village«. Black public intellectuals, activists and literary artists create a new space of collective belonging beyond national references of African and/ or diasporic identities

Selected Publications/Activities

- Piesche, P. »Inscriptions into the Past, Anticipations of the Future: Audre Lorde and the Black Woman's Movement in Germany«. In: Audre Lorde's »Transnational Legacies«, Bolaki, S. and Broeck S. (eds.). University of Massachusetts Press, 2014 (forthcoming).
- Piesche, P. »Remembering Flash Forward. The Politics of Memory«. In: Afrofictional In[ter]ventions. Revisiting the BIGSAS-Festival of African (-diasporic) Literatures, Bayreuth 2011–2013«, Arndt, S. and Ofuatey-Alazard, N (eds.). Münster, pp. 203–212, 2014.
- Interview: www.academia.edu/5732697/_Kritisches_Weissein_ist_eine_Uberlebensstrategie_-_an_schlage._Das_feministische_Magazin_Wien_Nov._2013 »Kritisches Weißsein ist eine Überlebensstrategie« an.schläge. Das feministische Magazin, Wien, November 2013.
- Presentation on the BA Outreach Day in Munich at Münchner Volkshochschule, 2nd February 2014.
- Piesche, P. Conference presentation at »Black Germans in Diaspora«: the third annual convention of the Black German Heritage and Research Association. Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts, August 2013.
- Piesche, P. Conference presentations at »Diaspora relocated: The Transnational of the Black Feminist Movement in Germany«: the 7th Biennial Conference of the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD), Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, October 2013.
- Interview: [www.academia.edu/5732697/_Kritisches_Weissein_ist_eine_Uberlebensstrategie_-_an_schläge._Das_feministische_Magazin_Wien_Nov._2013](http://www.academia.edu/5732697/_Kritisches_Weissein_ist_eine_Uberlebensstrategie_-_an_schlage._Das_feministische_Magazin_Wien_Nov._2013) »Kritisches Weißsein ist eine Überlebensstrategie« an.schläge. Das feministische Magazin, Wien, November 2013.

Revolution 3.0:

PROJECT MEMBERS

CORE MEMBERS

PROF DR
UTE FENDLER

DR DES
NADINE SIEGERT

DR ULF VIERKE

DR DES
KATHARINA FINK

CURATOR
STORM JANSE VAN
RENSBURG

PHD-RESEARCHERS

AMINATA MBAYE

STEFANIE ALISCH

Iconographies of social utopia in Africa and its diasporas

SUB-PROJECT **FIVE**

Images and visual cultures of revolution and drastic social change are at the centre of the interdisciplinary project »Revolution 3.0«, run by scholars from art, literature and cultural studies. Focal points of our research are the ways in which iconographies of revolution are taken up by younger generations in fine arts and popular culture as well as the migration of visual memes and the

development of »global icons« (Haustein) in different media.

Africa and its diasporas have produced diverse imaginations of future and utopias by means of visual culture. Today, visionaries draw on the pool of images of past futures which are provided by the visual archives of revolutions and liberation struggles. These fragments are remixed, re-interpreted or repeated in different genres such as painting, photography and audiovisual media. As well as referencing existing visions, such imaginations of futures by means of the past create new imageries and figurations and meander between political-economic pragmatism and nostalgic utopia. Based on this, we investigate the entanglements of aesthetics and politics in situations of radical social transformation, and the becoming of icons. Central to our investigation are diachronic and transcultural filiations and connections within visual culture in the ‚longue durée‘ of lusophone Africa. These »radicant« images (Bourriaud) are

part of visual memory cultures and are enmeshed with thriving political-social movements and recent medial transformations. Our understanding of image is a broad one – video stills, paintings, photos and virtual »post-productions« of images (Bourriaud) constitute our field, which spans a triangle of fine arts, film and virtual imageries in digital media such as the internet. Images thereby have several temporalities in relation to revolution – as »seismographers« and expressions of anticipation (»Vor-Schein«, Bloch), affirmation, and as a virtual archive of visual fragments intended to activate revolution.

