

UNIVERSITÄT
BAYREUTH



The BIGSAS World 2014 – 2015

Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies



It takes all sorts to make a world



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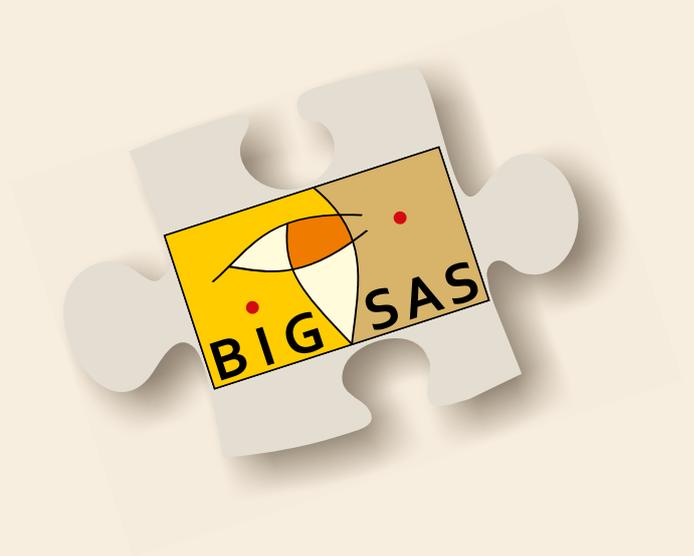
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It takes all sorts to make a world



A Word from the Editors



Uche, Yvette, Serawit, and Justice (L-R)

It is our pleasure to present to you the second issue of *The BIGSAS World*. The newsletter published biennially documents our experiences as “scholars-in-training” at the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS). BIGSAS offers a structured and innovative PhD programme which means a shorter “time-to-degree”, coupled with the requirements of making one’s research visible to the academic community through publications, conferences, summer schools, colloquia and symposia. But despite the pressure that comes with these activities, the BIGSAS Junior Fellows (JFs) still create time to engage in a lot of interesting activities besides writing their theses. The following pages present some of our experiences as BIGSAS JFs and Alumni in the years 2014 and 2015.

Today, there are about 100 JFs from 27 African, American, Asian and European countries at different stages of their PhD research with BIGSAS. And as varied as their backgrounds and fields of research are, so also are the variegated issues discussed in this second issue of *The BIGSAS World*. There are articles on the “non-academic” experiences of BIGSAS JFs both in Bayreuth and outside Bayreuth: finding your way around a foreign community of research; combining family with full-time studies; checking out the best *Döner* shop in Bayreuth; engaging in different sporting exercises; dealing with loneliness; preparing for the final thesis defense; returning home after a successful PhD defense; and so on. The JFs also engage a lot with the host community thereby bridging the gap between “town” and “gown” and also presenting a more complete picture of Africa to the natives. These accounts help us relive and appreciate our experiences studying at BIGSAS, help the newer JFs adapt to the BIGSAS “culture” easily, and give non-members of the BIGSAS family an idea of life in Bayreuth beyond producing the long lists of serious academic engagements in the Annex. Just flip through the pages and have fun reading the pieces. And yes, we are happy to receive your comments and feedback. The contact address and email are at the back cover of this issue.

Your Newsletter Editorial Team:

Justice Arthur, Serawit Bekele, Jean Pierre Boutché, Yvette Ngum, Uchenna Oyali



A Word from the Dean

Seit ich die Verantwortung für die BIGSAS trage und somit beständig in einem intensiven Austausch mit allen Promovierenden (*Junior Fellows*) stehe, höre ich nicht auf zu staunen. Ich staune über ihr intellektuelles Potential, über ihre ethischen Reflexionen, über die Besonnenheit ihrer Gedanken, über ihre Visionen zur eigenen und globalen Zukunft, über ihre Wertschätzung für das und ihre Freude an dem, was sie gerade jetzt haben und tun, über ihre Kreativität und über ihre Offenheit, Neues zu erleben und als Teil ihres Weges anzunehmen und zu gestalten. Dieses Staunen gibt mir Kraft, die Verantwortung für BIGSAS nicht als Last sondern als Privileg zu empfinden und zu leben.

Ich hoffe, diese Ausgabe von *The BIGSAS World* wird in allen Leserinnen und Lesern ein ähnliches Staunen erwecken.

Ich beglückwünsche die Herausgeberinnen und Herausgeber der zweiten Nummer von *The BIGSAS World* und danke allen *JFs*, Alumnae und Alumni für das Staunen, das sie mir und uns allen schenken.



Prof. Dr. Dymitr Ibriszimow

Since the moment I took over the responsibility for BIGSAS, I am in a permanent exchange with all our Junior Fellows. My contacts with them fill me with wonder. I marvel at their intellectual potentials, at their ethical reflexions, at the prudence of their thoughts, at the visions of their own as well as of the global future, at their joyous esteem of what they encounter and what they are doing in this very moment, at their candidness towards new things and at their creativity to accept them as part of their paths of life. That entire marvel gives me the strength to perceive and to live the responsibility for BIGSAS as a privilege, not as a burden.

I hope this issue of *The BIGSAS World* will give the readers a touch of what I experience at BIGSAS since the very beginning.

I congratulate the editors of the second issue of *The BIGSAS World* and I am deeply grateful to all *JFs* and Alumni for the marvellous present they are offering us.

May 2016

Prof. Dr. Dymitr Ibriszimow,
Dean of BIGSAS



CONTENTS (Topics)



INTERCULTURAL EXPERIENCE

- 10 *Afrika-Karibik-Festival 2015*
- 37 Grieving the Master of the Table
- 38 A Little Experience from Home
- 50 “Living Library”: Limitless Cultural Connections and Exchanges
- 66 Palm Wine: the “Miracle” Drink
- 81 Tourist, not Migrant!
- 83 Turkish or German? – My *Döner Kebap* Challenge
- 84 Educating beyond the University
- 90 “Welcome to Germany!” – Junior Fellows and the Bayreuth Community
- 97 Have Your Say!

ACADEMIC LIFE

- BIGSASworks! 21
- The Title Doctor 23
- The Defence Experience 26
- “English Academic Writing” with Josie Dixon or:
BIGSAS and the Tower of Babel 28
- Does Gender Matter? 35
- Junior Fellow Representatives: A Continued Chronology 47
- The Unexpected Summer School Encounter:
AEGIS 2014 and “Queeresima” 70
- The Epic Return! 72
- Workshop on Language and Religion 74
- Wagner and the Voodoo Priest 89
- Welcome Days in 2014 and 2015 94
- Annex 99
- 1 Publications 100
- 2 Conferences 109
- 3 Summer Schools 119
- 4 Alumni 120



FAMILY

- 14 Babies
- 18 With my Boys in Bayreuth: Challenges, Fun and Learning!
- 52 Married Bachelors!
- 92 Weddings



SPORTS & LEISURE

- 15 BIGSASläuft! A Quarter Marathon through Bayreuth
- 55 Mbaye Seye, *der pfeifende Junior Fellow*
- 62 Old Meet New 2015
- 76 Smart Heads and Quick Feet: BIGSAS Football Club
- 96 X-mas Party 2015

CREATIVITY & AWARDS

- Africa in my Blood 13
- Childproof 22
- My Daughter Has Raised Me 24
- L'arche de la délivrance 27
- Doing Fieldwork in East Africa 34
- Kulturpreis Bayern* 48
- DAAD Prize 2014 and 2015: The Award and the Drama 68
- Maayi Bee Waati 88



VISITS & EVENTS

- 30 Talking African Fashion: BIGSAS@school at *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium*
- 32 "A Friend Told Me that Africans Live with Lions": BIGSAS@school Project Team Meets the Pupils of *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium*
- 33 Less than a Kin, More than a Family: The 2015 ALA Conference and 5th BIGSAS Festival of African and African-Diasporic Literatures
- 39 "Is BIGSAS a Family?" Wonders Maimuna Adam
- 43 "Journalists Should Listen to the People": Interview with Alexandra Rojkov, Winner of the BIGSAS Journalist Award 2015
- 58 "Big Men" and their Audience in Development Politics:
Encounter with the German Minister for Development Cooperation
- 60 Disability and Social Breakthrough: A Night with Ras Mackinzeph
- 64 BIGSAS Outreach Programme in Munich
- 78 The Academia Meets the Society: Cooperation with the Locals
- 79 *Salongespräch* with Josie Dixon (4 to 5 December 2014)
- 86 Visit to *Berlinale* 2015
- 95 "WHO": Aderemi Adegbite Visits BIGSAS



CONTENTS (Alphabetical Order)

2 **Contact**

4 **A Word from the Editors**

Justice Arthur, Serawit Bekele Debele, Jean Pierre Boutché, Yvette Ngum, Uchenna Oyali

5 **A Word from the Dean**

Dymitr Ibriszimow

A 10 **Afrika-Karibik-Festival 2015**

Justice Arthur

13 **Africa in my Blood**

Yvette Ngum

B 14 **Babies**

15 **BIGSASläuft! A Quarter Marathon through Bayreuth**

Johanna Sarre

18 **With my Boys in Bayreuth: Challenges, Fun and Learning!**

Jimam Lar

21 **BIGSASworks!**

C 22 **Childproof**

Rose Nyakio Kimani

D 23 **The Title Doctor**

Magdaline Wafula

24 **My Daughter Has Raised Me**

Billian Otundo

26 **The Defence Experience**

Rose Nyakio Kimani

27 **L'arche de la délivrance**

Aboubakr Tandia

E 28 **“English Academic Writing” with Josie Dixon or: BIGSAS and the Tower of Babel**
Johanna Sarre

F 30 **Talking African Fashion: BIGSAS@school at Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium**
Linda Besigiroha

32 **“A Friend Told Me that Africans Live with Lions”:** BIGSAS@school Project Team Meets the Pupils of *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium*
Carline Liliane Ngawa Mbaho

33 **Less than a Kin, More than a Family: The 2015 ALA Conference and 5th BIGSAS Festival of African and African-Diasporic Literatures**
Weeraya Donsomsakulkij

34 **Doing Fieldwork in East Africa**
Johanna Sarre

G 35 **Does Gender Matter?**
Serawit Bekele Debele

37 **Grieving the Master of the Table**
Azza Mustafa Babikir Ahmed

H 38 **A Little Experience from Home**
Yemi Balogun

I 39 **“Is BIGSAS a Family?” Wonders Maimuna Adam**
Uchenna Oyali

J 43 **“Journalists Should Listen to the People”:** Interview with Alexandra Rojkov, Winner of the BIGSAS Journalist Award 2015
Serawit Bekele Debele & Uchenna Oyali

47 **Junior Fellow Representatives: A Continued Chronology**

K 48 **Kulturpreis Bayern**
Antje Daniel



-
- L** 50 **“Living Library”**: Limitless Cultural Connections and Exchanges
Weeraya Donsomsakulkij
-
- M** 52 **Married Bachelors!**
Justice Arthur & Uchenna Oyali
- 55 **Mbaye Seye, der pfeifende Junior Fellow**
Jean Pierre Boutché
- 58 **“Big Men” and their Audience in Development Politics: Encounter with the German Minister for Development Cooperation**
Matthew Sabbi
-
- N** 60 **Disability and Social Breakthrough: A Night with Ras Mackinzeph**
Emmanuel Sackey
-
- O** 62 **Old Meet New 2015**
- 64 **BIGSAS Outreach Programme in Munich**
Gilbert Ndi Shang
-
- P** 66 **Palm Wine: the “Miracle” Drink**
Yvette Ngum
- 68 **DAAD Prize 2014 and 2015: The Award and the Drama**
Jimam Lar & Matthew Sabbi
-
- Q** 70 **The Unexpected Summer School Encounter: AEGIS 2014 and “Queeresima”**
Matthew Sabbi
-
- R** 72 **The Epic Return!**
Omondi Robert Owino
- 74 **Workshop on Language and Religion**
Jean Pierre Boutché
-
- S** 76 **Smart Heads and Quick Feet: BIGSAS Football Club**
Renzo Baas
- 78 **The Academia Meets the Society: Cooperation with the Locals**
Jennifer Scheffler
-
- 79 **Salongespräch with Josie Dixon (4 to 5 December 2014)**
Alžběta Šváblová
-
- T** 81 **Tourist, not Migrant!**
Délia Nicoue
- 83 **Turkish or German? – My Döner Kebap Challenge**
Justice Arthur
-
- U** 84 **Educating beyond the University**
Jennifer Scheffler
-
- V** 86 **Visit to Berlinale 2015**
Mbaye Seye & Yvette Ngum
-
- W** 88 **Maayi Bee Waati**
Jean Pierre Boutché
- 89 **Wagner and the Voodoo Priest**
Serawit Bekele Debele
- 90 **“Welcome to Germany!” – Junior Fellows and the Bayreuth Community**
Musa Ibrahim
- 92 **Weddings**
- 94 **Welcome Days in 2014 and 2015**
- 95 **“WHO”**: Aderemi Adegbite Visits BIGSAS
Uchenna Oyali & Juliane Fender
-
- X** 96 **X-mas Party 2015**
-
- Y** 97 **Have Your Say!**
Justice Arthur & Uchenna Oyali
-
- Z** 98 **Zu guter Letzt – Final Remarks**
-
- 99 **Annex:**
100 **1 Publications**
109 **2 Conferences**
119 **3 Summer Schools**
120 **4 Alumni**
-
- 122 **Imprint**



Afrika-Karibik-Festival 2015

By Justice Arthur



BIGSAS stand at the 10th Afrika-Karibik-Festival

For some years now, the annual *Afrika-Karibik-Festival* has become one of the major events listed on the *Bayreuther Kalender*, billed as “an authentic Afro-Caribbean experience away from home.”



JFs are working hard to deal with the need for balloons

Organised by the Bayreuth Event und Festival e.V., it is an occasion that creates a platform to showcase the diverse cultural forms from different regions of Africa and the Caribbean. The three-day festival gives participants the rare opportunity to

sample different cuisines, appreciate contemporary Afro-fashion, concerts, films, workshops as well as an interesting programme tailored for children.



BIGSAS stands out with its signature colour orange

It also gives the locals the opportunity to meet and interact with people with connections to the African continent.



Liliane presenting authentic African fashion

The 10th edition of the festival took place from the 17 to 19 July 2015 at the Bayreuth city centre.



Need for ice cream to fight the heat

It was not short of the great variety of art forms and exhibitions of African diversity in the form of musical groups. As a sponsor and a great friend of Africa, training many of its scholars, BIGSAS was



Sarah having fun at the stand

fully represented at the festival. With a stand on the festival ground, the orange colour of BIGSAS could be seen everywhere on the second day of the celebration. Junior Fellows and administrative staff joined hands to display the various facets of

BIGSAS. The stand served as the information point where JFs explained to visitors what the Graduate School does and its longstanding commitment to the African continent. It also served as a place where locals encountered first-hand African academics who live in the city for a beautiful exchange.



BIGSAS to “take-away”

To spice up the occasion, JFs manually inflated several BIGSAS-branded balloons and gave them out to children. Along with the balloons, other



Admin staff and JFs stir the advertisement drum



Uche is busy handing balloons

custom-made souvenirs such as pens, stickers, book markers, mouse pads and brochures were given out to guests.

While the day was all about showcasing the Graduate School, it also served as a nice day-out for both the administrative staff and the JFs to bond. The event brought them even closer, as for



Especially the balloons were an attraction for the children

instance, they shared ice-cream and other snacks as one big family. Even more significant was the fact that it brought together the local community and the JFs – local-foreigner, African-European boundaries were blurred. It was such a sight to behold as native Germans sampled variety of cuisines from couscous topped with vegetables from Morocco, *Tilapia* recipes from Nigeria, *Jollof* rice from Senegal, *Injera* from Ethiopia to contemporary music from West, Central, Southern Africa as



Pupils reading about possible future perspectives in our brochures

well traditional music from North Africa and South American Samba. The *Afrika-Karibik-Festival* is definitely a good opportunity for integration and a chance to promote our motherlands in a grand style.

We look forward to the 11th edition ...



Africa in my Blood

By Yvette Ngum

I was born Mama Africa years ago

I am known by many aliases due to my humble, colorful personality:

African woman, black woman, natural woman, brave woman, warrior woman.

I am a pure, unblended, unadulterated, uncontaminated African lady

Born and bred under the city lights of Bamenda

I respect diverse cultures and lifestyles across the globe

But my culture, heritage and identity I will not abandon.

My roots I will not renounce

I am Mama Africa!

Many are captivated by my beauty;

My manifold art forms: music, dance, painting, fashion, linguistic!

The diversity of my peoples from the north, south, east, central and west entralls many

My children dazzle the world through creative writing

I build cities of ingenuity with the numerous languages:

Through these languages I merge cultures and ideas

At times give birth to many other languages through diverse modes of art

Africa is in my blood today, tomorrow and forever!



Babies



Izuldin, son of Junior Fellow Fulera Issaka-Touré, born on 16 December 2014



Kofi, son of Alumna Genevieve Nrenzah, born on 10 January 2015



Érin Naluende, daughter of Alumna Billian Otundo, born on 28 March 2015



Leo Immanuel, son of Alumna Henrike Firsching, born on 8 June 2015



Kuula, daughter of Alumnus Halkano Abdi Wario, born on 15 August 2015



JJ Sankara Kakama, son of Junior Fellow Linda Besigiroha, born on 3 September 2015



Koby Amatika, son of Alumnus Omondi Robert Owino, born on 31 October 2015



BIGSASläuft! A Quarter Marathon through Bayreuth

By Johanna Sarre



Participants and the BIGSASläuft!-Fan Club at "Maisel's FunRun" 2015: "Go BIGSAS!" – The BIGSAS family supports its members as usual

On 10 May 2015, BIGSAS Junior Fellows, admin team members and even a few Senior Fellows met for a very different kind of "BIGSAS" – a Bayreuth International Great Sports Activity Sunday! Five

Junior Fellows who took part in the quarter-marathon (10,6 km), well recognizable by their orange t-shirts with BIGSAS logo and the slogan "BIGSASläuft!" (BIGSASruns), were enthusiastically supported by



Warm-up for the runners



Mirjam capturing memories of the day with her lens



Mbaye, the most experienced runner in the team, right after the start



Pamela, BIGSAS' fastest female runner



Diderot did great after his spur-of-the-moment decision

the fan club, consisting of JFs, BIGSAS Dean Dymitr Ibriszimow and Deputy Gender and Diversity Representative Eric Anchimbe, members of the admin team as well as family and friends.

Since the runners' registration was sold out shortly after the idea had emerged, not everyone interested in representing BIGSAS on the track had the chance to register officially. Nevertheless, Pamela Chepngetich, Diderot Dijala (who spontaneously decided to run just a minute before the starter's gun was fired!), Johanna Sarre, Mbaye Seye and Manfred Stoppok took on the challenge. Rose Kimani had to cancel her participation due to knee problems which she developed while training with the others.



Friends and family came to support the team

The race started at 11.15 am in mild, sunny weather conditions. The steadfast and vocal support of the BIGSAS/äuft!-Fan Club accompanied the runners



The BIGSAS team cannot be overlooked in their orange T-Shirts

right from the start and to the last stretch to the finish line. Weeraya Donsomsakulkij proved to be a talented sporting event paparazzi.



BIGSAS JFs Liliane and Delia waiting for the runners to pass by

The results for the BIGSAS team showed that BIGSAS JFs are fit not only academically but also physically. Among the ladies – as happens frequently – a Kenyan was the fastest: Pamela finished 37th in

her age set (1h7min) while Johanna came in 61st (1h14min). Among the men, Mbaye ran the 10,6 km in less than one hour (59min!), followed by Diderot (1h1min) and Manfred (1h6min). Congratulations to our athletes!



Regular BIGSASläuft! participant Johanna

Both “athletes” and “cheerleaders” thoroughly enjoyed this Bayreuth International Great Sports Activity Sunday and we look forward to next year’s “Maisel’s FunRun” – be prepared!



Robert brought his little boy to cheer for the team



With my **Boys** in Bayreuth: Challenges, Fun and Learning!

By Jimam Lar (Alumnus)



Exploring the Dinosaur theme-park

As a graduate school focused on African Studies, BIGSAS is built on the pillars of individuality, internationality, and interdisciplinarity. While internationality and interdisciplinarity refer to the diversity of national and disciplinary backgrounds within the graduate school, and the interactions and collaborations that this creates, individuality underscores the fact that each doctoral student has his/her own path to follow and consequently story to tell. It is interesting how the period one spends studying and writing a PhD thesis encapsulates

much more than the intellectual endeavour. In my doctoral journey, there are several stories I could share, on this occasion I am pleased to share with you a family story. The scenario of a doctoral student having to write up his thesis while taking care of his children. I had the pleasure and challenge of being alone with my two sons Alexander and Nandam for six months, February to August, 2015. In the final year of my studies, the plan was to have the family in Bayreuth from August 2014 to August 2015. Unfortunately, due to work related issues my wife

had to return to Jos, Nigeria in January 2015 with our third son Nanman, therefore leaving me with Alex and Nandam. Here I share the challenge, the fun and pleasure and also the learning process of my experience with the boys in Bayreuth.

