

2nd workshop & Meeting of Working Group A: Conceptualizing ‚Future‘

9.7.: 14:00-18:00

10.7.: 10:00 -16:00

At Hugo-Rüdel-Str. 10,
Seminar room

Bayreuth Academy
of Advanced
African Studies

BA



Programme

Notions of time and future have been used in many disciplines. We seek commonalities among these different perspectives. In the social sciences modernity has been declared as “self-reflexive”. How does this affect notions of past, present and future? In religious studies mixtures of cyclic and linear aspects of time have been encountered. How are these concepts reflected in African Religions? Linear time as used in physics is considered as insufficient in characterizing human time experiences as studied in cognitive science. What are possible additions consistent with natural sciences?

Tuesday 9.7.: 14:00-18:00

14-15:30 **Colin Milburn:** "Extractable Futures: Speculative Fiction as a Resource for Science and Innovation" (introduced by Henriette Gunkel)

15:30-16 Coffee break

16:00-17:30 **Harald Atmanspacher:** Can physics teach us something for the mental experience of time? (introduced by Michael Hauhs)

Abstract: There is a huge gap between time as it appears in the basic laws of physics and temporal properties of human experience. In particular, the basic laws of physics know no past and future, and no present. In contrast, human experience is decidedly directed in time, and it is based on a distinct sense of nowness. Some novel developments concerning these differences will be sketched.

17:30-18:00 Discussion

2nd workshop & Meeting of Working Group A: Conceptualizing 'Future'

9.7.: 14:00-18:00

10.7.: 10:00 -16:00

At Hugo-Rüdel-Str. 10,
Seminar room

Bayreuth Academy
of Advanced
African Studies

BA



Programme

Wednesday 10.7.: 10:00 -16:00

10-11:30 **James L. Cox**, The Interpretation of African Concepts of Time in the Thought of J. S. Mbiti: Consequences for African 'Futures'.
(Introduced by: U. Berner)

Abstract: In his book, *African Religions and Philosophy* (1969), the Kenyan theologian and scholar of African Indigenous Religions, John S. Mbiti, argues that in traditional worldviews, Africans have a two-dimensional concept of time: a long past, a present, but virtually no future. He uses the Swahili terms *sasa* and *zamani* to describe the African idea of time. *Sasa* refers to what Mbiti calls an 'an experiential extension of the now moment stretched into the short future and into the unlimited past'. This is most important to the individual because it involves a personal recollection of past events. *Zamani* refers to the long past, which provides the foundation and security for the communal present in terms of myths and legends of founding ancestors. If Mbiti is correct, this has strong ramifications for understanding the concept of 'future' in Africa, particularly if traditional perspectives on time persist despite the impacts of globalisation and Westernisation on African societies. If traditional African worldviews are ignored by development agencies, international economic systems and democratic movements, this may lead to much misunderstanding by outsiders and promote conflicting interests among Africans themselves.

11:30-13:30 Resuming discussions from the workshop I "Time" (June 10-11) Chair: Dieter Neubert

12:30 - 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 - 16:00 Resuming discussion from the workshop II "Future"
Chair: Achim von Oppen

2nd workshop & Meeting of Working Group A: Conceptualizing ‚Future‘

9.7.: 14:00-18:00

10.7.: 10:00 -16:00

At Hugo-Rüdel-Str. 10,
Seminar room

Bayreuth Academy
of Advanced
African Studies

BA



Programme

Visiting WG Fellows and guests attending:

(in brackets the topic of talks on the opening conference 4.-6. July 2013)

Anne Adams, (Afropolitanism: A 21st Century Diaspora? Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* and Taiye Selasi's *Ghana Must Go*)

Jeanne Cortiel, (Future Technologies and Risk in American Popular Culture

— Michelle Engeler (CAS Uni Basel)

Michael Hauhs, (Concepts of Time as Mediators in Science: African Natures from a Modelling Perspective

Sidney Kasfir, (Contemporaneity in African Art as a Dual Problem of Past and Future, Socially Embedded in Time and Space)

Kara Lynch, (Invisible - a Retro/Future Exploration)

V.Y. Mudimbe, ('Singular.' On African Practices of Human Sciences)

Noemi Steuer (CAS Uni Basel)

Florian Stoll, (Social Milieus and their Use of Time in Recife, Brazil. A Transfer of Bourdieu's Sociology to a Specific Context in the Global South

Greg Tate, (The Futurism of Juju)

Storm Janse von Rensburg (Panel Talk & Vision: Curating failed Utopias)