Departing from the context of ›area studies‹, we make visible – eg by tracing images and motifs – routes and connections which are scarcely present in discourses around liberation. Our research circles around Mozambique, particularly because of the foundation of the »Instituto Nacional de Cinema« right after independence in 1975, established in order to produce and promote »own«

images as a contrast to colonial imageries. Furthermore, Mozambique as part of the »socialist international« formed an integral part of political dynamics (e.g. in Algeria, Angola, Namibia, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau), which constituted iconographies. This internationalism, both ideological and factual, resulted in references and relations which reach beyond Africa as a continent (and connect with, for example, the USSR, Cuba, GDR and Chile), which are traced by our project by means of image production. We work closely with artists and activists involved in the revolutions, as well as with researchers interested in investigating the temporalities and future visions of revolution focusing on images and image productions.

In the individual projects, the general research topic is tackled from different angles, ranging from the concept of the revolutionary »messenger« (Fendler) via visual possibilities of militant femininity (Siegert) and archives as futuristic visual projects (Vierke) to entangled

temporalities in fashion (Fink). The Icon Lab, developed as a research method in the first year of the project – and curated among other projects by Storm Janse Van Rensburg – is one of our main tools for creating an »image tank« of revolutions, both as a physical research setting in the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies as well as a mobile method. Beyond publications and exhibitions, our research results manifest in a glossary which is interlinked with our »image tank«.





PROJECT LEADER
PROF DR UTE FENDLER
 UTE.FENDLER@
 UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

Research Project

Itinerant Icons – Heroes as iconic messengers on the move

Images play an important role in conveying revolutionary messages. In particular, political leaders have often (been) transformed into idols for their respective communities and movements. It is particularly interesting to analyze these pictures, using the term »icon« as a lens – which links the quality of the iconic representation to sacred rites as well as sacred passages from one state of

BACKGROUND

Chair of Romance Literatures and Comparative studies at the University of Bayreuth (since 2006), Director of the Institute of African Studies (since 2011), specialist of African cinema, Francophone and Lusophone literatures and film/TV (Africa, Caribbean, Canada), intermedial and intercultural phenomenon.

being into another. Iconographies do also function via a typified representation that reduces the image to central elements that are significant for the message that is to be conveyed. It is therefore of foremost interest to trace sets of characteristics that are part of a process that turn images into icons.

Closely linked to the idea of the hero being represented in an icon is the notion of a vision or a dream. The message to be conveyed is linked to a future life so that the messenger (the icon, the represented hero in the icon) must be a visionary who can »see« the future and therefore communicates with another – invisible – world, being the messenger between the epochs (past-present-future)

and between the profane and the mythic or even the mystic. This characteristic also might link the personage to a »messianic type« of messenger/savior/visionary. The corpus of images comprises photographs of Samora Machel and its repetitive reproduction in various dispositives (popular modes like songs, fashion, internet, film). Besides Samora Machel, the corpus contains photos of Thomas Sankara, Amilcar Cabral, Patrice Lumumba and Che Guevara.

Besides the focus on the coming into being of an icon that transports messages and is used by and uses various dispositives, the itinerant quality of the icons is of main interest so that the routes between Mozambique, Angola, Burkina Faso, Congo and Cuba can be traced.

Selected Publications/Activities

- Fendler, U. »The missing people« – the return of the »people«? Fictocritical positions in the art scene in Maputo«. Publications of the international conference of the Center of African Studies, UEM, Maputo,

November 2012, September 2014 (forthcoming).

- Fendler, U., Gilzmer, M. and Bienbeck, R. »Transformations, changements et nouveaux dans la littérature et le cinéma au Maghreb depuis 1990«. München, September 2014 (forthcoming).
- Fendler, U. »Cinema in Mozambique: an outline of recent tendencies in a complex mediascape«. In: Critical Interventions, 2014 (forthcoming).
- Fendler, U. »Narrating the Indian Ocean: challenging the circuits of migrating notions«. In: Michael Mann/Ineke Phaf-Rheinberger (eds): »Beyond the Line. Cultural Narrations of the Southern oceans«, Mann, M. and Phaf-Rheinberger (eds.). Berlin: Neofelis, 179–198, 2014.
- Fendler, U. and Feierstein, L.»Enfances? Représentations de l'enfance en Afrique et en Amérique Latine«. München, AVM, 2013.