The Challenge: Time and Planning

As all PhD students would know, generally it is difficult to structure and plan the study. In other



words, my study depended on my schedules and moods. Some days, one is extremely productive on others there is nothing to show. As long as one was making progress albeit at times gradual, it did not matter. This all changed when I was alone with my sons. At first it was some kind of a mess, in a funny way. For example, on school days I had to wake up at 6:00 to get ready and wake up the boys at 6:45, prepare them for school and we have breakfast at 7:15. This is all targeted at being at the bus stop by 7:35, to catch the 7:37 bus. Alex had to be at school latest by 8:00 am, and Nandam at

kindergarten latest by 8:30. It was all about precision and planning, getting things timely. In fact, there is nothing unusual and extraordinary about this as it is a normal routine for any parent. However, when you are used to a different routine it is not very easy to adjust, and that was my challenge; learning to adjust! After a few weeks we had fun, going through these routines – the boys accepting 20:00 as time to go to bed; this meant that at 19:30 we start preparations for bed, pyjamas, brushing, etc. Alex reminding me on Tuesday night that Wednesday is his sports day, so I should remember to pack

his sports bag, or Nandam reminding me to check his bag for any important information from the kindergarten. However, as I was at the critical period of writing up the thesis it was still difficult to cope. This is why I am grateful and much appreciative for the intervention of the BIGSAS Gender and Diversity Programme. I received financial support that catered for babysitting services for most of the period I was alone with my sons and this was very helpful in allowing me to focus on writing.



Surprise birthday cake at kindergarten



Fun and Pleasure

We also had fun together. Attending festivals and celebrating the boys birthdays were two of many highlights. My two sons have their birthdays in February, so I collaborated with their teachers to surprise them with birthday cakes at the school and kindergarten; it was fun to watch the surprise when I turned up with the cakes. That was however not enough, I was dragged and cajoled into buying new toys as birthday presents! In fact Nandam's tactic was to stop in the middle of *Real* store demanding in German for new toys, as I sheepishly tried without success to avoid the attention of the several people stopping to witness a little boy holding his father to ransom, and yes – the new toys were eventually bought. Having the kids around also allowed me to acquaint myself with the children's event calendar in Bayreuth. We attended children shows at *Rotmain-Center* and a most enjoyable Dinosaur theme-park that was in Bayreuth in the summer of 2015. It was nice to have Alex lecturing us on the features of the T-rex, and other of these extinct reptiles.

Learning

Living in Bayreuth with two boys also demonstrated in subtle ways how similar attitudes are, in my case on single male parenting. What I found interesting was how I got so many commendations for deciding to take care of my children while I was writing my

thesis. Based on established stereotypes, I was not expected to do what I found an obvious thing to do. This was from people from different backgrounds, African and European. It was equally demonstrated when I attended programmes and events at Nandam's kindergarten. It was quite conspicuous that most parents in attendance were mothers and less of fathers. I often found myself laying mats on the grass as we conversed with female parents, generally on the children whose friendship made it compulsory for us to get acquainted with one another. On the whole as the saying goes all is well that ends well. I remain indebted to all the "Aunties" and "Uncles" who in their very special ways provided support and encouragement!!!



BIGSASworks!

BIGSAS*works!* is an online journal published as part of the series “Bayreuth African Studies Working Papers” of the Institute of African Studies (IAS) of the University of Bayreuth, Germany. Edited by their colleagues, BIGSAS*works!* provides a platform for Junior Fellows of BIGSAS who are willing to jointly or individually publish to showcase their ongoing research as doctoral candidates. Each volume focuses on a particular theme or theoretical concept formulated by the Junior Fellows and the contributing papers draw from different disciplines.

Until the end of 2015, five volumes have been published. The first four volumes were presented in The BIGSAS World I:

Women’s Life Worlds ‘In-Between’ (2011)

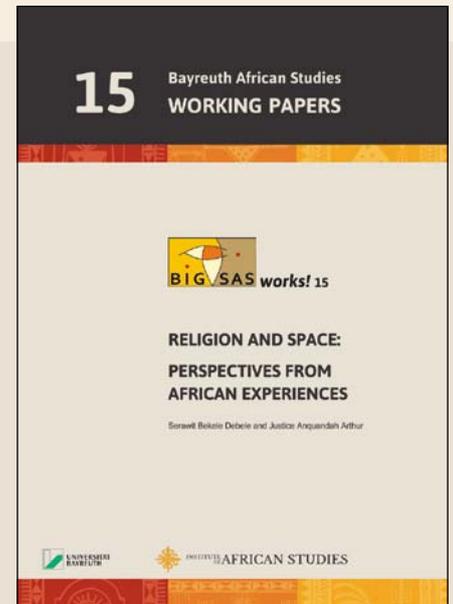
Trends, Discourses and Representations in Religions in Africa (2012)

The Making of Meaning in Africa: Word, Image and Sound (2013)

Challenging Notions of Development and Change from Everyday Life in Africa (2013)



Volume 5
(published in 2015.)



Actors, Institutions and Change: Perspectives on Africa (2015)

Editors: Matthew Sabbi, Jane Ayeko-Kümmeth

This fifth edition of BIGSAS*works!* presents studies on institutions and social change processes from political science, sociological and anthropological perspectives. The authors highlight the various ways in which institutions create opportunities for change but at the same time resist change by acting as structures of stability. The papers show that the notion of institution within the development debate should be understood from a broader perspective beyond the narrow confines of state bureaucracies to a wider conception that includes the family, marriage and indigenous institutional arrangements through which individuals organize their daily activities.



Childproof

By Rose Nyakio Kimani

Childproof your house

Pitter-pattering feet

Wandering hands

Could get hurt

Childproof your mind

Going on mental tangents

Outside the box

Not mature

Childproof your heart

Sheer delighted laughter

Drinking in life

Now outgrown



The Title Doctor

By Magdaline Wafula (Alumna)

A doctorate degree is a permit to teach especially in a university in a given faculty. The word doctorate originates from the Latin word *docere* which means to teach. In medieval Europe the doctorate was considered a license to teach Latin. The Roman Catholic Church had the exclusive right to grant a doctorate during this period. In the year 1213 however, the Pope granted the University of Paris the right to grant a doctorate but it was only until the early nineteenth century that the term PhD acquired its full meaning as we know it today, following university practice in Germany.

Essentially, the holder of the PhD is in command of a given field of study in which s/he can make a worthwhile contribution. Nonetheless, this perspective is limited to the academics who constitute a minority of the social calibre that an academic doctor interacts with on a day-to-day basis. This is the situation in most countries in Africa south of the Sahara. Given the preceding scenario you may probably understand the predicament that most PhD holders face.

Upon attaining my doctorate degree in Bayreuth, Germany, I returned to Kenya with mixed feelings. My local church, home, and village had great expectations lined up for me. To the ordinary Kenyan, a doctor of Kiswahili meant a moving Kiswahili dictionary who could virtually give a Kiswahili equivalent to any word in English or a mother tongue. The title “Daktari” as is popularly

known in Kiswahili suggests one who can solve myriad social problems. To my students, I was expected to help offset their pending tuition fees. In my local church, I was the perfect person to chair several committees given my level of education and broad experience. In the village, an invitation card bearing the title “Daktari” as the chief guest to raise school fees for needy pupils was a sure way to realize the target. As a mother and wife, I needed to nurture the family in a loving and submissive manner. Yet, as a lecturer, I needed to research, teach and supervise students’ thesis and dissertations.

At first, I wondered how I could cope with all these expectations and demands. However, I quickly learnt the important lesson not to go by people’s notions. The prefix “Dr” preceding my name is only a title to ascertain my worth academically. Nonetheless, potential graduates ought to keep in mind the fact that an academic doctor must take in a good stock of specialized as well as general knowledge. While this is no mean achievement, socially, a doctor is deemed to be an opinion leader and a role model. S/he is expected to diagnose and treat socio-political, academic and economic maladies more or less like a medical doctor. To achieve this, scholars must strive to acquire experience, knowledge, and good judgment through continual research and training. Armed with these tools, they will be better placed to diagnose and treat the society and make it better. This is what I aspire to accomplish.



My Daughter Has Raised Me

By Billian Otundo (Alumna)

My daughter has raised me
beyond my imagination.



Perseverance I learnt –

with her gentle yet firm wriggling within.

Endurance bestowed upon me –

as I brought her forth to explore the world without.

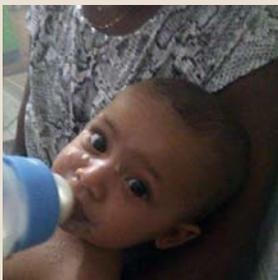
Bewilderment –

when I set eyes on this wonder.

The storm is over.

Her warmth I embrace.

A tiny hand barely clutches my baby finger.



I can love.

In slumber I watch her.

Afraid to blink off –

I toss and turn.

So deep I can care.

In the still of the night

awoken by crying –





I drag.

I blink twice.

I thought it a dream.

I pay attention more.

The roller coaster begins.

Patience I learn.

Now she sits.

She bubbles – a lot too.

Something close to “daddy”.

I nod and try to ape.

A smile so welcoming.

I am nourished as well –

between sessions of play and meals.

The sound of tearing paper

brings her to laughter.

One more time.

She screams with joy.

Tear.

Uncontrollable elation.

Now I laugh to tears.

I am a mother.





The Defence Experience

By Rose Nyakio Kimani

The moment JFs begin their PhD, at the back of their mind is the idea that one day, to culminate the years of work, shall come **The Defence**. I talked to a BIGSAS alumna about this once-in-a-lifetime moment:

What did you feel walking into your defence?

Nervous! Uncertain! Emotional! I was not sure I could pull myself together and make a coherent presentation that would make sense to people in attendance. I think my nervousness also stemmed from that uncertainty that engulfed me right before the presentation. I also became emotional. I remember crying few hours before it happened. I then cried again just few minutes before the oral presentation began. You know, I suddenly looked back and thought of the trajectory anew. The realisation that that day is decisive in bringing everything to a conclusion, sad or happy, made me emotional. And also, I thought of my challenges and my loss. I missed people that deserved to see this but were not able to. It was a mixture of all these that made me a bit emotional. But it was well!

Any highlights during the defence? Can you actually remember the details or it just passed by in a blur?

I remember most of it. I think I was more relaxed after the twenty minutes' oral presentation was over. Most of all, as it was a hot summer day, I remember feeling so thirsty at one point. I asked

a colleague to get me some water and that made everybody laugh. I was not sure that was the right thing to do but I was so thirsty that I was about to fail to utter words. So I took the risk and asked.

Any preparation tips for those who will defend someday (sooner or later)?

I think beginning to work on the presentation ahead of time is a wise move. That means, read the text as thoroughly as possible. It is possible that we might overlook some details if we do not read the text well enough. That is not cool. Preparing the slides well in advance and working on time management are other important tips that helped me. But above all, the mock defence is such a great opportunity to see how much prepared you are. Three advantages there. First, in terms of time management, it helps you see whether you are within the limits of the allotted time or not. If you use too much time, then colleagues and friends give you ideas on how to work on that. Second, aesthetics of the slides. Our slides have to be as precise and attractive as possible and the input from friends provides the chance to work on such technicalities. At the end you will have a beautiful set of slides. Third and most important one is the feedbacks and questions. I bet most of the questions raised by colleagues at the mock are repeated during the actual oral examination. Thus, I strongly recommend the mock defence. I have benefited from having done it.



L'arche de la délivrance

By Aboubakr Tandia

De l'abyme surélevé de la solitude,
Du silence ténébreux
Et des rêves orphelins de l'incertitude,
M'a délivré ton amour généreux.

Lorsqu'à moi tu es venue,
Le cœur raclé jusqu'au tréfonds
De ses plus funestes démons
Pour m'y installer en élu.

Voilà que d'un retournement fabuleux,
L'univers se retrouve empli
De l'excroissance cosmique du mien langoureux
Et du grondement féroce des éclaircis.

Voilà que de la sécheresse génocidaire,
La danse angélique des tonnerres
Vient libérer mon destin
Par cet orage salvateur que tu provoques sans fin.

À ton honneur, jamais je ne poserais ma plume ;
Pour tes hommages, jamais je n'épargnerais ma marche.
Chaque souffle de ma vie tournera en dime
Pour, de toute éternité, voguer dans la providence de ton arche.

“English Academic Writing” with Josie Dixon or BIGSAS and the Tower of Babel

By Johanna Sarre

In December 2014 BIGSAS invited Josie Dixon of Lucian Consulting, specialised in publishing and research training, for a workshop on English Academic Writing. This is what would happen, if the workshop had not taken place – if you want to understand anything, you might have to refer to the original German text.



Josie Dixon during a workshop at BIGSAS

“As a member of international PhD programmes BIGSAS new colleagues we are often faced with the challenge of discussing a language other than their mother tongue, supply or even to write scientific texts in order to engage in professional exchanges our comrades. Although formal learning and teaching and working languages in addition to English BIGSAS also include German and French, but we all do a good job for the training of scientific communication skills we have in the English language. To support these efforts allow BIGSAS two-day workshop on “academic writing in English” with Josie Dixon’s vast experience as an editor and writing coach to dozens of scientists participants * inside may benefit. Josie went in detail on the weaknesses of grammatical and stylistic texts, we sent in advance, but also gave advice process of writing abstracts and better (meaning more accurate and efficient) Editor Science in general. Reactions occupied enthusiastic participants * inside, we are ready to work on the science of verbal skills that we have to avoid falling again and again to the function of a translation of the search engine is known – because this makes the texts, this page shows impressive.”

(Google translate French – English)



« En tant que membre des programmes de doctorat internationales nous BIGSAS nouveaux collègues sont souvent confrontés au défi de discuter d'une langue autre que leur langue maternelle, de fournir ou même à écrire des textes scientifiques dans le but de se livrer à des échanges professionnels avec nos camarades. Bien que l'apprentissage formel et l'enseignement et les langues de travail en plus de l'anglais BIGSAS incluons aussi l'allemand et le français, mais nous le faisons tous un bon travail pour la formation des compétences de communication scientifiques que nous avons dans la langue anglaise. Pour soutenir ces efforts permettent BIGSAS atelier de deux jours sur «l'écriture académique en anglais» avec Josie Dixon, de la vaste expérience en tant que rédacteur et l'écriture entraîneur pour des dizaines de scientifiques participants * à l'intérieur peuvent bénéficier. Josie est allé en détail sur les faiblesses des textes grammaticales et stylistiques, que nous avons envoyés à l'avance, mais a également donné des conseils processus d'écrire des résumés et mieux (ce qui signifie: plus précise et plus efficace) rédaction scientifique en général. Réactions des participants enthousiastes occupés * à l'intérieur, nous sommes prêts à travailler sur la science des aptitudes verbales que nous avons afin de ne pas tomber encore et encore à la fonction d'une traduction du moteur de recherche doit connue – parce que ce qui rend les textes, cette page montre impressionnante. »

(Google translate German-Arabic-French)

„Als Mitglied eines internationalen Doktorandenkollegs stehen wir, BIGSAS Junior Fellows, oft vor der Herausforderung, in einer anderen als der eigenen Muttersprache zu diskutieren, zu präsentieren oder sogar wissenschaftliche Texte zu verfassen, um in fachlichen Austausch mit unseren Kommilitonen und Kommilitoninnen zu treten. Auch wenn die offiziellen Lern-, Lehr- und Arbeitssprachen in BIGSAS neben Englisch auch Deutsch und Französisch umfassen, tun wir doch alle gut daran, unsere wissenschaftliche Kommunikationsfähigkeit auf Englisch zu trainieren. Zur Unterstützung dieser Bemühungen ermöglichte BIGSAS einen zweitägigen Workshop zum Thema „English Academic Writing“ mit Josie Dixon, von deren umfassender Erfahrung als Redakteurin und Coach für wissenschaftliches Schreiben das Dutzend Teilnehmer*innen profitieren durfte. Josie ging detailliert auf die grammatikalischen und stilistischen Schwachstellen der Texte ein, die wir ihr vorab geschickt hatten, gab aber auch praxisnahe Hinweise für das Verfassen von Abstracts und eine bessere (will heißen: präzisere und effektivere) wissenschaftliche Schreibe im Allgemeinen. Die enthusiastischen Rückmeldungen der Teilnehmer*innen belegten, dass wir gerne bereit sind, an unserer wissenschaftssprachlichen Ausdrucksfähigkeit zu arbeiten, um nicht immer wieder auf die Übersetzungsfunktion einer bekannten Suchmaschine zurückgreifen zu müssen – denn was die mit Texten macht, zeigt diese Seite eindrucksvoll.“

(German original)



Talking African Fashion: BIGSAS@school at *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium*

By Linda Besigiroha



All students and BIGSAS members participating in the project day “Afrika in Bayreuth”

The morning of 25 November 2014 was as dull-looking as any other autumn day in Bayreuth. That was, until members of the project BIGSAS@school got to the *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium* (MWG) in Bayreuth. The students were in a sombre mood because one of them was in a coma in hospital after a bad accident, but the participants of the “Afrika in Bayreuth” themed *P-Seminar* managed to pull off an informative and lively session of presentations and interactive activities. From 8.30 am to 4 pm, the twelve motivated students in the *P-Seminar* held a workshop on diverse topics such as family, fashion, literature, music, dance, refugees, and movies to present their gained knowledge. The 12th grade students had invited pupils of a class from the 8th grade as their audience.

This was part of the programme that had begun in September 2013 at MWG in which students could

participate in a practical seminar called “Afrika in Bayreuth”. In the seminar, students could learn more about the African continent against the backdrop of the concept, “Africa is not a country.” BIGSAS@school on the other hand, provides an excellent opportunity to link students of schools in Bayreuth such as those of the MWG with BIGSAS Junior Fellows who can share first-hand experiences and personal knowledge about the African countries they come from.

Session on African Fashion

In the session on fashion, students gave a 90-minute presentation on the African fashion scene in Germany which now boasts events like the Africa Fashion Day Berlin (AFDB). They also shared what they had learned about international designers and their labels such as the British-Ghanaian Ozwald



Learning about African fashion and DIY-workshop at MWG

Boateng, Ugandan GloRia WavaMunno or the women's wear line "Maki Oh" by Nigerian fashion designer Amaka Osakwe.

The presentation was followed by a Q & A session, after which guests such as JFs and a visiting South African designer introduced themselves to the house. The young fashion enthusiasts were happy to have the chance to talk with the guests, asking them anything from, "What is your personal style?" to "Where do you buy your earrings?"

Finally, the young organizers of the fashion work group invited everyone to come together around a "jewellery table". At the table, the 12th graders showed the 8th graders and us how to make our own small accessories such as arm bands or necklaces using simple things like thread, beads and safety pins.



Linda wearing her new lovely accessories



“A Friend Told Me that Africans Live with Lions”: BIGSAS@school Project Team Meets the Pupils of *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium*

By Carline Liliane Ngawa Mbaho



Carline Liliane and Jimam discussing with the 8th graders

Following the invitation by Ms. Schöner and Mr. Dörfler (two trainee teachers), the BIGSAS@school project team visited the *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium* (MWG) on 18 May 2015. The delegation led by Susanne Hacker (PR Officer at BIGSAS) was composed of Magdalena Krebs (BIGSAS Student Assistant), JFs Jiman Lar, Serawit Bekele Debele, Uchenna Oyali, Johanna Sarre, Hanna Lena Reich and Carline Liliane Ngawa.

From 11 am to mid-day, the team had the occasion to share experiences about Africa with two 8th grade classes, approximately 13 or 14 years old pupils. The BIGSAS team was warmly welcomed on arrival by the teachers. Since we had to meet two classes, the team was divided into two groups led by Susanne Hacker and Magdalena Krebs. After the presentation of the BIGSAS and the introduction of Junior Fellows with their respective research projects, the pupils showed interest in learning more about Africa: What do you eat in your country? Do you have a job? Do you have children? What

do you miss in Germany? The education systems, the professional careers, the life-style (housing, nutrition and children's entertainment), the ongoing projects of BIGSAS JFs and the personal projects after graduating in Germany were some of the issues discussed during our meeting. During the

discussion, the pupils understood that Africa is not a country but a continent, just like Europe and America. They also learned a great deal about the education system and the life style in our home countries. The meeting was an occasion for the JFs to deconstruct stereotypes on “Africa” and Africans. For example, the pupils were surprised to know that wild animals are in the bush or in parks and not in houses. They were also happy to learn about our respective research projects in BIGSAS.

We shared what most of us think about Germany and its populace. German trains are always on time, Germans eat a lot of pork, drink a lot of beer, prefer bicycles to cars, etc. After such a round table on the questions raised by the pupils, our hosts understood that no one is spared from stereotypes. If at the beginning no one wanted to visit an African country because of the stereotypes, at the end of the discussion, it was apparent that the pupils were ready for an adventure.



Less than a Kin, More than a Family: The 2015 ALA Conference and 5th BIGSAS Festival of African and African-Diasporic Literatures

By Weeraya Donsomsakulkij (Alumna)



Organizing and enjoying: the team of the 2015 ALA Conference and 5th BIGSAS Festival of African and African-Diasporic Literatures

In 2015 and for the first time in Europe, Bayreuth, a lovely little city in Bavaria, welcomed one of the biggest conferences on African literature – the African Literature Association (ALA) Conference – and its complementary event of the 5th BIGSAS Literature Festival. Many delegates and scholars from all around the world came to connect and exchange their precious knowledge on Africa and, of course, this included a group of BIGSAS Junior and Senior

Fellows. A team of volunteers from the organising group welcomed them, making sure that they felt at home. As members of the BIGSAS community, we are close to each other. But this event brought us even closer. We made progress and laughed together; we made mistakes and solved them together. We are not related by blood, but we are more than a family. We learned from each other and at the end of the event, we celebrated.



Doing **F**ieldwork in East Africa

By Johanna Sarre

DOING FIELDWORK IN EAST AFRICA

What my friends think I do:



What my family thinks I do:



What society thinks I do:



What my supervisor thinks I do:



What BIGSAS thinks I do:



What I thought I'd do:



What I really,...