PROJECT LEADER

DR DES NADINE SIEGERT

NADINE.SIEGERT@UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

BACKGROUND

Dr. phil., Art Studies Africa, Bayreuth International School of African Studies, University of Bayreuth, 2013 with the topic ›Re-mapping Luanda. Utopia and nostalgia in aesthetic practice‹. Research topics: contemporary art, curatorial studies, popular culture, socialism in Africa, post-socialism, visual culture, museum and archive Studies.

Research Project

Socialist Realisms in Africa.
An art-historical study

This project aims at providing an overview of art production in the context of socialism and questions aesthetic practice in relation to ideology and concepts of past and future.

Iconographies of militant femininity before, during and after the revolution

The time of the anti-colonial liberation wars offered a space for emancipatory practices and the possibility to anticipate another future. I argue that this is also visible in the iconography of that time as well as today. In the project, I analyse these images and imaginaries.

Selected Publications/Activities

- Siegert, N. »Luanda Lab – aesthetic practices between nostalgia and utopia«. In: Critical Interventions Special Issue: »Emerging Platforms for Artistic Production in DRC, Angola and Mozambique«, Haney, E. (ed.). 2014 (forthcoming).
- Siegert, N. »Nostalgia and Utopia. On the (Post)socialist condition in Angolan Contemporary Art Practise.« Paper at 13th International Conference of Africanists. Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 2014.
- Siegert, N. »The Archives of the Future: Revisiting iconographies of revolution and utopia in contemporary art practice.« Presentation at ACASA 16th Triennial Symposium on African Art. New York, 2014.
- Siegert, N.: »The Art(s) of Revolution: Images, Figurations and Iconographies of radical change in the digital age.« Presentation at Création et actualité en Afrique / Creation and Actuality in Africa. International Conference Laboratoire Littérature Arts et Société of our Partner University Mohammed V, 2014.
- Siegert, N., Janse Van Rensburg, S. »GhostBusters II (Haunted by Heroes)«. Exhibition and catalogue with Savvy Contemporary Berlin, 2013.

**PROJECT
LEADER**

DR ULF VIERKE

ULF.VIERKE@UNI-BAYREUTH.DE



BACKGROUND

Ulf Vierke is director of the Iwalewahaus, the centre for contemporary African Arts at the University of Bayreuth. Simultaneously he is head of DEVA, the central archive and database system for African Studies at the University of Bayreuth. He teaches African arts as well as cultural studies and museology. As a curator his major focus is on photography and contemporary media art with a regional focus on East Africa and lusophone Africa

Research Project

Archives, Anarchy, Images

In this ongoing research contemporary art in Kenya is central, as well as methodological and theoretical questions in the field of visual studies. These two intertwine with research on the archive and its underlying con-

cepts (archive in both its institutional sense as well as in a more general sense of cultural memory). An archive looks forward, not backward: it is a collection, but also a project. A sense of the future of the archive was given meaning to us by the very creative practices developed in the Icon Lab. It presupposes a new relation with the objects and the documents of the past. Their potential reactivation is part of their archival value for us. They are not to be stored, they can provoke our feelings again and creatively disrupt our cognitive patterns. We can tell other stories from what we have kept and what we value. Considering the role of the museum or the gallery in general this is relevant: Both are not mere depositories or vaults, but places which wait

for positive and creative reconfigurations. Our relation to them is an act of the imagination, a gesture that looks forward.

Consequently, our relation to texts and images becomes problematic: what kind of treatment can we operate on this material? Following Michel de Certeau, one could suggest proper procedures: in this view the archive of our scientific project operates as a redistribution space and establishes its own momentum by creating its sources, by performance and by constantly transforming its procedures.

The visual creativity in places as Nairobi questions the usual borders between disciplines; photographs are used to narrate the story of an aspiring middle class, and of a plural society, projecting its own self-satisfied model. The current research focusses on the history and praxis of studio photography as well as on the art praxis of various Kenyan artists (e.g. Sam Hopkins or James Muriuki and Miriam Syowia Kyambi), whose practice constantly revolves around the

transition of society and the development of rapidly evolving urban spaces.