...really...



...do!



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Does Gender Matter?

By Serawit Bekele Debele (Alumna)

A group of Junior Fellows who work at the BIGSAS work stations usually have lunch together at the Mensa at *Geschwister-Scholl-Platz* (location of BIGSAS offices). At 12:30 pm everybody is ready to go downstairs. This gathering is one of the most looked-forward-to times not necessarily for the food but for what our colleague Emmanuel Sackey called the “lunch seminar”. The “lunch seminar” is a space we raise and debate diverse issues ranging between

agenda of our lunch seminar owing, mainly, to the fact that all of us there were affected by it. In a “get over it, all women’s problems are solved” tone, a colleague asked, does gender matter after all? And if so, why so? Indeed, one would indulge the temptation to think that after someone made it to this stage in climbing the academic ladder, it should not really matter. But indeed, does gender really matter??



Guests and participants of the conference “Gender Matters” at *Studentenwerk Oberfranken*

the current goings in the globe to history. It is one of the informal platforms where heated academic debates and exchanges take place. Current affairs and our take on them are mostly the dominant themes. BIGSAS events are among the lunch time consumables. So following the announcement of the “Gender Matters” conference, it became the

In discussing the “perfect candidate”, Katie Mack, a researcher, reveals the sad reality that the measure of perfection for candidacy is, apparently, being free from family related commitments as it eases mobility which is crucial in fostering academic career, particularly for emerging academics. In a blog titled “Academic Scattering” Katie Mack



starts her reflection with what she overheard two professors discussing regarding the position of a new candidate they were about to take. What caught her attention was the answer provided to the question whether the candidate had a family or not. The professor who was asked responded to his colleague's query about his status by saying, "No, he has no family. He's perfect!" Mack then writes "I doubt any selection committee would admit on-record to thinking a family-free candidate is "perfect". Nonetheless, the traditional academic career structure is built around an assumption of mobility that is hard to maintain with any kind of relationships or dependents". The conference "Gender Matters: Visions from Africa for the Internationalisation of Higher Education" of 4 to 6 November 2015 organized by BIGSAS is directly linked to what the author above raises, gender and mobility. The conference took up issues linked with academic career, private life, family and mobility, things pertinent to both upcoming and established scholars. This gets even more complicated for female academics as the burden of negotiating private life and academic career is more demanding on them. This conundrum is convincingly captured in the following reflection by a BIGSAS Junior Fellow who begins by asking:

But if I decide to have a family, how do I balance my career and family responsibilities? It feels as if I have to make a choice between a family and my career. Fathers can leave behind babies in order to attend a conference for days or conduct

research for months in another part of the country or outside it altogether without feeling guilty because of gender roles that distance men from child-rearing, particularly in societies where such roles remain rigid. But can a mother leave behind a baby in order to participate in career-related activities? While I am sedentary in the sense of working at a particular university, I am also mobile in the sense of attending conferences outside my country and accepting guest researches and lectureships. On the one hand, prioritizing the family means months of not being able to go beyond what can fit into the home routine especially when there are young children, and thus missing out on opportunities. On the other hand, prioritizing career seems to affect the family and sometimes strain family relations.

During the three days' sessions of the Gender Matters conference, a lot of ideas in relation to gender, mobility and family were deliberated. Junior Fellows and alumni were given a slot on the second day of the conference in which they organized panels which revolved around best practices, challenges and their visions for the future. Later on, the post conference reflection somehow found its way back to the lunch seminar. Some were challenged for harbouring the "get over it" view after having participated while others were provoked into asking even more complex questions regarding private and public life in relation to gender and mobility. Clearly, one cannot end the debate and discussion on matters of gender...it goes on!



Grieving the Master of the Table

By Azza Mustafa Babikir Ahmed

Fava beans, locally known as *Fool Musri* is the main ingredient of one of the most popular dishes in Sudan. Sudanese people give it many nicknames, such as *Habib Al Sha'b* – the lover of the people or *Sayyed Al Maida* – the master of the table. It is a meal that anyone can afford, although lately with the deteriorating living conditions, it is getting hardly affordable for many people.

Usually, *Fool* is made in small shops or popular restaurants, cooked in a metal pot that has a narrow neck and a wide gouged bottom known as *Qidra*. It is served in different ways but the two popular ones are: *Fool Musallah*, which means mashing it and adding salt and grinded fennel, accompanied with sesame oil, white cheese and *Ta'miyya* (the Sudanese version of *Falafil*), and eaten with bread. The other type is *Boush*, which means mashing the beans but making it a bit watery by adding some of the water that gathers on the surface of the cooked beans, and adding it to bread cut in small pieces mixed with sesame oil and white cheese; sometimes, according to different preferences, vegetables (e.g. onions or tomatoes) are also added on top. At breakfast (*fatoor*), which is between 10 and 12 am, *Fool* is central. In restaurants, in small shops or even in work places, people gather around a big aluminum plate holding a piece of bread in one hand and cutting a small bit with the other one, dipping it in the plate and making a morsel, making sure it contains all the blended ingredients. It is known to make people doze off as they feel heavy with languor. This is why they take a cup of black tea, after it, believing that it will awaken them.



Fool Musri, served with cheese and bread



In my recent visit to Sudan, I got to know a resolution has been introduced by the local authorities to ban selling *Fool* in small shops without a food and beverage license issued by the local authorities. Every shop keeper who violates the resolution will be subject to confiscating his *Qidra* plus paying a fine ranging between 200 and 500 SDG (between 16 and 40 Euros). When I read the news, I was asking myself whether it is time to grieve for the *master*, after being affected by “the taxation fever” in Sudan.



A little Experience from Home

By Yemi Balogun

I was very happy when I received the confirmation of my admission to BIGSAS in February 2015. I began to wonder how my experience in Germany would be. A lot of things were on my mind about the country and my university town – the academic life, the people, the foods, transport, shops, language, name it. I know some aspects of German history and have heard a lot from people, both positive and negative, and I knew that from October I'll be in for a life-changing experience.

I arrived late due to flight delay and the person that offered to pick me up at the airport had left. Everything was in *Deutsch* and since I could not speak *Deutsch*, I had to ask for help to book the train ticket to Bayreuth. A lady and a guy who spoke English assisted me and ensured that I boarded a train to my destination. At the Bayreuth train station, I approached another lady for help and even though she said she was in a hurry to catch her train, she offered to call the person that was supposed to pick me up at the station with her cell phone. I have had similar experiences in Bayreuth while trying to get around the city. Indeed, I find the people here wonderful.

My language class also taught me some lessons about Germany. Initially I was translating the English language to *Deutsch* in the hope that I will make a good sentence but this did not help much. It was not easy for me to cope with the German case system, the articles and the change in sentence structures when time comes first. For example, the

use of *Gestern, Heute, am Morgen*, etc., would change where the subject is placed in the sentence. Incidentally, I only understand few rules about the English I speak. Most of my English language experiences came from reading novels, watching films, and listening and reading the news. I was hoping that I could replicate the same with *Deutsch*, but it did not work as I needed to understand the basics of this language to make it possible.

One notable aspect I also like to mention is the kind of life I found myself living in Bayreuth or Germany generally – life away from home. I compare life here with life at home – the foods, the weather, the economy, religion. I also think about the non-Germans like the Chinese, Koreans, Indians, Ghanaians, Cameroonians, Kenyans, Turkish, and my fellow country-people from Nigeria. I see commonalities in our cultures as well as differences. Some people are not comfortable with certain things about life here, like smoking on the street. Yet they are living with it. In my thought, I often connect with local happenings, international politics, among other issues across the world. I imagined the future and I dream. It is not easy to fully grasp all that I imagined. I must add that I love the way the transport system operates and the way people keep to time. I admire the beauty and life here.



“Is BIGSAS a Family?” Wonders Maimuna Adam

By Uchenna Oyali



Artist Maimuna Adam

In the summer semester 2015, Maimuna Adam, an artist from Maputo, Mozambique did a two-month residency at BIGSAS under the BIGSAS Gender and Diversity Programme. Her work which centers on the concept of “BIGSAS as Family” reflects on these questions: who are these “family members”, how is this family “structured”, what are the perceived roles of

each family member, and how does each individual see themselves in relation to the greater “family” they are part of? More importantly, how do our experiences of “family” differ when looked at from the categories of gender, geographical “origin” or nationality, and in relation to other personal and social commitments that each individual has? Mid-way through her residency, she had a chat with BIGSAS Junior Fellow Uchenna Oyali. Below is an excerpt from the conversation:

Could you tell us a bit about your background?

I am an artist from Mozambique. I trained at the University of Pretoria; I did my BA in Fine Arts there and finished in 2008. Since then I have been working in Mozambique and since 2011 I have been participating in more international projects outside of the country. I work with different media. I would say I am a mixed media artist, but that comes very

much from the way I was trained and the way I see art. As time progressed I realized I use different materials, with different intents, different effects, different results. For this artistic project here with the Gender and Diversity Programme, I proposed a body of photographs, video-based works, video arts and also an artist book.

I understand you have been in Bayreuth before now. Could you give us some information on the project you did then?

I was in Bayreuth last year [2014] for four months at the invitation of *Iwalewaha* with a scholarship from the IFA / *Alexander Rave-Stiftung*. It was a scholarship for artists and curators to have an opportunity to work with a German institution to develop the curating aspect. I say this because as an artist I do not consider myself a curator, I have not done any tangible project where I worked exclusively as a curator. But the reality in Mozambique is that if you want to be an artist, especially an emerging artist, if you want to show your work, you end up having to do all the work behind it. An exhibition is not just coming into a space and saying “Here are my images” and putting them on the wall. It also involves finding the space where they could be shown, finding the money, or the support because it is not always in terms of money, to do the project you would like to do. In a way, my participating last year in the project was an interesting provocation for me professionally because I have been working at the Kulungwana – Association for Cultural Development, Maputo, for about two years. In the



beginning, it was simply volunteer work. I was interested in being at the Association's small gallery, and eventually they invited me to be part of the team that makes the projects happen. For me it is a very interesting association because most of the ideas for the projects and exhibitions I have done by the association come from the members. I enjoy working with other people. Of course, I am able to do things by myself but I feel the results are much better when there are more people involved with the project.

How did you get into the BIGSAS project?

I was invited by Dr. Ulf Vierke, the Director of *Iwalewahaus*, obviously because of my previous work at *Iwalewahaus*. I think he enjoyed the way I worked and the fact that I have this multi-facetedness, especially as an artist because even at *Iwalewahaus*, although I was officially there with the scholarship in curating, I immediately voiced my personal need to create because the way I understand the world is through creating. A lot of the preoccupations I have in my mind



about the world, about what is going on, over the years I try to figure them out through my art. I believe that is why he bought the idea of an interesting artist to bring here, in this case under the BIGSAS Gender and Diversity Programme.

I think he also doubles as one of the representatives of the Gender and Diversity Programme.

Exactly.

Now coming to your project with BIGSAS, could you tell us a little bit about it? What do you want to find out? How are you going about it?

What I have found out is that over the years I have been working in an intuitive way. What I mean is that I sometimes have a difficulty explaining to people what I am even thinking. So I need to work and eventually it comes out as something. In this case I needed to make a proposal while I was still in Maputo and not here. I had met some BIGSAS Junior Fellows last year, but I had not even been at GSP [*Geschwister-Scholl-Platz* in Bayreuth, location of BIGSAS offices], I had not immersed



myself into BIGSAS in that sense. Intuitively I felt like considering the Gender and Diversity Programme, without knowing too much about it or the ideas that would come out.

When people speak about “gender” and “diversity” in general terms, perhaps it would have to do with women in the case of gender, and minorities of a certain type rather than the dominant image. So my initial proposal was to call the project “Family”, then question whether BIGSAS is a family, what kind of family it would be if it is. The most important thing for me is that as much as it is a starting point, what I



enjoy doing through my work is to “unpack” things, to not accept that there would be a final answer, a final conclusion. From my little experience I feel that only time can tell what the final result would be and this is going to also change with time. What I was really interested in doing, as much as I also accept that it is almost an impossible task to do, would be a project where I would be here at BIGSAS, interacting with all of the Junior Fellows and all the greater BIGSAS family. It is an impossible task, I would say, but I think that is what I enjoy about art because as an artist, I am creating a problem and then having to find a solution for it.

So as soon as I arrived I asked for a little space where I could connect my computer, be on the

internet ad in the midst of things here. I was very lucky to get this office which is usually reserved for senior visiting fellows, I guess.

What really stimulates my work is the conversations I have had with the few Junior Fellows I have met so far. I think this part is the very interesting part so far because, if the concept is “Family”, then I started reflecting on it and unfortunately it takes me a while to digest things. It was only last week that I started understanding why. In a way I am very lucky that I have been in Bayreuth before, but at the same time I think that what helps me

is that I know from the little bit of travelling that I have done that wherever I go, even if I am away from Maputo for two days I know I will go to a new Maputo. It is the same but always different. I think this helped me. I think I only started understanding what I am doing which is I decided to immerse myself completely as much as possible in this other world of BIGSAS that is familiar but still unknown until I arrived. I am constantly reflecting on things, constantly reflecting not only on the Junior Fellows but also on the context, the environment, and also the reality that I do not have the full picture. And I will possibly never have the full picture.

Talking about having a full picture, at the moment I think there are about 120 Junior Fellows and



there is never a time you will have all of them in Bayreuth at the same time. They are at different stages in their research. Some are in the field, some are rounding off, some are still trying to understand their topics, some are still battling with their IRTP, trying to draw a plan of how they will go about their research in the next three years. At every point, about 20 or 30 people are in the field, and those around may not all be in Bayreuth. So it will be difficult to really have a “complete” picture. But that notwithstanding, what you have is still a reflection of the BIGSAS environment. That said, do you mind sharing how you have been going about this project?

I have just been living, experiencing, talking to people, exchanging because I think conversations are more of exchanging. We exchange so much in these conversations, where we are from, what backgrounds we have, and also how we feel about things, what we think about things. This is one of the things I find enriching, especially the critical discussions that I have had access to, learning about the research of individual Junior Fellows. In a sense I have been participating in a bit of everything as much as possible. Like you said, in theory there could be a bigger picture, but that bigger picture could only be seen from when something begins and then something ends. This is not what I am going to do now. What I am going to do now, in a way the more I look at even the space here that I am creating and destroying, it is changing every day. In a way it is a draft proposal. In my own work

in the first few years, I have been realizing that well, why not propose an art that in a way is not finished but that is the finished work, if that makes sense. I managed to feel like I was going somewhere more tangible.

Are you going to give us a presentation when you are done?

The way I have decided to do it, and I also have got some suggestions from Dr. Ulf Vierke, is to place these art works in the BIGSAS corridors by the admin offices and the work stations.



Project presentation of Maimuna Adam's work at BIGSAS on 4 August 2015



“Journalists Should Listen to the People”: Interview with Alexandra Rojkov, Winner of the BIGSAS Journalist Award 2015

By Serawit Bekele Debele (Alumna) and Uchenna Oyali

The BIGSAS Journalist Award was established in 2010 as a way of correcting the negative stereotypes and clichés about Africa that inundate the media in Europe. From a pool of articles published in print and online German media, this biennial award is given to the entry that best presents a balanced picture of Africa. The uniqueness of the Award is also seen in the jury which consists of BIGSAS alumni, headed by the former President of the University of Bayreuth, Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Helmut Ruppert. The 2015 Award was given to Alexandra Rojkov for her article “*Chris’ Reise zu den Sternen*” (Chris’ journey to the stars), from an impressive pool of 70 submissions. Below is an excerpt of an interview granted by the prize winner to BIGSAS Alumna Serawit Bekele Debele and BIGSAS Junior Fellow Uchenna Oyali.

From your background you seem to focus more on the Middle East, how did you come about the African experience?

As a freelancer you write for different media outlets. Sometimes you propose stories; sometimes they ask you for stories. In this case, a students’ magazine asked whether I knew an interesting story that has to do with astronomy. I proposed a number of topics, some on the States, some on German students who work on astronomy. Then I read about the ASRP, the African Space Research Programme, in an article a friend of mine had published about five years ago and I said I really want to go there. Basically it was not about writing about Africa but writing about astronomy. But it was



Editors Uchenna Oyali and Serawit Bekele Debele with Alexandra Rojkov

hard to convince the newspaper to send me there because Uganda was not a typical place to write about astronomy. We discussed it for a very long time and in the end they took me there.

How long did it take you to write the article? How much research did you do?

The problem was that Chris Nsamba, the founder of this space programme, did not want to talk to me. They have a webpage. I sent him an email, and he did not reply. Then I sent his assistant an email, again he did not reply. I found a phone number and called, he picked up the phone and said “Well I am busy” and then he hung up. Then I called again and he said “Well I am on holidays, call again in a week”. I tried to contact him for about three weeks without success. He just did not want to talk to me. In the end, I asked a friend, the guy who has written about



the ASRP some years ago, to help me establish contact with him, and he convinced Chris to talk to me. He was so sceptical about journalists and did not want me to write about them. In the end, I spent about a week in Uganda doing the research.

What was your motivation for writing the article?

I find it very interesting. Very often you hear about Africa as a continent of crisis, as a hopeless place. I am sure that this is not true in many ways. I wanted to show that something big and important can exist even in places where it is hard and where you do not have the same possibilities. These people really proved that. I wanted to describe how it is to build up a project like this out of nothing.

In your article, you talked about Africa’s “first space programme”. We are kind of wondering how much you dug into the past to see what might have been done before because we gathered

that there has been space programmes active since 1960s in some countries like Ethiopia

Yes, yes! I checked that. There were other initiatives and they were obviously smaller. In these previous cases, I am not sure whether they officially reached the level. I understand you have to reach a certain height to be officially in space and, to my knowledge, they did not officially reach the level.

Have these Ugandans reached the level?

They reached theirs. They did officially reach it. So that is why they call themselves the first.

Are there official institutions who evaluate these heights?

I think they have someone from NASA who checks it and hands in some proof.

So they are officially recognized by NASA?

I am not sure whether they are recognized by NASA but they have officially reached this level. It is official that they have reached space. Chris, who is the leader, is in the States very often. He has worked for the US Army and I am sure they have some guide or maybe he checked it through them.

When you sent your article for this Journalist Award, there must have been something that made you think “I have to go for the competition”. What was it?

For me it was quite an interesting research. I had a very interesting and fulfilling stay and I learnt a lot. I have a very good personal feeling about this article.



Maybe I handed it in because I put so much effort in it. It was very hard for me to write it and I spent three weeks or so going over and over it again because I found it hard to find the right words. I wanted to give

travelled a lot in Arab countries and as a woman I find it very hard sometimes, sometimes it was very tiring. In Uganda there was no moment at all when I felt uncomfortable or insecure, people did not even give me a strange look even though I stick out.



Horst Eggers, chairman of *Universitätsverein Bayreuth e. V.*, Alexandra Rojkov, winner of the BIGSAS Journalist Award 2015, Amrai Coen and Malte Henk, both winners of an honorary award, Prof. Dr. Dymitr Ibrizimow (L-R)

it justice but I also did not want to twist the truth and in this case it was very hard. There is something about this project.

Are you still in touch with them?

Yes, yes.

Do you plan on going back or visiting?

I would want to and really it is the next point on my list and I really want to go back to East Africa. I

Apart from this Journalist Award, have you got any feedback on this particular article?

Yes. I published it in two students' magazines, a students' magazine of a German daily and a students' magazine of a Swiss daily. After it was out other newspapers approached me and told me they have read this piece and they find it very interesting and asked whether they can re-publish it, which was very rare as you usually publish an article and that is it. In this

case three other newspapers approached me and asked to re-publish it. It has been published in Austria, in one more German paper and it has been translated into French, so it was published in France as well. Which is very rare, it never happened to me before. It shows that people obviously really liked the story.

This is very interesting. It is quite nice how the story is spreading. What does it tell us about the media representation of Africa?

There are quite a lot of pieces about crisis in Africa, especially with ebola; there are a lot of people that



just talk about devastation and human suffering. But I think the fact that so many newspapers approached me shows that people want to read something different. The goal of this Journalist Prize is actually to spread a different view of Africa.

As a journalist who has written about Africa, Uganda to be specific, what would be your advice to journalists?

I am not an expert in this field and so I guess people who have worked there for a long time would probably give you a better answer. My advice would be that journalists talk to the people. Some journalists go to places and they already have their story in mind. They know what they want to write. Sometimes they can even write the story without even doing the research. My advice would be to talk to people, listen to them, and if you have to change the story change it, as it was in my case. At the end it was less a story about science and more a story about human perceptions. And for people who are inexperienced on the topic I would say try to dig and find something that is different and not produce the same old stories. There is more to find.



BIGSAS Alumnus Dr. Rémi Armand Tchokothe congratulating Alexandra Rojkov

They are really happy to have a piece that shows something different and I think it gets better. The media are really trying to improve and not focus on the same old story. There are also some books recently about the middle class in Africa which is something that very few people know about, but the fact that this kind of books and articles are becoming more I think is very fine.

What does the BIGSAS Journalist Award mean to you?

I feel very honoured. Very often the juries of journalist prizes consist of journalists and journalists look at articles in a different way. The fact that these juries are not journalists but experts in their fields, that they did not look for any formal reason but the fact that they liked the article, it is worth a lot, more than any prize that has been awarded by journalists. For me it is a big encouragement to continue working in this region.



Junior Fellow Representatives: A Continued Chronology



Johanna Rieß



Azza Mustafa Babikir Ahmed



Sarah Böllinger



Johanna Sarre



Rose Nyakio Kimani



Musa Ibrahim

The chronology of tenure below shows Junior Fellows who served in office (for 1.-11. see The BIGSAS World I, pp. 37-38):

12. Johanna Rieß and Azza Mustafa Babikir Ahmed (2014)
13. Azza Mustafa Babikir Ahmed and Sarah Böllinger (2014)
14. Sarah Böllinger and Johanna Sarre (2015)
15. Rose Nyakio Kimani and Musa Ibrahim (2015)



Kulturpreis Bayern

By Antje Daniel (Alumna)



Winners of the university awards

Am 18. November 2015 wurde ich in Anwesenheit des Bayerischen Kultusministers Dr. Ludwig Spänle in Essenbach mit dem Kulturpreis Bayern für meine Doktorarbeit „Organisation – Vernetzung – Bewegung: Frauenbewegungen in Kenia und Brasilien“ ausgezeichnet. Meine Dissertation gibt aus vergleichender Perspektive einen Einblick in die Praktiken von Frauenbewegungen im gesellschaftlichen und politischen Umfeld Kenias und Brasiliens. Auf analytischer Ebene wird eine Analyseperspektive für soziale Bewegungen des globalen Südens entwickelt und damit ein Beitrag zur Protest- und Bewegungsforschung und nicht zuletzt zur Geschlechterforschung geleistet.



Prof. Dr. Tobias Haupt, Professor for Sport Management with winner Dr. Antje Daniel



In Zusammenarbeit mit dem Bayerischen Staatsministerium für Bildung und Kultus, Wissenschaft und Kunst zeichnet die Bayernwerk AG jährlich Künstler*innen und Akademiker*innen mit dem Kulturpreis aus. Damit möchte die Bayernwerk AG den Austausch zwischen Gesellschaft, Kunst und Wissenschaft fördern. Neben Persönlichkeiten aus Kunst und Kultur werden durch den Kulturpreis in der Kategorie Wissenschaft die besten Absolvent*innen der Hochschulen und von allen bayerischen Universitäten die besten Doktorand*innen gewürdigt. Dank der Unterstützung von BIGSAS wurde ich für den Preis nominiert und ausgezeichnet. In Anwesenheit des Bayreuther Universitätspräsidenten,

Prof. Dr. Stefan Leible, und meines Doktorvaters, Prof. Dr. Dieter Neubert, nahm ich den Kulturpreis Bayern 2015 entgegen. Alle Preisträger*innen wurden durch prominente Persönlichkeiten aus Wissenschaft und Film geehrt und auf einer großen Gala mit bekannten Live-Musik- und Tanzperformances gefeiert.

Der Kulturpreis belohnt junge Wissenschaftler*innen für ihre Leistungen und gibt zugleich eine Motivation für zukünftige Forschungen. Dank BIGSAS ist eine derartige Auszeichnung möglich!



“Living Library”: Limitless Cultural Connections and Exchanges

By Weeraya Donsomsakulkij (Alumna)

Seeing the title, you might wonder what a “living library” is. Living library is a kind of library that is neither passive nor only waiting for you to enter and leave without a single word of goodbye. It is one in which “books” can literally “talk”, “ask” and “answer” any question you may have. It is an interesting library, isn't it? The following space is devoted to the story of this library that is “living”.

In the lovely city of Bayreuth on 28 March 2015 at 10:15 in the morning, the Bayreuth city library was reborn as the first “living library”. This library breathed through intercultural single “cells” from Mexico, Benin, Thailand and Germany that acted as “books”. These cells/books formed a space in the café on the second floor and waited for enthusiastic people who pursue intercultural knowledge.

Unfortunately, not many such people visited the living library on that date. The books began feeling down. Were they not attractive? To prevent this unwelcomed feeling to grow any further, one book from Mexico started talking to her companions. She talked about life, the culture bestowed on her from Mexico. A book from Benin also began his story from his culture, and so did those from Germany and Thailand. The space was then filled with lively stories from different regions around the globe. The unwelcomed feeling was long forgotten.

It seemed that their enthusiasm towards cultures attracted the attention of passers-by. While they were talking to one another, a family of three from

Germany came and joined the conversation. The books were very excited and even happier when the family started asking about their cultures. Finally, their existence was noticed. They exchanged their cultural knowledge with the family, ranging from the reasons why they decided to come to Germany, why they decided to pursue certain knowledge of their own fields and so on. The conversation and knowledge exchanging went on until 1:30 pm in the afternoon and did not seem to end anytime soon.

However, things in the world do have an ending so that new beginning will have its chance. The conversation between the books and their visitors ended with satisfaction from both sides. The family was pleased and wished to have this kind of conversations sustained. The books were happy that eventually their presence and cultural knowledge were recognized. The family left with several words of “see you again”.

As you can see, this is a happy ending. The living library has been living on although at this moment, it is still sleeping and waiting for the books to come back with more enchanting stories and knowledge and if the living library is fortunate enough, the books may also bring other books to the library.

Yet, on a second thought, is it really alright to keep the books to oneself? Perhaps not. One day, the living library reconsidered the situation and finally made a crucial decision. Can you guess what the living library decided?



“Living books” from Benin, Mexico, Germany and Thailand (L-R)

The living library decided to release its restriction on the books and expressed its will for the books to travel the world. Let the books wander around and exchange their cultural knowledge with others. The books do not have to come back to this living library. Instead, they could establish other living libraries, connecting their cultural knowledge with one another and constituting cultural global connections.

Since then, there has not been only one living library, but several ones. The living library of Bayreuth is not lonely anymore. They all have been in relations. Now my question is: “do you want to join us?”



Married Bachelors!

By Justice Arthur & Uchenna Oyali

First comes the excitement of being admitted as a BIGSAS Junior Fellow. A couple of days or weeks later comes the loneliness that usually follows settling in a different clime, different from what you have always known. This loneliness becomes worse if you left that “significant other” at home and are here *alleine*. How do you deal with such a situation? How do you cope with life as a bachelor/spinster when you are actually married? As usually happens, we become philosophers when we find ourselves in difficult situations. Below are some “ruminations” by two BIGSAS JFs, Justice and Uche, who have chosen poetry as one of the ways to deal with their married bachelor life in Bayreuth.

Justice Arthur

Long distance relationships are extremely difficult to freshen up, especially where it involves children. In my case, it has never been easy having to leave my wife and my children in Ghana to assume a self-imposed bachelor status in Germany. Sometimes, I have to stay up to make sure homework on the other side (Ghana) is sorted before attending to my own needs. There are times when I have to resort to talking to my children on Skype for hours to make sure they are safe, until my wife comes back from work. It is even more difficult when I have to celebrate occasions like Valentine’s Day all by myself and then turn to sending my wife virtual roses and “Golden Tree Chocolate”. This might sound strange to some people but then I have realized that all my colleagues have different

ways of coping with loneliness and the difficulty of leaving family behind to pursue a PhD abroad. One of the things I do to manage is writing amateur prose poems for my wife and children. Here, I give you two such poems to enjoy:

To my wife:

Across a distance (Justice Arthur)

Oh! I remember as if it was yesterday
When we met across a distance
Yet we were so close

Though we seemed so far apart
Little did we know then
That our paths would cross

A caring soul, so strong yet so sweet
My battles you fought
My love to have, me to treat
As the best to cross your path

You promised never to let go
Even when I had said “go”
How could we have known that
True love could be this sweet

An answer to a prayer
Laid at the Master’s feet
Forever to love; forever to cherish
A promise I intend to keep
Even across a distance



To my daughter:

My little girl shall be President

(Justice Arthur)

You are bold and beautiful
 You are strong and intelligent
 You are kind and empathetic
 You are a future president of Ghana

Meanwhile

He is a king among the poor
 Lives on a 27-acre property
 Chauffeured in bullet-proof automobiles
 Has executive power to decide everything

His friends visit their concubines in convoys
 Dare speak up and his friends will descend on you
 Using the power of the media
 Clergy and laity alike are taken to the cleaners

Citizens crave for change
 They have seen it happen in Tanzania
 But mediocrity says rebranding buses and oversized
 Chinese tailored uniforms are unprecedented achievements

In the meantime

At key stage 3 you are already a leader
 Blowing away two male competitors in two elections
 What the boys can do you can do better
 What Mrs Merkel has done you will better it

You transcend mediocre boundaries
 Until the last of your friends has a candy
 Mum and dad will know no peace
 You are a real fighter

You will make a great leader
 I will invest my last dime on you
 I will encourage you
 I will pray for you

And I will stand by you
 Till you become the President!



Uchenna Oyali

I came to Bayreuth single in April 2013, met her in 2014 and we got married in Nigeria the following year. Some weeks after the wedding and I was back in Bayreuth...alone... back to life as a bachelor...a married bachelor, a life of loneliness and...loneliness.

Now I appreciate Skype, WhatsApp, Facebook, mobile phones better as they bridge the distance between Nigeria and Bayreuth and make Nigeria look like next door. But at times, I find expressing myself on paper some fissure for the turmoil within. I share two of these poems for her...my inspiration...

... for Mma
(Uchenna Oyali)

There are moments
Moments like this
When nothing has meaning
But the company of one person

She's my idol
She's my angel
She's that one person
That makes me smile with joy

She makes me warm in winter
She makes me feel in company
The empty room melts away
Thoughts of her so palpable

It's always winter here
Always winter without her
Her company brings the sunshine
And makes me smile within...

I forget my age ...
(Uchenna Oyali)

How you do it
I know not
But with you
I come alive

In your company
I forget my age
I play like a kid
I live my dream

They say for every man
There is a woman
I say they are right
You are my woman

With you I sleep
No matter the storm
With you I smile
I see the beauty of life
With you I love
You give me love unequalled
With you I live
I live life in full



Mbaye Seye, *der pfeifende Junior Fellow*

By Jean Pierre Boutché

Mbaye Seye promoviert seit Oktober 2014 im Fach Komparatistik bei BIGSAS. Neben dem Studium und der Forschung hat der hervorragende und talentierte Senegalese sein Hobby Basketball immer praktiziert, in dem er sich allmählich professionalisiert hat. Im Namen der Redaktion von The BIGSAS World hat Jean Pierre Boutché (JP) ein Gespräch mit ihm geführt.



Mbaye Seye during a basketball match

JP: Lieber Mbaye, ich freue mich mit dir dieses Interview zu führen und danke dir für deine nette Bereitschaft und die kostbare Zeit, die du für deine Dissertation bräuchtest. Aber wie deine Geschichte es zeigen wird, bist du eher ein Doktorand, der neben erfolgreichem Studium auch sportliche Freizeit und Gesellschaft konsequent genießt. Meine erste Frage an dich betrifft Sport im Allgemeinen in deiner Heimat. Wahrscheinlich ist Fußball der populäre Sport im Senegal. Fußball kann man ja auf allen Flächen spielen, was nicht der Fall ist mit deinem Bereich, dem Basketball. Warum hast du dich überhaupt für Basketball entschieden?

MS: Der populäre Sport in Senegal ist eher Lámb (traditioneller afrikanischer Ringkampf). Fußball kommt auf den zweiten Platz, dann Basketball. Mein Vorteil war, dass meine Geburtsstadt (Thiès) im Bereich Sport und insbesondere des Basketballs sehr bekannt ist. Auch das Basketballstadion lag ganz in der Nähe von meinem Zuhause.

JP: Wie ist die Idee gekommen, Schiedsrichter zu werden? Welche Etappen hast du bestanden, bis du heute internationaler Schiedsrichter geworden bist?

MS: Ich war zuerst Spieler, dann, einmal in der Uni, hatte ich keine Zeit mehr zum Spielen. So habe ich mit dem Pfeifen angefangen, weil ich mich nicht vom Basketball trennen wollte. So musste ich acht Jahre lang warten, bis ich die internationale Prüfung 2010 bestanden habe.



JP: Wie schätzt du das Niveau des Sports in deinem Land? Was könnte man noch verbessern?

MS: Wie fast in ganz Afrika ist das Sportniveau noch zu verbessern. Das Niveau des Sports ist allgemein geschätzt durchschnittlich im Senegal. Man zählt viele professionelle Spieler (Fußball, Basketball, Handball, Leichtathletik, etc.) mit senegalesischer Herkunft in allen Kontinenten. Darum ist Senegal in fast allen Meisterschaften (kontinental oder international) mit ausgewählten Profi-SpielerInnen respektvoll vertreten.

Ich muss trotzdem behaupten, Senegal hat ein sehr gutes Niveau in Basketball! Sowohl bei den Damen (elfmal Afrikameisterinnen) als auch bei den Herren (fünfmal Afrikameister). Nach dem eklatanten Sieg gegen Kamerun zu Hause während der letzten Afrikameisterschaft in Yaoundé (2015) wird unsere Basketball-Damenmannschaft bei den nächsten Olympischen Spielen in Rio de Janeiro (Brasilien) teilnehmen dürfen.

JP: Du bist aber als Doktorand nach Deutschland gekommen. Wie hast du Kontakt mit dem deutschen Basketball geknüpft?

MS: Kontakt mit dem Deutschen Basketball (DBB) hatte ich bereits in 2011 bei der Teilnahme am IGBS-Camp in Bad Kreuznach. Damit war es leichter, 2014 wieder Kontakt mit dem DBB zu haben. Einfach anmelden und in einem Verein Mitglied sein, dann ging es schnell los!

JP: Wie oft und wo bist du schon im Einsatz gewesen?

MS: Wegen meines Promotionsstudiums muss ich leider Prioritäten setzen; d.h. ich bin nicht viel unterwegs. Also, ich habe schon an der Ü35 Deutsche Meisterschaft 2014 in Wiesloch teilgenommen, etwa fünf / sechs Bundesliga Vorbereitungsspiele mit Drei-Mann-Technik gepfiffen (mit der Ehre den deutschen Meister Brose Baskets Bamberg und den FC Bayern München pfeifen zu dürfen), und noch dazu in der 2. Damenbundesliga und Regionalliga Südost. So ist es.

JP: Denkst du, dass dein sportliches Engagement in Deutschland dein Bild von Deutschland sowie das Bild von Afrika bei deinen deutschen Kontakten beeinflusst hat? Wenn ja, in wie fern?

MS: Ja, schon! Dass ich als Afrikaner Stereotypen überwinde und als qualifizierter und kompetenter Mensch anerkannt werde, finde ich schön. So wird durch diese Anerkennung auch mein Bild von Deutschland positiv bestimmt.

JP: Bist du immer nur Schiedsrichter oder spielst du manchmal auch andere Rollen?

MS: Ich spiele öfters und bin ab und zu mal Zuschauer bei den Medi Bayreuth Heimspielen (Bundesliga) oder bei Brose Baskets Heimspielen (Euroleague).



JP: Ich vermute, dass du außer dem Basketball und dem Doktorstudium noch andere Aktivitäten unternimmst ...

MS: Ich mache auch Sportreportagen für das Uni-Radio „Schallwerk on Galaxy“.

JP: Aber, du bist Doktorand, Mbaye! Wie schaffst du es, beides auf die Beine zu bringen?

MS: Nicht einfach, gutes Zeitmanagement und Disziplin müssen sein. Dazu noch den Mut haben, seine Ziele zu erreichen und immer voll Gas geben, damit alles gut klappt.

JP: Besteht noch Kontakt mit den Heimatkollegen?

MS: Ja, natürlich. Wir sind eine Familie und müssen einander unterstützen, miteinander arbeiten für die Zukunft der Basketballschiedsrichter in der Heimat.

JP: Welches sind deine Zukunftspläne?

MS: Meine Promotion erfolgreich und mit sehr gutem Prädikat abzuschließen, als Dozent an meiner Heimatuniversität tätig zu sein und weiter zu den besten weltweit Aktiven gehören.

JP: Was ist das Geheimnis deiner Lebensfreude? Gibt es vielleicht ein Wort oder ein Motto, das dein Leben bestimmt? Kannst du das bitte in deiner Muttersprache (Wolof) sagen?

MS: Gäbe es ein Motto, das mein Leben bestimmt, wäre es in diesem Gedicht zu finden:

Jub, jubël te gëm sa bopp!

*Auf dem richtigen Wege sein
und Selbstvertrauen haben*

Xam te xaamee say xarit ak say noon!

*Seine Freunde und Feinde kennen
und anerkennen!*

Di dímbali waate saa booko mënee!

Immer hilfsbereit sein!



“Big Men” and their Audience in Development Politics: Encounter with the German Minister for Development Cooperation

By Matthew Sabbi (Alumnus)



Dr. Gerd Müller discussing with BIGSAS JFs and Alumni

Encounters with German politicians, especially holders of important portfolios such as the Federal Minister for Development Cooperation, do not come very often. So when the Minister, Dr. Gerd Müller, visited Bayreuth on 29 April 2015, it was an august occasion for most of us in BIGSAS to interact with him and discuss development cooperation themes between Germany and the Global South. The morning was a long one and the minister’s arrival

was no longer predictable. The look on the faces of the university president, professors and fellow students said it all. I quickly reflected that perhaps the scholars Paul Nugent and Mat Utas did not have to look too far in the Global South to find examples of “big man” politics. The setting at the *Iwalewaha* and the long wait for the minister’s arrival was clear indication that we were waiting for a “big man”, and yet unsure when he would arrive. Of course, when “big men” arrive, they have good news! And indeed, Dr. Müller had some for me. Beyond support for African Studies and research in Bayreuth, he had visited Accra a fortnight earlier and held discussions with his Ghanaian counterparts on key health and sanitation themes including the management of electronic waste (i.e. e-waste) which pose serious health challenge in Ghana especially at Agbogloshie, a suburb of Accra. With the mention of the German government’s commitment to help address this

Dr. Gerd Müller with Prof. Dr. Stefan Leible, president of the University of Bayreuth, and Hartmut Koschyk MdB with BIGSAS members at *Iwalewaha*





environmental challenge, I was delighted to quickly follow up with a question. “How does the German government ensure that development assistance and funds are put to proper use?” “What happened to your German language?” was the question that nearly knocked me off when I decided to carefully ask my question in English. Indeed, the minister was blunt in his answer: “As far as we know, they use the funds in line with local needs and realities”. But I felt less convinced with the answer which was somewhat in defence of the local “big men”. Though less startling, it was to be expected that when one asks politicians a question of this nature, they get ‘politically correct’ responses.

Additionally, Dr. Gerd Müller did not mince words with a question from another colleague: “Could you ensure that development funds are sent to specific states in Nigeria so the central government does not use them for its own sake?” Once more, the minister was emphatic that “it will be very difficult to do that”. Perhaps, the local “big men” will make it impossible



The event was also a good opportunity to meet and discuss with former colleagues and friends



or even label such actions as neo-colonialism: that governments of the Global North are coming back to dictate to them once more. Overall though, one thing remains clear in my mind: one “big man” does not hurt or query another, whether in the context of giving or receiving development assistance. That is what “big man” politics is all about.



Disability and Social Breakthrough: A Night with Ras Mackinzeph

By Emmanuel Sackey

On the night of Tuesday, 9 June 2015, a cross section of Senior and Junior Fellows of BIGSAS who participated in the Diversity Lecture at *Iwalewahaus*, did not only enjoy an inspiring presentation but were also treated to some moving African (reggae) musical rhythms delivered by Ras Mackinzeph. Known officially as Zephyrinus Ghong Ndum, he is the Head of the Philosophy Department of GBHS (High School) in Etoug Ebe Yaounde, Cameroon. The objective of the lecture cum musical night was to highlight the challenges faced by persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Cameroon as well as the prospects of their social progress. Ras Mackinzeph noted that disability is often defined as the functional limitation of a person, as a result of physical or sensory impairment. In disability studies, this is often referred to as the medical model of disability. Ras Mackinzeph however emphasized that a person's physical or sensory impairment (such as loss of limbs, mobility, eye sight, or sense of hearing) *per se* is not the root cause of the challenges faced by persons with disabilities. In this regard he reiterated the United Nations (UN) conception of disability which is "the interaction between a person's impairment and the attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".

The UN conception is often referred to as the social model of disability which can be distinguished from the medical notion. The underlying assumption of the social model, which is currently the most acceptable

definition of disability, is that, while a person may have a physical or sensory impairment, they are not actually disabled until the person is excluded from the full participation from social activities such as employment, business, politics or marriage. Such exclusions come from barriers created by society. Thus, according to Ras Mackinzeph, the major challenge persons with disabilities face is social exclusion due to stigmatization and discrimination.

So why do people stigmatize and discriminate against persons with disabilities? For Ras Mackinzeph the root cause of the problem can be traced to false cultural or religious beliefs, as prevalent in Cameroon. But apart from superstition, the psychological process of social categorization based on physical appearance and the unjust socially constructed notions of normality and abnormality, which influence the creation of social identity, also contribute to the problem. Nonetheless, it is a reality, that physical impairment or disability can happen to anyone at any time, so there is no need to stigmatize or discriminate against any person on that basis.

Breaking the Barriers

How can the challenges faced by persons with disabilities be overcome? Breaking the barriers faced by PWDs requires three approaches from different actors. For the first approach, Ras Mackinzeph called for a change on the part of the wider society regarding the perceptions about



PWDs. This requires doing away with false beliefs and notions regarding the capabilities of PWDs. The second strategy requires interventions from public (state) and private institutions in terms of policies and other forms of interventions that would make society more inclusive for persons with disabilities. For the third approach, Ras Mackinzeph urged PWDs to have confidence in themselves. He emphasized that through the cultivation of self-confidence he has been able to develop his capacity to become the head of the Philosophy Department of his School. Not only that but also



Ras Mackinzeph playing reggae sounds at *Iwalewahaus* after giving a lecture

he is an accomplished musician and a mechanist. Through his mechanical talents and skills, he has been able to develop a special tricycle for use by people with mobility impairment in Cameroon.