Selected Publications/ Activities

- Vierke, U. Presentation »Archive, Art and Anarchy. Challenging the praxis of collecting at Iwalewahaus« for the panel »Arts from the Archive«. at ACASA, Sixteenth Triennial Symposium on African Art. New York, March 2014.
- Vierke, U. Discussion during the panels: »Revolution 3.0: iconographies of utopia in Africa and its diaspora«. 5th European Conference on African Studies (ECAS), Lisbon, 28th June 2013.
- Vierke, U. »Archive, Art and Anarchy – Challenging the Praxis of Collecting like in Not in the Title or From the Topological Archive to the Anarchic Archive«. In: Mashing up the Archive, Hopkins, S. (ed.). Nürnberg, 2012.
- Vierke, U. , Lenoire, G., Richard, A. and Siegert N. (eds.). »Aquitaine Afriques: Contact Zones. 20 années de migrations culturelles«. Nürnberg, 2012.

BACKGROUND

Cultural Studies, Comparative Literature Studies and Rhetoric at the universities of Tübingen/ Germany, Stellenbosch/South Africa and Johannesburg/South Africa. Magistra in 2008 on »Museums as contact zones? The Apartheid Museum Johannesburg«; PhD within the Bayreuth International Graduate School BIGSAS on the topic: »UnDoing Sophiatown: contemporary reverberations of a myth and in a suburb«, as an affiliated researcher of University of Johannesburg's Department of Historical Studies. Her research focus is on performativity and memory in popular cultures, mainly in fashion and dress. She conceptualizes exhibitions and cultural interventions; as well as outreach programmes at Iwalewa-haus, Bayreuth and other museums, as well as city tours with a focus on critical history and children's programmes.

**POST-DOC RESEARCHER****DR DES**

KATHARINA FINK
KATHARINA.FINK@
UNI-BAYREUTH.DE

Research Project

Fashioning the revolution – images of radical futures in fashion and dress.

From Dr Kwame Nkrumah's visualized declaration of independence by means of sending images of the first beauty pageant to elect the new, independent Miss Ghana around the world via fashion endeavors such as »Gold Coast Trading Company« by Emeka Alams to fashion bloggers such as the crew of »I See A Different You«, images of fashion and dress stipulate, consolidate and re-activate drastic change. The research project focusses on the temporality of fashion by investigating the role of images of past futures; as which visual expressions referencing revolution and social change are understood. The metaphor of

the »logbook«, first taken to fashion in an exhibition in 2013 (»virtual/material: logbook fashion«) serves as a lens to analyze the entangled visions of time and future which manifest in expressions of fashion and dress. Fashion is not only perceived as a marker for change, for distinction, as such as a speech act (e.g. Vinken, Barthes) but as a performative »seismographer«. Fashion and dress enable »visual subjects« (Mirzoeff), who create a temporal existence by referring to an-other, time and space, at times utopian, by means of images of past revolutions. The research looks at the creative energy unleashed in the context of displaced images – with 'image' not only referring to photographic images but also cut, design and style.

Selected Publications/Activities

– Fink, K. »ReMix Sophiatown«. In: Hospitality and Hostility in the Multilingual Global Village, Horn. A (ed.). Bloemfontein, 2014.

- Fink, K. »virtual/material: Logbook Fashion«. In: Iwalewahaus (eds.): Quatre vues de l'Afrique contemporaine. Bordeaux, 2013.
- Fink, K. Exhibition »virtual/material: logbuch mode«, Iwalewahaus/ Bayreuth and Musée d'Ethnographie/ Bordeaux and fringe programme, 2013.
- Organisation of »Revolution 3.0: iconographies of utopia in Africa and its diaspora«. Panel at 5th European Conference on African Studies (ECAS): Lisbon, June 2013.
- Organisation of the BA Outreach Day in Munich at Münchner Volkshochschule, 2nd February 2014.