During the musical session, both Senior and Junior Fellows danced their hearts out in response to the various reggae rhythms dished out by Ras Mackinzeph. It was a lively night by all standards. The programme was organized by the Gender and Diversity Representatives of BIGSAS, under the chairmanship of Dr. Ulf Vierke. Dr. Eric Anchimbe, the Deputy Gender and Diversity Representative moderated the programme. By the close of the night, not only did the participants enjoy the music but also they learnt that disability is not inability.



Old Meet New 2015

In 2015, the BIGSAS Junior Fellow Representatives organised the annual get-together for old and new friends, estimated colleagues and fellow BIGSASians at *Iwalewahaus*. The event gives everybody the





chance to get to know new BIGSAS members and to say goodbye to the ones leaving soon. Here are some impressions of the evening.





BIGSAS Outreach Programme in Munich

By Gilbert Ndi Shang (Alumnus)



Susanne Hacker, Jimam Lar, Gilbert Ndi Shang, Katharina Fink and Hanane Amghar discussing at *Gasteig München*

The event was a two-day outreach programme organized by the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies in collaboration with the *Münchner Volkshochschule* in the city of Munich on 20 and 21 February 2014. The aim of the outreach was to inform and obtain feedback from the Munich public about the Academy's programmes, research perspectives and some of the major activities it undertakes in collaboration with other African Studies research institutions of the University of Bayreuth. The Bayreuth delegation was made up of the Academy's management and research fellows, BIGSAS JFs and a staff member, and one student from the Department of Intercultural German Studies, University of Bayreuth.

The first day of activities comprised of interactive sessions at the *Willy-Brandt-Gesamtschule* by the then JFs Katharina Fink, Jimam Lar and me. This was an extension of BIGSAS@school (see also pp. 30 "Talking African Fashion: BIGSAS@school at *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium*" by Linda Besigiroha and pp. 32 "A friend told me that Africans live with lions': BIGSAS@school Project team meets the students of *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium*" by Carline Liliane Ngawa Mbaho), with the

specificity that it was being hosted for the first time by a school outside of the city of Bayreuth. Secondly, the school visited is part of a UNICEF programme dedicated to students with an immigrant and multicultural background.

The second day was characterized by parallel presentations by the Academy's research fellows at the *Gasteig München* cultural centre. This was followed by a roundtable discussion on the impact of international students in intercultural relations and the panellists' views on the prospects of Africa as a continent of the future. The heavily attended roundtable anchored by Katharina Fink had as panellists then JFs Jimam and me, BIGSAS PR



officer Susanne Hacker, and Hanane Amghar, a PhD student in Intercultural German Studies, University of Bayreuth. It was another opportunity to share the experiences of BIGSAS@school and how it constituted a learning avenue both for the students and the members of the BIGSAS team on the diversity of Africa. Further discussions

centered on the crucial and fundamental role of international students in building not only intellectual knowledge but also cultural knowledge across boundaries in a globalized world. This task is more so crucial with African students and other societies of the so-called Global South that have often been represented

with a certain measure of bias in the media and other avenues of information exchange. Apart from being a good example of the collaboration in African Studies institutions in Bayreuth, the trip demonstrated the necessity of connecting and sharing visions of academic institutions with the society at large.



Palm Wine: the “Miracle” Drink

By Yvette Ngum



Palm wine, the “miracle” drink, in Ndop, Cameroon

Palm wine is an alcoholic beverage extracted from the sap of either palm tree, raffia or coconut tree. It is white and contains natural yeast that makes it sour and alcoholic with time by changing the original sweetness at the time of extraction. The liquid is common in many parts of Africa, Asia and other parts of the world. In some parts of Africa, palm wine symbolizes unity and is often consumed from one pot. Interestingly, different ethnic groups in Cameroon have different names for the drink such as *mulu*, *white mimbo* and *white stuff*. When the liquid is fresh and less alcoholic it is considered as a “woman’s drink”, but when it stays too long and becomes stronger, it becomes “man’s drink”.

This “miracle” drink is present in every cultural ceremony or festival in Cameroon, particularly the North West; enthronement of a new chief (*fon*),

traditional weddings, funeral ceremonies, child birth and other social gatherings. In the case of chieftaincy enthronement, it is emptied into a horn-made cup for the *fon* to drink as a sign of acceptance and blessings. Sometimes, the wine is served from his cup to the cups of elders and everyone present without exception, symbolizing unity with the people. In funeral ceremonies, palm wine is served to entertain during the wake-keeping as well as a form of negotiation between families of the deceased. This long-standing cultural practice passed on from generation to generation indicates

acknowledgement from friends who have come to condole with the family of the deceased. Palm wine is also consumed at home on ordinary days and sold at drinking spots (commonly known as *mbuh* bar) in times of relation. It is usually served with food as a drink for refreshment.

In a traditional marriage ceremony, palm wine is the main drink for negotiation between the bride and the grooms’ family. The first visit of the groom’s family to the bride’s home is never done without the drink usually provided by the groom’s family. If the negotiation is fruitful, palm wine is shared with kolanuts as a symbol of agreement. The final blessing is usually done with palm wine given to the new couple by the father of the bride. The drink is poured in a special cup made from cow horn for the bride and groom to drink as a symbol



Drinking palm wine during a social gathering

of acceptance and unity. In the case of childbirth, palm wine is served to the guests and they drink while dancing in a circle with the new born baby, singing songs of praise and thanks giving. A special newly tapped fresh palm wine is given to the baby's

mother because it is believed that this “magic” wine is helpful in producing fine breast milk for the baby.

In addition to the above functions of palm wine, it is served with kolanuts in cases of conflict reconciliation between two parties, fortification, appreciation, medication, etc. Moreover, it is a valuable source of economy in the peripheries because it involves several businessmen and -women from production to final consumption. It operates as a chain that links people involved in the same line of business from neighbouring ethnic groups. This chain is composed of the palm wine tapper, the retailer and the public. Many people operate small palm wine bars in the quarters, markets and village squares to add up on the family income. A lot of people consume palm wine because they believe it contains certain nutrients that are valuable to the human system provided the liquid is fresh enough, that it has not lost its original taste or mixed with other liquids. It contains vitamins in lower proportion, sucrose and potassium.

The exudates can be classified as rich sources of nutrients that are needed for men. Some of the nutrients are sources of energy, body builders, components of body organs and tissues, coenzymes and play notable roles in biochemical functions and deficiency.



DAAD Prize 2014 and 2015: The Award and the Drama

By Jimam Lar & Matthew Sabbi (both Alumni)

The DAAD Prize for Outstanding Achievement is the German government sponsored prize awarded to international students with outstanding academic records and impressive social or intercultural engagements. BIGSAS JFs have repeatedly clutched this much coveted award over the years. Below, Jimam Lar and Matthew Sabbi, winners of University of Bayreuth DAAD Prize in 2014 and 2015 respectively, reflect on their experiences receiving the prize.

Jimam Lar

When one receives a scholarship of the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst* (DAAD) it is clearly expected that the doctoral student does not just work for a post-graduate degree in a specific academic field, but is equally involved in the social context where s/he is studying, “getting to know the country, its people and its culture better.” It is in recognition of an individual student’s attempt to enrich the higher education world of his host university culturally and academically that the DAAD-Prize for the outstanding achievement of a foreign student is bestowed annually. As the process requires a nomination, it is difficult to reflect on why I was selected – particularly because there are several other outstanding doctoral fellows who could have equally been selected. However, I can share with you the feeling of receiving such an award. My selection as the recipient of the University of Bayreuth’s DAAD-Prize 2014, was a pleasant surprise. Of course one is pleased to

be so considered, but it is equally humbling. It is part of my job to do research, understand societal phenomena and publish the findings. Therefore, to be partly recognized for this alongside social engagements is very encouraging. Furthermore, receiving awards as recognition also entails responsibility, and expectation. I am grateful to the graduate school for nominating me for the 2014 award. The support and encouragement of my supervisor is also highly appreciated. Finally, as I was unavoidably absent and could not receive the award in person, my appreciation to BIGSAS colleagues Johanna Rieß and Azza Mustapha for helping me record an acceptance video piece which was relayed at the University of Bayreuth’s *Akademischer Jahresfeier* 2014. I am also grateful to then JF Representative Sarah Böllinger for receiving the award on my behalf.

Matthew Sabbi

When I had a call from the International Office in the evening of Thursday, 29 October 2015, I could hardly connect the name of the caller, Dr. Arnim Heinemann, to anything on my desk. Indeed, having almost forgotten of the nomination for the DAAD Prize some months earlier, the joy that followed the news led to my suspension of every task for the rest of the evening. Yet, it soon came down to rescheduling my numerous activities: a waiting draft dissertation, an impending conference, the award ceremony, the after-party, etc. Despite the enormous planning needed, the joy of being



honoured by my university surpassed everything I had in mind that night.

However, when the initial joy subsided the main drama began. In fact, when the invitation letter for the award ceremony came, I read it in a haste, partially conceiving it as a dinner with the University President. The truth is that my German language skills were not adequate to comprehend the section on awards ceremony. I also waived the offer to come along with one person. It was only when the Dean of BIGSAS, Prof. Dr. Dymitr Ibriszimow, picked me up from my apartment on Friday, 20 November, that it became clear that awards would be given. I immediately began to pant; I was going to be alone with nobody to support me. This was actually the first time the awards were given at a dinner. At the restaurant *Zur Sudpfanne*, the brochure listed me as the first prize recipient for the night. That made the situation even worse because I had no clue how to stand and where to look. To be honest, though it was a cold winter night, I could already feel the sweat on my face and under my shirt. Frankly, I could barely follow what the Vice-President Prof. Dr. Anna Köhler read about me when I stood in front of the audience because all that while I was struggling to adjust my posture in front of members of the University Senate. I even forgot to hand over my camera to someone for personal photos of this special event. That I was perplexed is an understatement. Despite the drama, the post-



The awardee Matthew Sabbi with Prof. Dr. Anna Köhler, Vice-President of the University of Bayreuth for equal opportunities and external relations

award celebrations could no longer wait. A week after the awards, my friends and colleagues joined me in the kitchen of *Bussardweg 39* for a grand celebration with Ghanaian food, drinks and music with the “crazy dance” to cap an eventful month for all of us.

Most importantly, I came to appreciate the importance of the award afterwards when my supervisor asked for a photo of the event and when the Dean of BIGSAS presented it at the BIGSAS General Assembly. The rigorous nomination process and the eventual election by the University Senate added to its significance. Indeed, the award has entered the scholarship and awards section of my CV. My sincere thanks to all friends and colleagues in and outside BIGSAS who made it happen!

The Unexpected Summer School Encounter: AEGIS 2014 and “Queeresima”

By Matthew Sabbi (Alumnus)



The participants of the AEGIS Summer School 2014

It was particularly interesting and an honour to have been selected among a few students from German Universities to share our research results with other scholars and researchers in the Africa-Europe Group of Interdisciplinary Studies (AEGIS) Summer School 2014 on the theme: “Mobilisation and the State in Africa: Multiple Spaces for Political Action”. The trip to Cagliari, Italy, was particularly intriguing for my colleague Serawit, who was also invited. Indeed, Cagliari, the capital of Sardinia is a major tourist attraction and a Summer School on the island meant the prospect of combining academic work and networking with fun i.e. beaching, sightseeing, etc. So between the 23 and 29 June 2014, we enjoyed Cagliari’s beautiful weather and the city’s many attractions though we must confess that the weather felt much warmer

than we had expected having to sleep in air-conditioned rooms.

Besides the normal academic discussions and debates, there were two interesting but no less important observations and encounters. First was the personal encounter with migrants on the island, part of the larger discussion in international geopolitics: the intractable migration “challenge” across the Mediterranean. It was quite evident from a couple of interactions with some of the migrants especially those from sub-Saharan Africa that they already felt their anticipated dream of economic fortunes and their

reality were miles apart, while the persistent uncertainties over their stay in Europe remained a constant nightmare.

The second intriguing encounter was with the LGBT community in Sardinia called “Queeresima”. Of course, it appears that for most people especially academics, the LGBT question remains an ambivalent one but it was more so fascinating for Summer School participants who were multi-cultural in outlook. Some of the participants had joined the Summer School directly from African universities, from a continent where the LGBT topic is very lively in national politics and social life. There were yet others who research the topic from European universities and the meeting with the LGBT community was an appropriate platform for merging



Working but also enjoying the great atmosphere in Cagliari

academic, advocacy and personal opinions on the “heated” topic. There were three levels of encounter with the LGBT community: interactive roundtable discussion and insights by scholars from Edinburgh and Roskilde who research gay legislations in Uganda in particular and Africa in general; a cinema session on the “Jim Crow” type legislations in Uganda. The movie “God Loves Uganda” was both sensitive and insightful; and finally a lunch sponsored by the LGBT community was awesome! The interactions over food and drinks helped dispel so many



We relived the friendship, networks, discussions, food and beer at *Piazza Yenne*. With all these experiences, we left Cagliari with some food for thought...



myths... Over all, given the responses to LGBT issues in Africa, it was less surprising that most of the questions were directed towards African participants but it was also notable that the responses still echoed the already known ambivalences and that none of them particularly appeared to hold an advocacy position. However, whether some of the participants were only appearing “politically correct” with their views was not easily discernible.

The Epic Return!

By Omondi Robert Owino (Alumnus)



Robert with his family in Kenya

From the monitor in front of my aeroplane seat I could tell that we were about 15 minutes away from touch down! Soon the seat belt lights came on and in no time I heard the pilot's booming voice over the intercom requesting cabin crew to take their positions in readiness for landing. I had been on an 11-hour overnight flight from Frankfurt to Mombasa having successfully defended my doctoral thesis just three days earlier. Landing at Moi International Airport in Mombasa, I could not help feeling a little bit like the biblical Jacob returning after many years from Laban's home. Whereas I had travelled to Germany all alone with a single suitcase, I was now returning accompanied by my wife who had joined me, our twins Minwa and Mich, our then unborn son Koby, and six heavy suitcases between us! Having lived in Bayreuth for four years, the return was epic! I can now "connect the dots looking backwards" and summarize my experience as an intense learning phase and an odyssey of self-discovery!

Being in Germany offered me countless opportunities to learn countless things! For instance, just the mere fact of being a BIGSAS Junior Fellow made it possible for me to decipher the diverse destinations and cultures that make Africa, at little cost. Germany for me became that great melting pot that taught me greater tolerance and accommodation of varying hues and shades of opinions that stem from the great cultural mosaic that constitutes it. I also experienced intellectual growth in leaps and bounds! It was however crucial for me to establish a

delicate balance between learning the hosts' culture and way of thinking while retaining that critical inner voice and *Weltanschauung* that defines me as an African!

In terms of self-discovery, living in Bayreuth gave me an opportunity to step away from my country Kenya and now look at it with completely new eyes! Indeed, in the words of Marcel Proust 'the real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes,





but in having new eyes'. Here in Kenya is where I truly belong! I still fit in effortlessly even after many years abroad! My family and I now appreciate and enjoy many things we previously took for granted. For instance, the priceless sunny beaches at little cost, a world of unlimited wildlife and natural beauty that is only a drive away, the unending warmth that flows from the people, a rapidly growing middle class and an economy that is hungry for ideas and intellectual manpower, I could go on *ad infinitum*! Like in all societies, negatives of course abound! But from where I stand, I see and experience more positives than negatives!

Truth be told, the return to "Africa" at the end of the PhD journey can be a cataclysmic shift that encourages many individuals to clutch at the comforts that Europe guarantees; but I ask myself, "At what cost?" I am alive

to the fact that every case is unique and I do not intend the preceding question to be judgmental but for me I can honestly look back and say returning home has been one of the most rewarding experiences thus far. In the short time of my return to Kenya I have felt the sense of contributing meaningfully by taking part in consultancies and most recently teaching at the university. I have also received offers to make contributions at intellectual conferences and I cannot help but feel a deep sense of thirst and hunger for intellectuals in a developing country. Indeed,

the very words "developing country" remind me that there is and there will be greater need for individuals to change them to "developed country"! It is in this transformational process that you and I become relevant because ultimately Africa must fight its own battles and its salvation will come not from the strength of borrowed soldiers but from within!



Reunited again with his daughter



Workshop on Language and Religion

By Jean Pierre Boutché

The University of Bayreuth had an interdisciplinary workshop on “Language and Religion” with the aim of bringing doctoral students together and giving them the opportunity to share and discuss their ongoing projects, thereby facilitating exchange beyond disciplinary boundaries. The workshop, which took place on 5 February 2015, was specifically organized by PhD candidates Carolin Dix (*Germanistik*) and Jean Pierre Boutché (BIGSAS, *Afrikanistik*) under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Karin Birkner (*Germanistik*), Prof. Dr. Gabriele Sommer (*Afrikanistik I*) and Prof. Dr. Dymitr Ibriszimow (*Afrikanistik II*).

Prof. Dr. Ibriszimow, BIGSAS Dean and Chair of the Department of African Linguistics (*Afrikanistik II*), opened the floor with a presentation of the results of an interdisciplinary research entitled “The power of prayer: Rituals, language and cognition in African Christian churches” which was aimed at understanding the role language plays in the religiosity of the concerned churches from linguistic and religious studies perspectives. Grounding on the cognitive semantic theory and methods, the study described the meanings of religious lexemes in Yoruba and English and examined the role of the language used (Yoruba and/or English) in religious practices in the cognitive conceptualization of religious concepts by the adherents.

With her paper entitled “Performing politics at Hora Arsedí (Ethiopia)”, Serawit Bekele Debele took the discussion closer to interactional

language practices by analysing speeches at the annual thanksgiving ritual of *Irreecha*. *Irreecha* is celebrated at the sacred lake of Hora Arsedí, Oromia region of Ethiopia, where state politicians avail themselves and make speeches that motivate the participants to support the regime in its effort to develop the country. They also use the site to preach peace, unity and conviviality. In this study, she argued that such speeches by politicians transform the religious ritual into a religio-political performance that challenges the tenability of the dichotomy between the two realms.

As to complete the list of beliefs, Idris Simon Riahi presented his research on the conceptualisation of witchcraft which gave a cultural and cognitive linguistic insight into the discourses on this phenomenon in Southern Ghana. Special regard was given to nosological interpretations of witchcraft, both on the surface structure, i.e. in the form of visible argumentation, as well as in deep structure where he aimed at investigating whether the (metaphorical) target domain of witchcraft is shaped after nosological notions in the source domain.

In the line of investigating the making of meaning, Uchenna Oyali shared his research on “The conceptualization of ‘holy’ in Igbo”, where he attempted reconstructing the strategies and techniques adopted by the translators of *Bible nsò: Union version* (1913) in creating the Igbo equivalent of “holy”. He achieved his goal by



Serawit Bekele Debele



Idris Simon Riahi



Uchenna Oyali



Carolin Dix



Jean Pierre Boutché

identifying the equivalent of “holy” as given in the Igbo translations of the Bible (“*nsọ*”), and setting up the cognitive model profile of “*nsọ*” as used in the Bible (Christian context) vis-à-vis outside the Bible. Thus he was able to reconstruct how the meaning of “*nsọ*” was extended to now include certain profiles of “holy” which it did not have.

Carolin Dix, a specialist of German linguistics interested in language use in the church context, took the turn with her paper entitled “Die Predigt als kommunikative Gattung” (Sermon as a communicative genre). It provided a qualitative analysis of the interactional structure of preaching in the Christian Churches in the German-speaking context. Her ongoing doctoral research the aim of which is to fill lacking and detailed description of the sermon as communicative genre uses a mixed methodology ranging from videographical class analysis to ethnomethodological conversation and interaction analysis.

Still in the church context but this time in a variationist perspective, I presented a paper investigating Fula spoken by non-native speakers in the city of Maroua (Northern Cameroon). A special attention was given to the process of Fula acquisition in the framework of Bible classes in a Christian Church (Seventh Day Adventist, Fuunaange Maroua), an interaction situation where the non-native speakers who usually speak a simplified variety cope with the conservative and morphologically more complex variety of the Bible they use. I showed with empirical linguistic illustration that the participants are well aware of the structural variation between the register of the Bible and the register they speak when they comment on the Bible and that they use reformulation strategies which do not only help them to consolidate the understanding but also consequently develop their competence in both varieties.



Smart Heads and Quick Feet: BIGSAS Football Club

By Renzo Baas



Two colours – one team: the BIGSAS FC taking a break from tournaments during the Football Feast in August 2015. Friends, fans and families come together to play football and party.

Founded in 2011 on the initiative of Dr. Eric Anchimbe, the BIGSAS Football Club (BIGSAS FC) has continually been a presence in the social football scene in Bayreuth. Apart from being a mainstay of the annual *Wilde Liga*, a comprehensive football league which consists of a number of different teams who compete on various levels, the orange and green of BIGSAS FC have also been involved in a number of games outside of the for-



mal league setting. Examples of this include the participation in the Post SV indoor tournament against established teams such as *Post SV* and *Roter Stern Leipzig* (where an 8th place finish was achieved), a successful game against a selected Bayreuth police team, as well as regular attendances at social events such as the *Bayreuther Interkulturelle Wochen*, and a friendly match organized by church congregations in Bayreuth and Nuremberg, which took place in the Middle Franconian capital.



Through the years, the team has successfully been led by Dr. Anchimbe, Cheikh Anta Babou, and more recently, Hanza Diman.

Although BIGSAS FC is organized as a competitive unit – regularly achieving respectable results in the *Wilde Liga* – it also serves two further purposes. Initially, the team was conceived as an extension of the Gender and Diversity Programme, aiming to unite BIGSAS members through sports. This was achieved through joint training and game



sessions (usually held at the fields close to the *Bussardweg* international student hostel where most of the BIGSAS JFs reside) and the collective support of the teams on game days. Furthermore, pre- and post-game get-togethers (which usually involved the collective cooking and eating of food as well as game analyses) formed the backbone of any match. A second important facet of the team was the integration of newcomers (first year PhD candidates) into the BIGSAS community. This was encouraged through the participation on match days itself, either by playing or supporting. As the *Wilde Liga* numbers indicate, BIGSAS has



managed some levels of consistency, especially considering the high turnover of players through the years. In most cases, players left the team due to the completion of their studies, while others missed out due to the long periods of field work.

However, BIGSAS FC has maintained a high level of participation and luckily, through the constant supply of fresh faces at BIGSAS, the football team has also profited from the introduction of new talents



and supporters. BIGSAS FC can also boast with their high degree of internationalism, with players from the African continent who are aptly aided by team mates from Germany, Spain, Afghanistan, and South America. This may be one of BIGSAS FC's biggest contributions to the *Wilde Liga* as well as possibly being the defining feature of the team itself. As it is our tradition, BIGSAS FC will again aim at top spot in their division this year and hope for the continued support of players, fans, and the administration.



The Academia Meets the Society: Cooperation with the Locals

By Jennifer Scheffler (Alumna)

In the last months, several initiatives on top of the already existing ones were started with the aim to help to create a more realistic and differentiated image of the African continent in public discourse. There will be a publication summarizing some of the outcomes of BIGSAS@school (see also pp. 30 “Talking African Fashion: BIGSAS@school at *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium*” by Linda Besigiroha and pp. 32 “A friend told me that Africans live with lions’: BIGSAS@school Project team meets the students of *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium*” by Carline Liliane Ngawa Mbaho). Two meetings took place with journalists from the local newspaper *Nordbayerischer Kurier* and there are several ideas of how we could work together in the future. They offered BIGSAS students the opportunity to be in charge as editors-in-chief for a day for a special issue of the newspaper. On top of that, JFs were encouraged to write and publish articles in cooperation with journalists in both the print version and the webpage of the

paper. BIGSAS JFs are also working on a system to alert the journalists when something important is happening in Africa that might be of interest for the Bayreuth public.

Another cooperation is being developed with the University of Bayreuth’s Center for Teachers’ Education. In the course of their new programme to train teachers to work with diversity in the classroom and in society, there will be different offers for students and teachers to learn more about Africa.

I am looking forward to be part of these initiatives in the future and invite all members of BIGSAS to engage as well. I love academic discussions and the joy of penetrating a topic to its core on an abstract level. However, I strongly believe the true challenge lies at the interface of academia and society, at communicating knowledge, ideas and concepts to a wider public.



Meetings of BIGSAS and the team of *Nordbayerischer Kurier* in 2015



Salongespräch with Josie Dixon (4 to 5 December 2014)

By Alžběta Šváblová

A *Salongespräch*. One of the words that we in BIGSAS always use in German, even if the whole conversation is in English. It sounds so inviting, so promising. It brings to mind a picture of closed circles in France of 17th and 18th century, where the intellectual discussion and academic exchange flourished. Where inspiring personalities talked about literature and philosophy. Places of education, but also of amusement and social exchange.

In BIGSAS, we picked up this tradition. Every year, a number of visiting scholars and personalities come for workshops or seminars and since they usually have an interesting background and a story to share, we always try to “catch” them for an informal talk like this. I remember many cosy evenings in a circle of a few girls (yes, *Salongespräche* started as a ladies-only event), listening to inspiring life stories, secret tips for self-management or discussions on how to combine an academic career with a family. In the course of time, *Salongespräche* became a popular and a widely attended event – as was the one with Josie Dixon.



Josie Dixon, photographed during a workshop at BIGSAS

It was a cold December day. Second day of the workshop on academic writing Josie was giving. The programme of the workshop was quite full, so we decided to have the *Salongespräch* during the lunch break, to keep the evenings free. Everything was organized: coffee and cakes were ready, pizza was ordered, people started to gather in the corridor, just waiting for the door to open. We were running a bit late with the morning session of the workshop, but nobody worried about it. There were so many things to discuss.

Twelve thirty-five. I checked my mobile phone again. Where is the pizza? They were supposed to be here at half past... I checked again. Nothing. Maybe they are late because of the snow. Finally, an incoming call! From my husband, however. I slipped out of the seminar room to answer the phone: “Hey dear, did you order ten big pizzas? I guess it must be a mistake...” “Oh no... *Mist!* Instead of bringing the pizzas to BIGSAS, the delivery man sent them to my residence! It is going to take at least another half an hour...”



In the meantime, the workshop session came to an end and then more people joined in. I explained the situation to Josie. Without missing a beat, she suggested simply to start the talk and leave the “lunch part” for later.

After a short introduction, Josie gave us more information about her background. After her studies of English Literature, she started her career as a trainee at the Cambridge University Press and climbed the ladder up to the position of Senior Commissioning Editor in Humanities and Social Sciences. Next, she moved to Palgrave-Macmillan as Publishing Director. An impressive record indeed.

Then, a lot of questions came: What is the best way to enter the publishing business? Why did you decide to leave the job and start your own consultancy business? Was it difficult? What is the best strategy for writing a good article and getting it published? The answers elicited more curiosity and further questions. An hour passed and we hardly noticed. This lady is amazing. And a true professional.

In the end, even the refreshments came. People swarmed around the classroom, chatting, laughing and enjoying their lunch. There were so many topics to discuss that we would have needed the whole day. But it was time to resume the afternoon session of the workshop. One more heartfelt thank you, one more applause and we went back to work.

On my way home, I went through the day in my mind once more. I learnt so much. How to get articles published, how to edit and polish the texts. But not only that. Every time I meet someone so inspiring, like Josie, I feel empowered. Everything is possible – just do what you love, work hard and be ready for challenges.

I felt so happy. But then, I thought, when I get home, kiss my husband and my little daughter, I’ll have to bear a bunch of jokes about the false pizza delivery. Never mind, this was another lesson learnt from the day: No matter how well you plan, do not forget that life happens... Just keep cool and enjoy what is coming.



Tourist, not Migrant!

By Délia Nicoue (Alumna)

The use of maps for a cognitive representation of space, and for orientation is not a common practice among many Africans. From my Beninese background and also based on insights from my field research among several African migrants, especially Ethiopian female migrants, the use of maps is an exception even among those who have to find their way in new environments in their countries of destination.

Doing research in foreign countries does not only pose language challenges but also challenges on how one negotiates one's way through unfamiliar territory. In instances like that, the map comes in handy and learning to read it becomes even more vital. During my fieldwork in "cities of transit" and destination of Ethiopian and Eritrean migrants such as Dubai, Istanbul, Rome and Crotona, the map was more than an instrument of cognitive orientation in those cities, whose winding and complicated street networks were unfamiliar to me. As a result, I choose to build on my map, whose language I learn to speak in order to better practice what geographers may call "the cognitive representation of space".

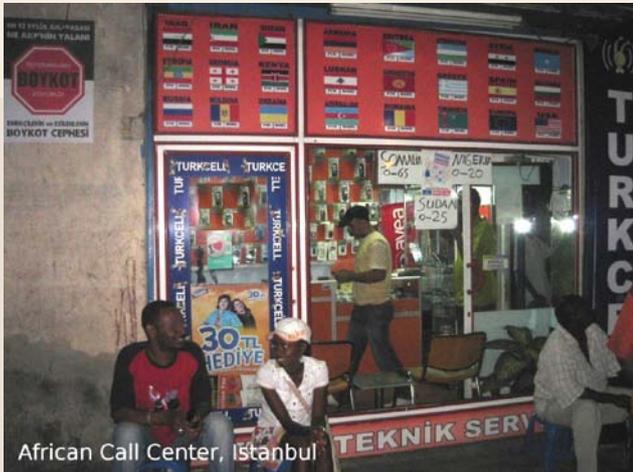
Mohamed, my guide and field assistant in Istanbul during my field work in 2010, is a well-established Sudanese "migration assistant" in the Turkish megalopolis. Some will call him a smuggler; others may see him as a *Fluchthelfer* (the escape agent), a glorious figure in Germany during the era of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). I got the



August 2010: New comers in Mohamed's apartment, *Kumkapı* (Istanbul, Turkey)

contact to this "migration assistant" through one of his former Ethiopian "customers" who succeeded in realizing her dream of reaching a European country, Germany. On the day of our initial meeting, Mohamed, who has been living in Istanbul since 2001, insisted on meeting me at my guest house near *Taksim* Square, despite my attempt to convince him of my ability to find my way to his place in *Kumkapı*, which is about 8.7 km away from my guest house. My intention to personally locate Mohamed's place was informed by two reasons. First, because I was the one who needed his services and second, because, of course, I also trusted my map to help me navigate across the mega-polis of Istanbul.

Mohamed's favorite meeting points are McDonald's restaurants, which are significantly scattered across



August 2010: African Call center, *Kumkapı* (Istanbul, Turkey)



March 2011: With Eritrean informants at the sea front, Crotona (Italy)

the city. When he picked me up from the McDonald's at *Taksim Square*, we took a *Dolmuş* (shared taxi) to the very busy *Mustafa Kemal Caddesi*. As we were walking on the crowded boulevard down toward the *Langa Hisarı Caddesi*, I colored this street on my Istanbul map, to the astonishment of my guide. This street was later to be the reference point for my orientation into the "African" neighborhood in *Kumkapı*. I learnt subsequently, that neither Mohamed nor other African migrants I encountered have ever taken note of the street signs in the places where they live and conduct their daily businesses. This came to light when several efforts to have Mohamed help me to find my way around the high-end neighbourhood, which is situated behind the flashy shopping, hotels and restaurants area of *Aksaray*, proved futile.

After two weeks in the field, I had to admit that in the face of the confusing nature of these alleys, my capacity to familiarize myself in the busy, narrow and dark alleys of *Kumkapı* was limited despite having a map. As I kept wandering on/in the streets

of Istanbul day after day with my map and my field note book, it dawned on me that these objects only served the purpose of distinguishing me from the "others", *Cikolata* people, whose daily life and routine I was trying to track in cities of transit migration, where African migrants mostly have a very dodgy reputation.

On subsequent field researches that I conducted in Crotona (South Italy) and later in Dubai, the map became a kind of protective shield, which I used not only to find my way, but rather as a conscious means of distinction, especially in the south Italian town Crotona. In this town, many of the young black women were mostly Nigerian migrants involved in prostitution – very visible throughout the town. Therefore, my map became a sign of distinction from other black women. I carried it everywhere I went and referred to it time and time again. Nevertheless, the will to appear as a tourist, and not as an African migrant, did little to prevent the humiliating and slanderous harassments from the local Italian men, who kept asking: "How much?"



Turkish or German? – My *Döner Kebap* Challenge

By Justice Arthur

I have always been kind of a food enthusiast – always looking forward to sampling local cuisines of places I visit. Before coming to Germany in April 2013, I had the impression that all that this country had in offer, gastronomically, was beer and sausage. This was informed by the Anglo-Saxon stereotypical portrayal of the German people as *Lederhosen* wearing, beer drinking and sausage eating. True to this perception, the first thing I fell in love with foodwise was the *Bayreuther Bratwurst*. To this day, *ein Paar Bayreuther Bratwürste* has continued to be a Saturday afternoon tradition of mine. Actually, I think it is the best in the region, although my *Nürnberger-Bratwürste*-loving family will disagree with me on this.

Soon after I had shed my stereotypical view, my eyes began to open to an array of cuisines that are proudly German – not to speak of my favourite Bavarian/Franconian speciality, *Haxen mit Knödel und Sauerkraut*. Hopefully, I shall blog about my love for Bavarian food in the future. But for now I want to share a challenge I undertook in the Bayreuth city centre in October 2014. I decided to compare all the *döner kebab* joints in order to come up with what I believe is the best *döner* place in the city centre. My interest in this fast food variety was inspired by the fact that in spite of its Ottoman origins, it is a multi-billion industry in Germany. Also, the *döner* in this country is arguably unique – at least in terms of the meat choice and the complementary salads. To begin with, I put together some criteria to judge the outlets, which is basically my view of what a good *döner* is as well as other pertinent parameters.

Personally, I think the best *döner* should have tasty meat (whether beef or turkey), it must not be greasy, the vegetables must be fresh, the ingredients must be uniquely fused and the bread crunchy. Aside from this, the outlet must have friendly staff and a good enough dining area.

Next, I set out for my adventure which lasted for a week, visiting the following shops in the process: “Royal Kebap Haus”, “Döner II”, “DöneRIA”, “ADANA Imbiss”, “Aksu Döner”, “Sahin Döner”, “Memo’s Berlin Döner”, “Kebaphaus Istanbul” and “ANADOLU Imbiss”. After grading and comparing all of them, it was obvious to me that four outlets, “Royal Kebap Haus”, “Aksu Döner”, “Memo’s Berlin Döner” and “Anadolu Imbiss” stood out, which led me to another week of experimentation in order to really come up with the best *döner* joint. As a matter of fact, it was at times very difficult because there were days I had to eat *döner* for both lunch and supper, but I was determined to see the challenge through. After the second week, I came up with my subjective judgment of the best place to pick your *döner*, whether you are new to Bayreuth or a local coming to the city centre for weekend shopping. Yet, in order to be sure of my pick, I took two of my colleagues, Azza and Serawit, to this place for their judgments too. Whereas the former totally agreed with me, the latter was not so sure about the place, although she enjoyed the taste on offer. In the end, I say without a shadow of doubt that “MEMO’S BERLIN DÖNER” is the best *döner* place in the centre of Bayreuth. Eureka! Now bring on the challenge!



Educating beyond the **U**niversity

By Jennifer Scheffler (Alumna)

Most of us BIGSASians are trained to become researchers and lecturers in universities around the world. But we all know very well that there is a world beyond the academia. Many of the research topics we are working on are of significant relevance to this world. This is equally or even more true for our experiences commuting between Germany, different African countries and many other parts of the world, communicating across cultural and disciplinary boundaries and building and cultivating networks. Our research results as

I know of quite a few of BIGSASians – Africans as well as non-Africans – who do exactly this. While many of us engage in different ways on a private basis e.g. in churches and other associations, there are a number of examples of initiatives within the BIGSAS-framework with a focus on outreach to society, even more if you include all activities by the Institute of African Studies (IAS) and *Iwalewahaus*. These include the BIGSAS Journalist Award, the BIGSAS Literature Festival, Cinema Africa!, the BIGSAS FC and BIGSAS in Town.



Junior Fellows present their home country during a BIGSAS@school meeting



Meeting and discussing with pupils is also interesting for the Junior Fellows

well as our professional and personal experiences and knowledge should not be found in libraries and scientific conferences alone.

On the other hand, it should be part of our experience while being part of BIGSAS to engage in and with the German society and to give back a little of the great opportunities we are offered here in Bayreuth.

Another very prominent example is BIGSAS@ school. Many Junior Fellows and Alumni have been part of this programme in which we meet and discuss with pupils from local schools. There were meetings with student groups that took a couple of hours up to cooperations that lasted for more than a year (see also pp. 30 “Talking African Fashion: BIGSAS@school at *Markgräfin-*



Wilhelmine-Gymnasium” by Linda Besigiroha and pp. 32 “A friend told me that Africans live with lions’: BIGSAS@school Project team meets the students of *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium*” by Carline Liliane Ngawa Mbaho).

Not surprisingly, we did find that there is not a lot of knowledge about Africa and the perception of the continent is dominated by stereotypes, negative images of war, poverty, disease and crime as well as exotic and romantic ideas about landscapes etc.



BIGSAS Alumni and Junior Fellows guide the tour “Bayreuth meets Africa”

The notion of Africa as a very diverse continent with many countries, cultures and specific potentials and challenges is not very developed. This is, of course, not only true for kids in primary and secondary schools, but can be found almost anywhere: on television, in films, school textbooks and newspapers, in public speeches and in private discussions with family and friends. We should all

see it as one of our tasks to help to educate about Africa beyond the academic world. Last autumn I had the opportunity to teach at the so-called “Studium Generale” at the adult education center (*Volkshochschule*) in Nuremberg. There were four classes, mostly consisting of senior citizens and there were eight hours in each class to discuss about Africa. After an overview that illustrated the huge diversity of the continent in terms of culture, resources, history, economy and politics, the focus was on current issues such as economic



Junior Fellows during a project at *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine Gymnasium*

growth, migration, education, the demand for electricity and so on. In the last session the group discussed the images of Africa and Africans that people in Germany carry and the way Africans are talked about. It was a very interesting and fruitful experience to work and exchange with people, who were quite keen on learning more about a continent they knew little about.



Visit to *Berlinale* 2015

By Mbaye Seye & Yvette Ngum

Two Junior Fellows, Mbaye Seye and Yvette Ngum, took part in one of the biggest film festivals, namely the *Berlinale*, one of the “A-Festivals” (Festivals with international participation accredited by the *Fédération Internationale des Associations de Producteurs de Films* (FIAPF)).

The first edition of the *Berlinale* was held in Moscow in 1932. It has subsequently been held in Germany since 1935 under the famous name *Internationale Filmfestspiele* Berlin. The *Berlinale* holds every February in the German capital with a large spectrum of films/screenings from around the world.



65th *Berlinale* International Film festival: Mbaye Seye and Yvette Ngum behind the cinema *Akademie der Künste*

During this festival, filmmakers and superstars across Africa, Asia, Europe and the US showcase their latest products to an international audience. Important activities include movie projections, debates, symposia, fora, round tables, and interviews with filmmakers, TV spots with celebrities and an exhibition of film products (sound mixers, images, camera shots etc.). In the programmes were “Wettbewerb”, “Berlinale Special”, “Panorama”, “Forum”, “Perspektive”, “Deutsches Kino”, “Berlinale Shorts”, “Generation”,

“Retrospektive”, “Berlinale Classics”, “Forum Expanded”, “Native”, “Berlinale Talents”, “Berlinale Goes Kiez” and “Kulinarisches Kino”.

Interesting but challenging, our activities began daily from 5 am queuing for tickets into the cinema halls. Through the beautiful city of Berlin, we moved by tramway from the hotel near the train station *Berlin Hauptbahnhof* to *Potsdamer Platz* for the tickets and from *Zoo-Palast* to *Haus der Berliner Festspiele* to watch the chosen films. Indeed, such



65th *Berlinale* International Film festival: Yvette Ngum, Flora Gomes, Jean-Pierre Bekolo and Mbaye Seye (L-R)



Queuing for the coveted tickets

beautiful experiences explain why the *Berlinale* is referred to as an “A-Festival” not only in Europe but also across the globe.

During the festival, we had the opportunity to encounter and discuss with famous filmmakers such as the African film directors Jean-Pierre Bekolo from Cameroon and Filipa César and Flora Gomes from Guinea. Attending this festival has been useful, even more so, as both of us are conducting our doctoral research on African cinema.



Maayi Bee Waati¹

By Jean Pierre Boutché

Maayi bee waati

Dead first type and dead second type

Ba waali bee weeti?

Are they different and like day and night?

Hebtan-am ko senndi di

Tell me what differentiates them

Pullo wi'i o anndi:

The Fulani said he knows:

Neddo, o mo maayan,

The Human dies first type,

Ndabba boo nga waatan.

And the animal dies second type.

Gaazoowo wi'i o anndi:

The preacher said he knows:

“Allah, o mo senndi,

“God is the one who differentiated:

“Juldo, o mo maayan,

“The believer dies first type,

Kaado boo mo waatan”.

The unbeliever dies second type”.

Sey henndu mawndu fuufi,

Then sudden wind gust,

Mbulwuldi ta'i kiita.

And the dust closed the debate.

Maayi bee waati,

Dead first type and dead second type

ba yiite bee naange

Are like the fire and the sun.

¹ The poem is in the Adamawa dialect of Fula (ethnonym: Fulfulde), mainly spoken in Cameroon and Nigeria.



Wagner and the Voodoo Priest

By Serawit Bekele Debele (Alumna)

In February 2014, we (JFs) received a call for papers for a conference organized by Dr. Magnus Ehtler and Prof. Dr. em. Ulrich Berner of the Department of Religious Studies on the theme “Wagner and the Voodoo Priest: Sacred Performances in Bayreuth and Elsewhere”. When it was announced, most of us working on African religions did not know how we could possibly contribute to the discussion on the theme that evoked Wagner and the voodoo priest. One hardly thinks of Richard Wagner in connection with African religions practiced both on the continent and in the diaspora. Back in the days he lived, Africa was probably so far away from his imagination as he was and still is unknown to most people in Africa. On the other hand, it is well established that religion and music are intrinsically interwoven. For instance, the discussion on spirit possession and trance cannot do without music because the two largely depend on music for the invocation of spirits. Opera being one genre of music, scholars on the area have posited that one could compare it to some performances in some parts of Africa that involve music like *vodum*. Here, at the heart of this interweaving of opera and religious performances, one finds the link between Wagner and the voodoo priest.