WORKING GROUPS

Working Groups are regularly convened at the Bayreuth Academy to bring debates about its general research theme »Future Africa. Visions in Time« to a wider level (see more above, 1. Introduction). Each one covering the major part of a semester, Working Groups concentrate on specific aspects of the overarching theme of the particular semester from a transdisciplinary and transregional perspective. A Working Group consists of all the researchers of the Academy and a number of outside experts (Fellows), who are selected on the basis of a competitive tender (Call for Proposals). Three Working Groups have been held so far (as of summer 2014), with a total of about 45 Working Group Fellows and short-term guest speakers coming from Europe and overseas, notably Africa and North America, but also from Germany, including Bayreuth

Members of the Bayreuth Academy in front of the Seminar room



itself. Discussions take place in regular Working Group sessions, complemented and accentuated by special workshops, conferences or public events during the Working Group periods. The numerous results are presented in a variety of forms.

Themes and contents

The three Working Groups held so far – see below for details – have explored the variety of disciplinary debates on and approaches to conceptualisations of Future (summer 2013); the diversity and changeability of visions of the future across regions, times, classes and cultural milieus (winter 2013–14); and ideas about time and future implied in models of human-nature relationships (summer 2014).

During the coming semesters (winter 2014/15 to summer 2016), there will be a mid-term Working Group devoted to preliminary conclusions from both individual research and general insights into the project theme, followed by thematic Working Groups facilitated by sub-projects 4 »Concepts of Future in MediaSpaces«, sub-project 5 »Revolution 3.0« and sub-project 3 »Middle Classes on the Rise«.



During the Opening
Conference of the Bayreuth
Academy July 2013

Working Group B

»Multiple Futures through Time«
(Nov. 2013 Jan. 2014)

Aims and questions

Working Group B, »Multiple Futures through Time« explored the great diversity of conceptualisations of ›future‹ in Africa, in African diasporas, and in other parts of the world. Running from November 2013 to February 2014, and facilitated by sub-project 1 »Narratives of Future in History«, the Working Group discussed how notions of ›future‹ were shaped, and have been shaped in turn, by different historical contexts.

Topics and activities

Working Group sessions addressed, inter alia, decolonization as an open moment of re-envisioning ›Future‹ in West, East and the Horn of Africa; different types of 19th and 20th century manifestos as a medium which emerged directly out of concern about the future/s; and nature as an imagination not only of the past and present, but also of a future of the continent. The Working Group brought forward the enduring importance of processes of transmitting, translating and reforming ideas of future through time. European concepts of ›nation-state‹ or ›nature‹ were imposed by external planners of Africa's ›future‹, but were also of-



BA guest and members during a workshop.

ten both abrogated and appropriated in key periods of change by Africans themselves, to assert political change. Peak events of the Working Group were two intense workshops: »Sharing/Dividing Futures« (12th–13 Dec. 2013) and »Changing Futures through Time« (16th–17 January 2014).

They brought researchers of the Bayreuth Academy and a range of invited fellows and guest speakers (see below) into stimulating and sometimes controversial discussions. In general, in the course of the working group debates of the working groups, new insights were developed into how and why ideas of change through time towards a better future emerge and how they have influenced, or borrowed, from each other. The working group thus helped to advance research on the diversity and changeability of »future«, drawing on a wide range of disciplines and approaches. Several basic issues, including the question of different disciplinary approaches to »area studies« or the importance of identity for conceptualisations of »future« were brought forward into Working Group C.

Working Group Fellows and Guest Speakers

- › Akosua Adomako Ampofo, Professor & Director, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana
- › Ottmar Ette, Professor of French and Spanish Literature, Potsdam University, Germany

- › Peter Geschiere, Professor of African Anthropology, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- › Lotte Hughes, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, African History, Open University, Milton Keynes, UK
- › Emma Hunter, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of History, Cambridge University, UK
- › Storm Janse van Rensburg, Independent Curator, Berlin, Germany/South Africa
- › Loreen Maseno, Senior Lecturer, Dep. of Religion, Maseno University, Kenya
- › Alondra Nelson, Professor of Sociology and Gender Studies & Director, Institute for Research on Women and Gender, African American Studies, Columbia University, New York, USA
- › Rafael Nuñez, Professor of Cognitive Science, University of California, San Diego CA, USA
- › Luís Patraquim, Poet, playwright & journalist, Maputo, Mozambique
- › Mariam Popal, Postdoc Researcher, Islamic & Postcolonial Studies, University of Freiburg, Germany
- › Christiane Reichart-Burikukiye, Academic Assistant, African History, University of Bayreuth, Germany
- › Tabea Scharrer, Postdoc Researcher in Social Anthropology, Max-Planck-Institute for Ethnology, Halle, Germany
- › Rachel Spronk, Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology, Univ. of Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- › Elizabeth Wangui wa Goro, PhD, Writer, Editor, Consultant, London, UK