One of the talks was prominent in capturing this link between the voodoo priest and the opera guru. In Dr. Magnus Ehtler’s exposition, the thread that connected the two was traced using different examples but Christoph Schlingensief was very central in connecting Africa and Richard Wagner.

Christoph Schlingensief (1960 to 2010) was a German artist who staged the “Parsifal” in the Bayreuth Festival at the *Festspielhaus* for three years, from 2004 to 2007, and played the influential role that brought Wagner closer to Africa and/or Africa to Wagner. He did so by introducing some African religious performances for which he chose blacks to act out. This controversial production was received with mixed feelings but it did the work of bringing the two performances closer. For us Junior Fellows, this became a thought provoking deliberation that opened our eyes to recognize the connection of what otherwise seemed unlinked. The workshop stretched our imagination showing that Richard Wagner of Bayreuth is in Africa as much as Africans are in Bayreuth of Richard Wagner. More so, due to the foundation called “Opera Village Africa” (*Operndorf Afrika*) which Schlingensief set up in Burkina Faso, Wagner’s musical influence lingers on Africa as we line up at the *Festspielhaus* to be enchanted by his magnificent composition. Who would have thought Wagner as yet another strand of link between Africa and Europe?



“Welcome to Germany!” – Junior Fellows and the Bayreuth Community

By Musa Ibrahim

The focus on Africa is the gatekeeping word for BIGSAS. The existence of such an academic institution of African Studies does not only increase the population of diverse African nationals in Bayreuth but also makes them part and parcel of the society. But still, not every person outside the academia in Bayreuth and indeed in Germany is aware of the diversity in BIGSAS, as well as the heterogeneity of Africans in their midst and the African continent at large. Africans living here are often stereotyped as asylum seekers; this is escalated even more with the increasing influx of African refugees in recent years. Some of us have experienced the local reaction towards Africans in myriad ways.

One beautiful evening in September 2015, five of my African colleagues and I went to a restaurant located on the *Maximilianstrasse* for dinner. As we were entering, a middle aged German man was leaving the restaurant, and since we were many, we stepped back and gave him the way to exit first. As he stepped out, he paused, looked at us and said, “Welcome to Germany!” in a tone that seemed to suggest that we were lucky to have made it to Europe when hundreds of Africans are perishing in the seas. That might not necessarily be his intention but we all read it that way. If we guessed the meaning of his remarks right, I think we have to be fair to him that it is a popular “truth” and an easy way of understanding Africa and Africans based on the mainstream media projection which tends to



BIGSAS in Town 2015, JFs and Alumni giving the tour “Africa meets Bayreuth”

focus on a particular image of Africa and Africans while neglecting others. That remark became the topic for discussion throughout our time in the restaurant. We deliberated on the frequent stories of African migrants dying in the Mediterranean Sea in their desperate attempt to cross to Europe. Of course, much of the discussion was about the neglect of success stories about Africans’ engagements in Europe due to the over-emphasis on the negatives. There are many people who are yet to understand that not every African in Germany came through the same way or even more, that not all Africans on the streets of Bayreuth are asylum seekers. The fellow we ran into at the restaurant might have read in the papers that there are many African professionals and academics in Bayreuth. If he had stayed back and opened a conversation, he might have discussed with us the topic he just generated for us to grumble about alone.



BIGSAS JFs together with the students of *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium*

Based on this experience with the person, in this short article, I would like to highlight the need for more participation of BIGSAS Junior Fellows in social events and collaborations with other institutions to nurture a better understanding of African diversity both on the African continent and among Africans in the diaspora. Needless to say that BIGSAS management and some Junior Fellows have been engaging in a variety of societal reorientation programmes that have tremendously helped in tackling challenges and misunderstandings as well as improving social relationships with non-academic members of our host community. Programmes like BIGSAS in Town and BIGSAS@school are playing great roles in creating awareness about Africa and Africans as well as fostering mutual understanding with the locals. Similar achievement has been recorded with BIGSAS Football Club package of social activities through our participation in local league tournaments and friendly matches.

some of our “leisure” or “recovery” time to such collective interests and socially oriented events in BIGSAS. Our participations as Junior Fellows in social events will indeed not only create awareness about our presence in Bayreuth and Germany but also offer alternative perspectives of thinking about Africans and Africa, thereby correcting some stereotypes created by mainstream media. If we do not say it our stories will be told by others. It is about time we own our narratives!

Although we are all contending with time constraints in meeting our various academic schedules and deadlines, it is worth dedicating



JFs participating in BIGSAS@school at the entrance of *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Gymnasium*



Weddings



Alumnus Peter Narh and his wife Winnie got married on 20 December 2014 in Eldoret, Kenya.



Alumnus Gilbert Ndi Shang and his wife Biende Linda got married on 9 May 2015 in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

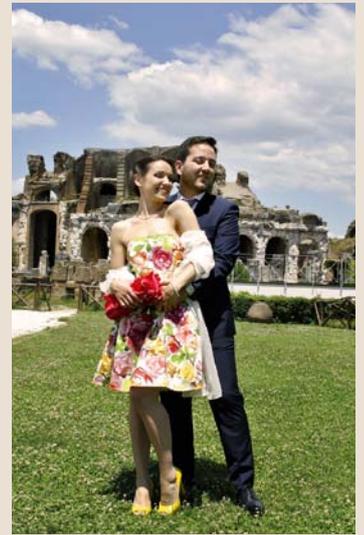


Lohna Bonkat and her husband Jonathan Polit got married on 6 September 2014.





JF Serena Talento and her husband Alessandro got married on 18 June 2015 in their home town Santa Maria Capua Vetere. They had a wedding lunch in front of the town's old amphitheater and their wedding dinner in Vietri sul Mare (Amalfi Coast).



JF Uchenna Oyali and his wife Chidimma Faustina got married on 10 October 2015.



Welcome Days in 2014 and 2015

BIGSAS officially welcomes its new Junior Fellows regularly at the beginning of the summer and winter semester. In 2014 doctoral students from four continents were admitted. 19 Junior Fellows from Afghanistan, Benin, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Sudan and the

USA began their doctoral studies at BIGSAS. The following year 2015 BIGSAS grew with 15 new Junior Fellows from Cameroon, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda and Zimbabwe.



Welcome Day summer semester 2014



Welcome Day winter semester 2014/15



Welcome Day summer semester 2015



Welcome Day winter semester 2015/16



“WHO”: Aderemi Adegbite Visits BIGSAS

By Uchenna Oyali and Juliane Fender

Aderemi Adegbite was an Artist in Residence with BIGSAS between December 2015 and January 2016. He started his career some seven years ago when his passion for photography and search for another medium of expressing himself besides writing drove him to buy a camera. Then he started publishing his photos on his blog and Facebook page. His art has taken him to countries in Africa, South America, Asia and Europe.

The Nigerian-born artist's first impression of BIGSAS was that it is an interesting place with very accommodating people, and the JFs ambitious and hardworking. At BIGSAS, he worked on the interactive art project “The BIGSAS Family”. He sees the lives of BIGSAS JFs as writings on the chalk board: “Doing a PhD is like that: creating new ideas and sometimes having to wipe them away.” His reflections on his experience with BIGSAS throws more light on his project:

“I found the idea of the constant exchange of knowledge which goes on between Senior Fellows and Junior Fellows as a visual language vividly represented on the blackboard in one of the workstations: a grid of five parallel lines on the blackboard set the tone for the inconsistent equations and torrent of texts, in several colours that form the rhythm on the lines. Then, the blackboard



became a scholarly canvas on which I portray the BIGSAS Family. “WHO”, the project's title, was adapted from the pool of texts on the blackboard. This title posed a question without a question mark. The portraits of Fellows sitting on the text “WHO” posed the visual question: who is this or who am I? Often times, we assume that we know our family members, and take for granted many things, until we uncover new knowledge and/or things about them, after which our opinions may/may not remain the same [...]. This visual question begs for answers from the BIGSAS Fellows, regarding their colleagues

that are featured in the portrait, as part of this project.”



The artist and his exhibition, still “work in progress”



X-mas Party 2015



On 19 December 2015 BIGSAS colleagues and administrations team members came together to celebrate the end of the year at the annual Christmas party in *Iwalewahaus*. The JFs prepared

traditional food from several African countries which was enjoyed while listening and dancing to African sounds played by amateur DJ and BIGSAS JF Kamal Donko.



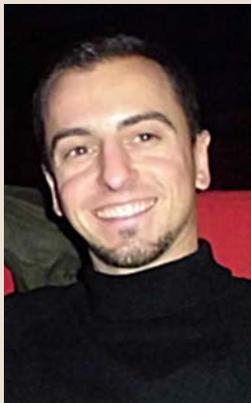


Have Your Say!

By Justice Arthur and Uchenna Oyali

Sebastian Müller

What is your impression of BIGSAS so far?



Since I joined BIGSAS I realized that there are even more events going on than I was aware of before I became JF. I think it is great to be offered this wide range of interesting events and lectures on the one hand and on the other to contribute by initiating own projects.

As a new JF I have really enjoyed the idea of the Old-Meet-New (where old JFs welcome the new JFs, see also pp. 62) and the kind of community spirit and diversity it reveals about BIGSAS. I hope in the future there will be many of such events to give us opportunities to get in touch with other JFs.

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enjoyed the idea of the Old-Meet-New (where old JFs welcome the new JFs, see also pp. 62) and the kind of community spirit and diversity it reveals about BIGSAS. I hope in the future there will be many of such events to give us opportunities to get in touch with other JFs.



James Wachira

Is this your first time in Germany? Your first impressions?

Yes! My impressions? – Varied. I arrived during winter and it was my first time to experience the cold weather. In Kenya I had been scared

so much about winter, to the extent that I had bought a lot of winter clothing. But I think the scare helped me to deal with the cold. It was a bit lonely – the only people I could interact with were those in the language centre. The two weeks Christmas break was terrible because I had nowhere to go to and the weather was not conducive. And the idea of shorter days was a great cultural shock to me. I also found out that the people are ever ready to help out. If you found yourself stuck anywhere people were willing to help you out, which is great because before I came, I was given the impression that people are mean in this part of the world.

Eliane Kamdem

What attracted you to BIGSAS?



Good question! Well, I will say that as an African linguistics student and from the information I gathered about universities in Germany, it occurred to me that Bayreuth is probably the best place to do African Studies. So basically, I chose Bayreuth because it is a good fit for me and my aspirations. Also, I heard about the graduate school and the possibility of doing intercultural studies drew me here.



Zu guter Letzt – Final Remarks

“It takes all sorts to make a world”.

So goes the slogan of this magazine.

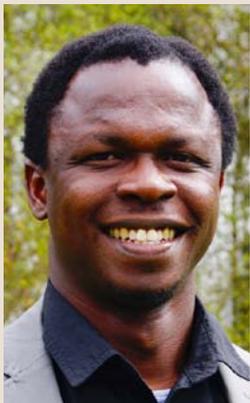
And indeed, it takes all sorts to relive the experiences. We appreciate the BIGSAS management for their support and encouragement while we worked on this issue. Susanne Hacker and Juliane Fender have been of immense help. We also appreciate Gilbert Ndi Shang, the Editor-in-Chief of the first issue for his support especially in helping us take off. We further acknowledge the support of former BIGSAS Reps Sarah Böllinger and Johanna Sarre.

The BIGSAS JFs who have shared their stories on these pages deserve special commendation. Their contributions have further showcased the beautiful mix of which our graduate school is made up. Indeed, we appreciate these stunning hearts.

To our readers, especially from outside BIGSAS, we thank you for relishing these moments with us. We believe you had fun reading these pieces and ask that you sit back and wait for the third issue, for it promises to be more eventful and interesting. Once more, we are happy to receive your comments and feedback, which you can send to the contact address and/or email at the back cover of this issue.

The editorial team:

Uche, Serawit, Jean Pierre, Yvette and Justice



Uchenna Oyali



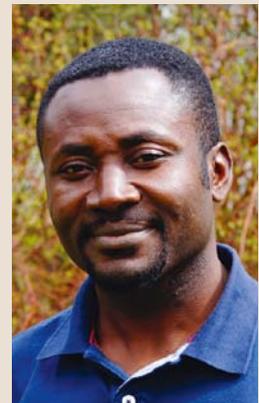
Serawit Bekele



Jean Pierre Boutché



Yvette Ngum



Justice Arthur



ANNEX CONTENTS

| | |
|------------------------|------------|
| 1 Publications | 100 |
| 2 Conferences | 109 |
| 3 Summer School | 119 |
| 4 Alumni | 120 |

1 Publications

- Abd Elkream, Tamer. 2015. Whose Dam? The Danger of Narrowly Defined Development: The Case of Kajbar Dam, Northern Sudan. *Modern Africa: Politics, History and Society* 3 (1): 95-112.
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2 Conferences

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- Abou Moumouni, Issifou, *Colloque La fabrique de l'action publique dans les pays « sous régime d'aide »*, 17 to 20 November 2015, Cotonou, Benin, Paper: "Gouvernance de la sécurité au Bénin : Logiques des acteurs et mécanismes de Co-délivrance du service public de sécurité".
- Al Hadi, Abu Baker Ahmed Abdel Rahman, *Body Discourses / Body Politics and Agency*, 5 to 7 February 2015, Vienna, Austria, Paper: "The Price of Gaining Weight and Bleaching: Perceptions and Practices of Body Modification and their Impact on Female Infertility in the Sudan".
- Al Hadi, Abu Baker Ahmed Abdel Rahman, *Spirituality in the 21st Century: At the Interface of Theory, Praxis and Pedagogy*, 18 to 20 March 2015, Lisbon, Portugal, Paper: "The prime option: spiritual Islamic healing for female infertility (FI) in Tamboul town – Sudan".
- Al Hadi, Abu Baker Ahmed Abdel Rahman, *Islam in Africa Historical and Contemporary Processes of Islamisation and Re-Islamisations in Africa*, 23 to 25 April 2015, SGAS/SSEA, Berne, Switzerland, Paper: "The spirituality of the space: rituals of healing female infertility in Muslims saints' shrines in Tamboul town, Sudan".
- Al Hadi, Abu Baker Ahmed Abdel Rahman, *6th European Conference on African Studies*, 8 to 10 July 2015, Paris, France, Paper: "Consequences of the African Woman's Silence in Being Childless: The Voice of Perceived Infertile Women in Tamboul Town, Sudan".
- Arthur, Justice, *Postgraduate Conference of the Society for the Study of Theology*, 4 to 6 January 2014, St. John's College, University of Oxford, United Kingdom, Paper: "Metaphors of the body: Building a community through preaching".
- Arthur, Justice, *FUTURE AFRICA – Conference of the African Studies Association in Germany (VAD)*, 11 to 14 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "The impact of the 'Economic Gospel': The case of Mensa Otabil's International Central Gospel Church".
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- Arthur, Justice, Workshop Religion and Space, 15 to 17 December 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "From Egypt to Ahenfie: Sacralisation of space in a Ghanaian Charismatic church".
- Arthur, Justice, XXI IAHR World Congress, 23 to 29 August 2015, Erfurt, Germany, Paper: "Loyalty and Disloyalty': Building a church through membership drive".
- Bakhit, Mohamed, FUTURE AFRICA – Conference of the African Studies Association in Germany (VAD), 11 to 14 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "Life Construction in Al-Baraka Shantytown: the decision of return back to South Sudan".
- Bakhit, Mohamed, Workshop The state of research on the new Sudans, 6 November 2014, Hatfield College, Durham University, UK, Chair of first secession.
- Bakhit, Mohamed, Justice in Sudan and South Sudan: Historical legacies and contemporary challenges, 15 to 16 December 2014, Durham University, UK, Paper: "Identity Construction in a multi-ethnic Shantytown: exploring Al-Baraka in Khartoum, Sudan".
- Bakhit, Mohamed, Initiative of the Volkswagen Foundation "Knowledge for Tomorrow – Cooperative Research Projects in Sub-Saharan Africa" Selection Conference "Social Sciences 2015", 1 to 5 March 2015, Mbarara, Uganda, Project presentation: "Identity, Nationality and Citizenship for Southern Sudanese Communities in Khartoum and Juba".
- Daniel, Antje, Lebensrealitäten von Frauen in Entwicklungs- und Schwellenländern, 17 January 2014, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Germany, Paper: "Frauenbewegungen in Kenia und Brasilien – Beitrag für eine geschlechtergerechte Gesellschaft?".
- Daniel, Antje, Kolloquium Politik von unten, 7 April 2014, Institut für Protest- und Bewegungsforschung, Berlin, Germany, Paper: "Organisation – Vernetzung – Bewegung: Frauenbewegungen in Kenia und Brasilien".
- Daniel, Antje, Workshop Theorizing social movements: Challenges and contradictions in a contested field of Southern struggles and Northern theories, 11 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Organisation (together with Bettina Engels, and Dieter Neubert).
- Daniel, Antje, FUTURE AFRICA – Conference of the African Studies Association in Germany (VAD), 11 to 14 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Panel: "African Women".
- Daniel, Antje, Weingartener Afrikagespräche 2014 "Globale Krisen – lokale Konflikte? Soziale Bewegungen in Afrika", 5 to 7 December 2014, Weingarten, Germany, Paper: "Frauenbewegungen in Kenia".
- Daniel, Antje, 6th European Conference on African Studies, 8 to 10 July 2015, Paris, France, Panel: "Beyond a rock and a hard place? African women's movements designing visions about gender roles".
- Daniel, Antje, Vorsicht Sicherheit! Legitimationsprobleme der Ordnung von Freiheit, Congress of the DVPW, 21 to 25 September 2015, Universität Duisburg-Essen, Germany, Panels: "(Un)Sicherheiten in der Geschlechterforschung" and "Feministische Perspektiven auf Sicherheit".



- Daniel, Antje, Weingartener Afrikagespräche 2015 “Mittelschichten und sozialer Wandel in Afrika: Akteure & Lebensstile“, 4 to 6 December 2015, Weingarten, Germany, Organisation (together with Sebastian Müller, Rainer Öhlschläger and Florian Stoll).
- Debele, Serawit Bekele, 6th AASR Conference in Africa (African Association for the Study of Religions), 30 July to 3 August 2014, University of Cape Town, South Africa, Paper: “Ritual and Ecology: Examining Irreecha Ritual in relation to ecology among the Oromo of Ethiopia”.
- Debele, Serawit Bekele, Workshop Religion and Space, 15 to 17 December 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: “Re-producing the holy city: An analysis of Ethiopia’s ‘Jerusalem’”.
- Debele, Serawit Bekele, The 2015 Midyear Conference of Oromo Studies Association, 28 to 29 March 2015, Munich, Germany, Paper: “Reclaiming the nation through prayer: Irreecha celebrations by the Diaspora Oromo”.
- Debele, Serawit Bekele, Religion, Violence, and Peace Conference, 9 to 11 April 2015, Wake Forest University, North Carolina, USA, Paper: “State violence, societal victimhood and religious response: A case study of the Waqqeffana movement by the Oromo of Ethiopia”.
- Debele, Serawit Bekele, XXI IAHR World Congress, 23 to 29 August 2015, Erfurt, Germany, Paper: “How loyal are members? Ethiopian Orthodox Church and Indigenous religions”.
- Diallo, Brahima, 4th International Conference on Nursing and Health, 5 to 7 October 2015, San Francisco, USA, Paper: “Problematic of providing better healthcare to child bearing mothers and infants: A case study in a Fulbe community in Mali”.
- Greven, Katharina, 16th ACASA Triennial Symposium on African Art, 19 to 22 March, New York City, USA, Panel: “Artistic Practice and Patronage” and paper: “Images of European Art Patrons in Africa: A Turn toward Self-staging and Mediation”.
- Greven, Katharina, Inclusive Museum Conference, 4 to 5 August 2014, Los Angeles, USA, Paper: “How Subjective and Self-Promoting are collections? An Iconographic Approach of Art Patrons in Africa”.
- Greven, Katharina, Creation and Actuality in Africa, 24 to 25 April 2014, Rabat, Morocco, Paper: “Indoor Images of European Art Patrons in Africa – Visual Conceptions of Self-Staging of Ulli and Georgina Beier”.
- Greven, Katharina, FUTURE AFRICA – Conference of the African Studies Association in Germany (VAD), 11 to 14 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Panel: “Future Concept Africa – A Mix of European and African Views illustrated by the commitment of Art Patrons, Collectors and Artists during the 1960s and 1970s”.
- Greven, Katharina, Forschungskolloquium zur Kunst Afrikas, 11 November 2014, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany, Paper: “Phantasie Afrika – Die (Selbst-) Inszenierungen Europäischer Kunstpatrone in ihren Archiven zur Zeit der Moderne”.