Working Group C

»Concepts of Nature and Future:
Africa and beyond« (Summer 2014)

Aims and questions

This Working Group, convened by sub-project 2 »Visions of Nature«, seeks to question approaches, presumptions and models of Western knowledge on nature, ecology and the environment. Currently the natural sciences perspective dominates in such topics. The corresponding concepts and models treat time as an external parameter allowing future events to be predictable in principle. Evaluating and protecting environments in the past and future has been based on the nature-culture dichotomy, despite repeated and substantial criticisms.

This dichotomy is ingrained in the academic division of labour between disciplines studying nature or culture. However, at times, when for instance climate politics and biodiversity have become prominent in the literature, arts and media, this 'traditional' dualism has proven to be incapable of adequately guiding related research questions about past and future. This Working Group is designed to generate dialogues that challenge and resituate conventional binaries such as nature/culture, Africa/West and sciences/humanities.

Topics and activities

The Working Group is interested in human-environment relations; these may either appear as a continuum or as a dichotomy between nature and culture, as in (scientific) Western thinking. The Working Group takes into focus different stakeholders and their respective notions and narratives, their epistemologies and cosmologies, with regard to the past, present and future of human-environment relations. Examples of such multiple, contested ideas of nature and its future, which will be examined more closely in the Working Group, are ideas of authentic or untouched »nature« (especially in national parks), or the recent scientific debate on ecosystem services, within global-local economic and cultural interconnections. Another strand is current debates about climate change and how it is expected to change societal relations with nature in Africa in the near future. In these debates, »nature« often has contra-

dictory meanings. On the one hand it is conceived in terms of continuous change, and on the other hand its underlying idea contains such concepts as continuity, resilience, stability and robustness.

The Working Group has met and is meeting from early May to early July 2014 for weekly sessions and public lectures comprising all researchers of the Bayreuth Academy, its current guest fellows,



During the Workshop
of Working Group B
January 2014

and sub-project Guests. Its peak event will be an international Conference on »Negotiating Concepts of Nature and Future in Africa« from 19th to 21st of June, 2014. Find detailed information on the sessions, the conference and first results on <http://www.bayreuth-academy.uni-bayreuth.de/en/arbeitsgruppen/Summer-2014/index.html>

Working Group Fellows

- › Marlou van den Akker, PhD researcher, Department of Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology, Leiden Univ., The Netherlands
- › Gratien Atingdogbe, Prof. of Linguistics, Univ. of Buea, Cameroon
- › Grisha Coleman, Assistant Professor in Arts, Media and Engineering, Arizona State University, Tempe, USA
- › Kristina Dietz, Post-Doc-Researcher in Political Science, BMBF project DesIgualdades, FU Berlin, Germany
- › Lauren Dyll-Myklebust, Lecturer at the Centre for Communication, University of Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa
- › Christina Gabbert, Post-Doc-Researcher in Social Anthropology, Max-Planck-Institute for Ethnology, Halle
- › Samuel Ndogo, Lecturer, Department of Literature, Theatre & Film Studies, MoiUniversity, Eldoret, Kenya
- › Jan-Erik Steinkrüger, Post-Doc researcher, Department of Geography, University Bonn, Germany

- › Nisbert Taisekwa Taringa, Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department of Religious Studies, University of Zimbabwe, Harare
- › Fabio Vanin, PhD in Urbanism, architect and urban designer, Researcher, Univ. of Venice, Italy
- › Elizabeth Watson, Senior Lecturer in Environment, Society & Development, Department of Geography, Cambridge University, UK

Imprint

Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies
Hugo-Rüdel-Str 10
95444 Bayreuth

www.bayreuth-academy.uni-bayreuth.de

Contact

Bayreuth.Academy@uni-bayreuth.de

All members of the Academy
can be contacted directly by Email

Editorial staff

Katharina Fink, Peggy Piesche, Doris Löhr
Proofreading: Cathy Lear
Layout: Rosendahl

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