- Greven, Katharina, Indigenous Modernisms: Histories of the Contemporary, 11 to 12 December 2014, Wellington, New Zealand, Round table with Chika Okeke-Agulu and Nicholas Thomas about “The Legacy of Ulli Beier and Georgina Beier in Nigeria and Papua New Guinea”.
- Greven, Katharina, “Nostalgia Isn’t What It Used to Be.” Poetologies of and Theory as Nostalgia, 17 to 18 April 2015, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany, Paper: “Longing for a New Home: The ‘Fantasy Africa’ of the German Art Patron Ulli Beier and his wife Georgina Beier in their Archive”.
- Greven, Katharina, African Art and Artists after the Millennial Turn, 24 to 27 June 2015, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria, Paper: “The Heritage of European Art Patrons in Africa within their Archives – African Modernisms as Histories of the Presence”.
- Greven, Katharina, 6th European Conference on African Studies, 8 to 10 July 2015, Paris, France, Paper: “The Nigerian Nostalgia Project – Resisting pre-scribed Histories and Perceptions”.
- Hailu, Aychege Hadera, 6th European Conference on African Studies, 8 to 10 July 2015, Paris, France, Paper: “NGO Visions of Development in the Changing Contexts of Ethiopia 1960s-2015”.
- Hailu, Aychege Hadera, “To the East, to the South” – International Conference of Doctoral Candidates and Young Scholars of Asian and African Studies, 28 to 29 September 2015, Warsaw, Poland, Paper: “Researching Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Ethiopia in Historical Perspective: Challenges and Methodological Approach”.
- Ibrahim, Musa, Freedom. Bondage, Future, and Selves in Central Asia, the Middle East and Africa, 17 to 18 September 2015, Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca, Italy, Paper: “Freedom of and from Religious Bondage: Hausa Filmmakers and their Struggles for Freedom of Filmmaking and Expression in the Sharia Age of Northern Nigeria”.
- Ibrahim, Musa, 58th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association (ASA), 19 to 21 November 2015, San Diego, USA, Paper: “Appropriation of Religion in Film Production and Censorship in a Sharia Context: Spiritual Contestation between Indigenous Filmmakers and Religious Authorities in Northern Nigeria”.
- Issaka-Touré, Fulera, FUTURE AFRICA – Conference of the African Studies Association in Germany (VAD), 11 to 14 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: “Enacting Agency in the Global South: The Example of Muslims in Accra”.
- Issaka-Touré, Fulera, XXI IAHR World Congress, 23 to 29 August 2015, Erfurt, Germany, Paper: “A Ghanaian brand of Islam: A perspective on Gender”.
- Issaka-Touré, Fulera, 58th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association (ASA), 19 to 21 November 2015, San Diego, USA, Paper: “The Muslim family law in Ghana: a case of ambivalence and change”.
- Issaka-Touré, Fulera, Lecture “Islamic Reformism, Marital Conflict and The Secular State”, 30 November 2015, Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA.



- Kimani, Rose, Deutsche Welle Media Dialogue 2014: Kenya's Media Landscape: A success story with serious structural challenges, 21 May 2014, Bonn, Germany, Paper: "Community radio in Kenya: Navigating legislation and economics".
- Kimani, Rose, International Association of Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) 2015 Conference, 12 to 16 July 2015, Université du Québec à Montréal, Montreal, Canada, Paper: "Participatory Processes in Kenyan Community Radio – A Case Study".
- Kopecka, Ziva, Wagner and the Voodoo Priest. Sacred Performances in Bayreuth and Elsewhere, 12 to 14 February 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "Performing a *Shakti pūjā*: Hindu Firewalking *thiruvizha* in Durban, South Africa".
- Kopecka, Ziva, 6th AASR Conference in Africa (African Association for the Study of Religions), 30 July to 3 August 2014, University of Cape Town, South Africa, Paper: "Terrific Goddesses in the city. Amman worship among Hindus in Durban, South Africa".
- Lar, Jimam, 57th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, 20 to 23 November 2014, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, Paper: "Violence, Identity Politics and Vigilantism on the Jos, Plateau – Nigeria".
- Lar, Jimam, 6th European Conference on African Studies, 8 to 10 July 2015, Paris, France, Paper: "The State, Society and 'Global' Conceptions of Vigilantism: Insights from Central Nigeria".
- Lar, Jimam, 58th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, 19 to 21 November 2015, San Diego, USA, Paper: "Challenges and Innovations in Conflict Resolution and Peace-building: Cases from Plateau, Nigeria".
- Materna, Georg, Lecture "Sama reew laay jaay. Le commerce de souvenirs touristiques au Sénégal", 18 March 2014, University Gaston Berger, Saint-Louis, Senegal.
- Materna, Georg, Lecture "La culture comme ressource touristique au Sénégal : son marché, sa valorisation et sa vente", 23 March 2014, University Gaston Berger, Saint-Louis, Senegal.
- Materna, Georg, FUTURE AFRICA – Conference of the African Studies Association in Germany (VAD), 11 to 14 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "Social Work and Money as a Gift in Senegalese Tourism: Local traders and the tourism industry in conflict about market exchange and price".
- Materna, Georg, 13th EASA Biennial Conference "Collaboration, Intimacy & Revolution – innovation and continuity in an interconnected world", 31 July to 3 August 2014, Tallinn University, Estonia, Paper: "Boom and Crisis of a Cultural Market: Small-scale souvenir vending in Senegalese tourism since the 1960s".
- Materna, Georg, Anthropological Colloquium, 5 May 2015, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "Beyond Buying and Vending: Interactions between street vendors and their clients".



- Materna, Georg, Workshop Cultural Tourism and Indigenous Groups in Africa: Lessons learnt, questions raised, 2 to 3 June 2015, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "Ignorance or Resistance? About the non-appropriation of World Heritage on the Senegalese souvenir market".
- Materna, Georg, 6th European Conference on African Studies, 8 to 10 July 2015, Paris, France, Paper: "Tourism Resistance: Senegal's depreciation of the pleasure periphery".
- Materna, Georg, Conference of the German Anthropological Association (DGV), 30 September to 3 October 2015, Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany, Paper: "Fighting for the Walkway: Conflicts between the state and street vendors in Senegal".
- Maurus, Sabrina, FUTURE AFRICA – Conference of the African Studies Association in Germany (VAD), 11 to 14 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "Zwischen Schule und Rindern. Zukunftsvorstellungen von Schülerinnen und Schülern in Südäthiopien".
- Maurus, Sabrina, Conference of the German Anthropological Association (DGV), 30 September to 3 October 2015, Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany, Paper: "'Bildung für Alle' als Auslöser von Krise? Jugendliche und ihre Familien im Spannungsfeld formaler Bildung und agro-pastoraler Lebensweise in Südäthiopien".
- Mekonnen, Mulugeta Bezabih, IS Academy Migration and Development Conference, 22 to 24 January 2014, Maastricht University, The Netherlands, Paper: "Diaspora Engagement for Socio-economic Development in Ethiopia".
- Moyo, Charles, 6th International Conference on The Image, 29 to 30 October 2015, University of California, Berkeley, USA, Paper: "Media Images and the EU Foreign Policy in Africa: The Zimbabwean Experience".
- Müller, Sebastian, Seminar Krisenhilfe oder Hilfe in Krisen? Entwicklungszusammenarbeit mit Krisenländern, 26 to 28 June 2015, Weingarten, Germany, Paper: "Krisen und Glaube – Streiflichter Islamischer Nothilfe und langfristiger Entwicklungsmaßnahmen in Namen des Islam".
- Müller, Sebastian, Weingartener Afrikagespräche 2015 "Mittelschichten und sozialer Wandel in Afrika: Akteure & Lebensstile", 4 to 6 December 2015, Weingarten, Germany, Organisation (together with Antje Daniel, Rainer Öhlschläger and Florian Stoll).
- Nambula, Katharina, Transgressions/Transformations: Literature and Beyond (International CISLE Conference), 27 to 31 July 2015, University of Göttingen, Germany, Paper: "'Who would expect the Embassy of Cambodia?' Experimentation and power in Zadie Smith's The Embassy of Cambodia".
- Ngawa Mbaho, Carline Liliane, Les métropoles francophones en temps de globalisation, 5 to 7 June 2014, Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense, Paris, France, Paper: "Pratiques plurilingues dans le secteur informel de la santé à Douala".



- Nicoué, Delia, Anthropological Colloquium, 24 November 2015, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "Wilhelm Meisters Schwestern. Etappen der Entwicklung im Lern- und Migrationsprozess junger Migrantinnen zwischen Äthiopien und Deutschland".
- Oyali, Uchenna, Symposium in Honour of Professor Ozo-Mekuri Ndimele, 12 to 14 March 2014, University of Port-Harcourt, Nigeria, Paper: "The Politics of Religious Translations between English and Igbo".
- Oyali, Uchenna, 21. Afrikanistentag – Biennial Conference on African Languages, Literatures and History, 10 to 11 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "The Politics of Literary Translations between English and Igbo".
- Sabbi, Matthew, Young Researchers Workshop RESPONSibility – Sub-Saharan Africa, 20 to 21 February 2014, University of Cologne, Germany, Paper: "Reforms of the Local Government Structure in Ghana: Actors, Structures and Myths".
- Sabbi, Matthew, FUTURE AFRICA – Conference of the African Studies Association in Germany (VAD), 11 to 14 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "Twilight Actors of Local Public Administration and Reforms in Ghana".
- Sabbi, Matthew, Winter Global Public Policy Symposium, 4 to 5 December 2015, University of Riverside, California, USA, Paper: "Transnational Funding, Institutional Reforms and Mundane practices of Local States in Ghana".
- Sackey, Emmanuel, NNDR 13th Research Conference, 6 to 8 May 2015, Bergen, Norway, Paper: "Competing interests and the development of the disability rights movement".
- Scaglioni, Marta, Participation at EU Young Researchers Open Stage, 14 to 18 July 2014, CEERNT (Centre Européen d'Etude Recherches et Nouvelles Technologies), Bruxelles, Belgium.
- Scaglioni, Marta, 6th European Conference on African Studies, 8 to 10 July 2015, Paris, France, Paper: "The 'Ahib Ghbonton in Southern Tunisia and in the Media: A Case of Apartheid?'".
- Scaglioni, Marta, Urban Africa, 16 to 17 October 2015, University of Turin, Italy, Paper: "Black Tunisians and Racism in the Discourse of national Media, Urban Élites, and Local Rural Actors: The Case of 'Ahib Ghbonton'".
- Scheffler, Jennifer, Sustainability Conference 2014, 22 to 24 January 2014, Split, Croatia, Paper: "Cultural and Economic Sustainability of Community-based Cultural Tourism in the Kalahari: Heritage, Commodification and a Cultural Elite".
- Scheffler, Jennifer, 2014 International Conference on Arts, Culture, Heritage and the National Development Plan: Vision 2030, 1 to 3 October 2014, Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria, South Africa, Paper: "Cultural Tourism and Development in Southern Africa: The example of San-Speaking Communities".



- Scheffler, Jennifer, 18th General Assembly and Scientific Symposium: Heritage and Landscape as Human Values, 9 to 14 November 2014, Florence, Italy, Paper: “‘Bushman-Encounters’: Cultural Tourism in the Kalahari”.
- Seye, Mbaye, XXVI Conference of the International Association for Media and History, 17 to 20 June 2015, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA, Paper: “Women’s Empowerment in the Senegalese Films *Madame Brouette* and *Karmen Gei*”.
- Seye, Mbaye, Lecture “Afrikanische Filme mit deutschen Untertiteln: Ein komplexer Übertragungs- und Rezeptionsprozess”, 10 July 2015, 7. Afrikatage (AKWABA), Nuremberg, Germany (together with Cheikh Anta Babou).
- Seye, Mbaye, Colloquium Dynamiques culturelles dans le cinéma africain du XXI^e siècle, 27 to 28 November 2015, Universität des Saarlandes, Saarbrücken, Germany, Paper: “Moussa Sène Absa : Acteur de renouveau culturel du cinéma Sénégalais”.
- Stasik, Michael, FUTURE AFRICA – Conference of the African Studies Association in Germany (VAD), 11 to 14 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Papers: “Vernacular neoliberalism, or how the invisible fingers of the informal market regulate public transport in Ghana” and “Productive friction: planners’ visions, dwellers’ practices, and the struggles over urban spatial production in a central bus station in Accra, Ghana”.
- Stasik, Michael, PhD Workshop, 19 to 20 September 2014, University of Bayreuth/Wallenfels, Germany, Paper: “Emplacement upon arrival: the migrant, the city and the station”.
- Stasik, Michael, 2. Biennial conference of the SPP 1448, 1 to 4 October 2014, Dakar, Senegal, Paper: “Emplacement upon arrival”.
- Stasik, Michael, 57th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, 20 to 23 November 2014, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, Paper: “Vernacular neoliberalism, or how the invisible fingers of the informal market regulate public transport in Ghana”.
- Stasik, Michael, 113th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, 3 to 7 December 2014, Washington D.C., USA, Paper: “Productive friction: planners’ visions, dwellers’ practices, and the struggles over urban spatial production in a Ghanaian transport hub”.
- Stasik, Michael, Workshop Technologies of control and the limits of social creativity, 18 to 20 June 2015, University of Bayreuth/Kloster Banz, Organisation (together with Kurt Beck) and paper: “Encroachment in reverse: the unviable efficiency of Ghana exemplary bus station model”.
- Stasik, Michael and Gabriel Klaeger, 6th European Conference on African Studies, 8 to 10 July 2015, Paris, France, Paper: “Hawking in times of infrastructural renewal: technology and technique in Ghana’s new roadside spaces”.



- Stasik, Michael, PhD Workshop, 17 to 19 July 2015, University of Bayreuth/Wallenfels, Germany, Paper: "The valorisation of delay: waiting trades in the Ghanaian bus station".
- Stasik, Michael, Conference of the German Anthropological Association (DGV), 30 September to 3 October 2015, Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany, Paper: "Emplacement upon arrival: West African migrants in Accra's central bus station".
- Šváblová, Alžběta, 6th European Conference on African Studies, 8 to 10 July 2015, Paris, France, Paper: "Early warning in Liberia: what, how and for whom".
- Šváblová, Alžběta, VIVAAFRICA, 22 to 23 October 2015, Metropolitan University Prague, Czech Republic, Paper: "Reconciliation in Liberia: discourse, knowledge, consequences".
- Talento, Serena, BIGSAS Colloquium, 7 February 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "Conceptualising Translation and its Discourses within the Swahili Experience: A Critical Overview".
- Talento, Serena, 27th Swahili Colloquium, 8 to 9 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "Translating literary texts into Swahili during British rule: a recipe to construct the colony".
- Talento, Serena, 21. Afrikanistentag – Biennial Conference on African Languages, Literatures and History, 10 to 11 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Panel: "Translating (and Transferring) Africa" and paper: "The power of translation and translation as a resource of power: Examples from the Swahili experience".
- Talento, Serena, V International Symposium for Young Researchers in Translation, Interpreting, Intercultural Studies and East Asian Studies, 4 July 2014, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain, Paper: "Conceptualising Literary Translation as a Resource of Power within the Swahili Experience: Examples from Pre-colonial and Colonial Translation Practices".
- Talento, Serena, 4th IATIS Regional Workshop Postcolonial Translation Studies and Beyond: Researching Translation in Africa, 23 to 24 August 2014, University of Zambia, Lusaka, Zambia, Paper: "The discourse (and silence) on literary translation into Swahili during British colonial rule: Translation as deconsecration".
- Talento, Serena, African Studies Association (UK) Biennial Conference, 9 to 11 September 2014, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK, Paper: "Conceptualising translation from Arabic into Swahili classical poetry: The fabrication of symbolic capital".
- Talento, Serena, 28th Swahili Colloquium, 31 May to 2 June 2015, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "The merchant, the capitalists, and the usurer: Domesticating and Tradapting Shakespeare in East Africa".
- Talento, Serena, 41st Annual Conference of the African Literature Association (ALA), 3 to 6 June 2015, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Paper: "Literary Translation as a Strategy to design the autonomous Future of Swahili Language and Literature in post-colonial Tanzania".



Ungruhe, Christian, FUTURE AFRICA – Conference of the African Studies Association in Germany (VAD), 11 to 14 June 2014, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Panel: “Auf dem Weg: Zukunftsvorstellungen und -perspektiven von Kindern und Jugendlichen in Afrika” (together with Tabea Häberlein and Jeannett Martin) and paper: “South-south migration as the future of African football mobilities?”.

Zöller, Katharina, Workshop Post-Slavery Societies in twentieth century East Africa, 16 to 17 December 2014, Cambridge University, UK, Paper: “Manyema hatutoki boi”: Manyema group identification and the issue of slavery in urban Tanganyika”.

Zöller, Katharina, Urban Studies Seminar 2014-2015, 12 January 2015, Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin, Germany, Paper: “The Manyema of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) between urban margin and regional connections”.



3 Summer Schools

Abou Moumouni, Issifou, Gouvernances et actions publiques, 15 to 28 September 2014, Niamey, Niger.

Abou Moumouni, Issifou, Water Governance and Interdisciplinary Research Techniques in Post-Conflict Areas, 3 to 17 October 2015, Goulu, Uganda.

Al Hadi, Abu Baker Ahmed Abdel Rahman, Basel Summer School in African Studies: Interdisciplinarity in Area Studies: Basic and Applied Research, 29 August to 5 September 2015, University of Basel, Switzerland.

Debele, Serawit Bekele, AEGIS Summer School: Mobilisation and the State in Africa: Multiple Spaces for Political Action, 24 to 28 June 2014, Cagliari, Italy.

Issaka-Touré, Fulera, Religion as Resource, 18 to 20 July 2014, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Germany, Paper: "A Ghanaian brand of Islam: A perspective on Gender".

Issaka-Touré, Fulera, Berlin Summer School in Social Sciences, 20 July to 2 August 2015, Berlin, Germany.

Kimani, Rose, Media Analysis Techniques, 7 to 11 July 2014, Maastricht, The Netherlands.

Ngawa, Carline Liliane, MAINLY – Multimodal (INter)actions LYon: the construction and organisation of social actions, 21 to 26 September 2015, Université de Lyon, France.

Oyali, Uchenna, 26th CETRA Research Summer School, 18 to 29 August 2014, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium, Paper: "The Translation of Biblical Concepts into Igbo".

Sabbi, Matthew, AEGIS Summer School: Mobilisation and the State in Africa: Multiple Spaces for Political Action, 24 to 28 June 2014, Cagliari, Italy, Paper: "Local Public Administration and Reforms in Ghana: Actors, Structures and Institutions".

Seye, Mbaye, Internationale Sommerschule 2015 "World Literature, Global Archives", DLA Marbach, 26 July to 7 August 2015, Marbach am Neckar, Germany.

Stoppok, Manfred, Interdisciplinary PhD Training Week "Is small sustainable? Decentralizing Infrastructure and Utility Systems in East Africa", 9 to 14 March 2015, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Talento, Serena, Third Summer School for Translation Studies in Africa, 18 to 22 August 2014, University of Zambia, Lusaka, Zambia.



4 Alumni

Alumni – Thesis Defence Year 2014

| Name | Month | Country of Origin |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Alemu, Girum Getachew | January | Ethiopia |
| Geda, Gemechu | February | Ethiopia |
| Fink, Katharina | March | Germany |
| Shang, Ndi Gilbert | April | Cameroon |
| Boger, Julia | May | Germany |
| Mkumbukwa, Abdallah | June | Tanzania |
| Debelo, Asebe | June | Ethiopia |
| Narh, Peter | June | Ghana |
| Borszik, Anne-Kristin | June | Germany |
| Flosbach, Johannes | June | Germany |
| Marowa, Ivan | July | Zimbabwe |
| Traoré, Daouda | July | Burkina Faso |
| Baiyewu, Timothy | October | Nigeria |
| Bloemertz, Lena | October | Germany |
| Kuhn, Tobias | November | Germany |
| Nganga, Simon | November | Kenya |
| Glover, Evam | December | Ghana |



Alumni – Thesis Defence Year 2015

| Name | Month | Country of Origin |
|------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Firsching, Henrike | January | Germany |
| Bakhit, Mohamed | January | Sudan |
| Daniel, Antje | February | Germany |
| Scheffler, Jennifer | February | Germany |
| Mané, Fodé Abulai | March | Guinea-Bissau |
| Rudic, Christiane | April | Germany |
| Wijngaarden, Vanessa | May | The Netherlands |
| Brinkmann, Felix | May | Germany |
| Mendes, Paulina | May | Guinea-Bissau |
| Ungruhe, Christian | June | Germany |
| Abdalla, Salma | June | Sudan |
| Nrenzah, Genevieve | June | Ghana |
| Coulibaly, Marie Paule | June | Côte d'Ivoire |
| Koto, Yawo | July | Togo |
| Owino, Robert | July | Kenya |
| Debele, Serawit Bekele | August | Ethiopia |
| Otundo, Billian | November | Kenya |
| Lar, Jimam | November | Nigeria |
| Woldegiorgis, Emnet | November | Ethiopia |
| Dahlmanns, Erika | December | Germany |
| Chepngetich, Pamela | December | Kenya |
| Kamdem, Hector | December | Cameroon |
| Bonkat, Lohna | December | Nigeria |



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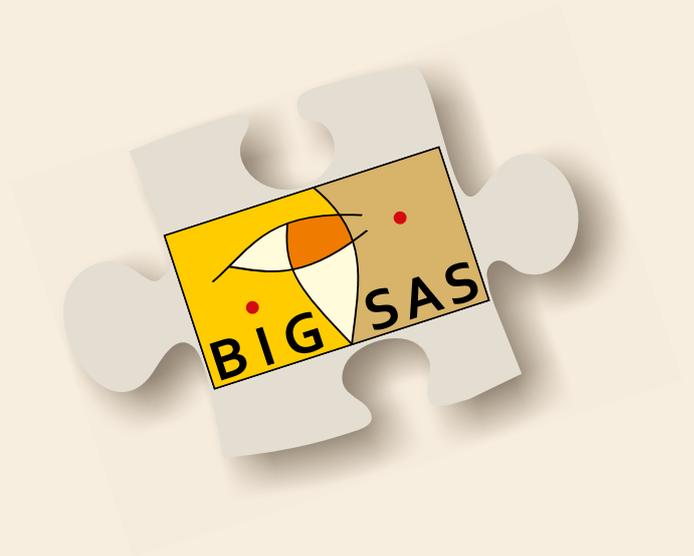
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It takes all sorts to make a world

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