

International Alumni News University of Bayreuth

Issue III/2013



International Alumni Day on Campus



**UNIVERSITÄT
BAYREUTH**

International  fice



Table of Contents

Network News

International Alumni Day on Campus3/4

Founding of Alumni Network
for Western and Central Africa in Cameroon4/5

Bayreuth International University News

Opening of the University of Bayreuth Graduate School5

Holder of the University Medal6

Research at the University of Bayreuth

Language, Identity, Post-Colonialism:
A World Full of Paradoxes7

Award of the 2013 DAAD Prize Ndi Gilbert Shang
State and Society: Narrating Transformations
in Selected African novels8

Discover our New Web Portal9

International Alumni Day on Campus

The Coordinators of the International Alumni Networks Meet in Bayreuth for the First Time



The workshop “International Alumni Networking in the Context of University Development, Strategies and Policies“, which was held as part of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) funded project, aimed at expanding support for and engagement of international alumni of the university. It began with a visit to the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) in Eschborn, as well as the Commerzbank-Tower in Frankfurt. 20 international participants, all alumni of the university, traveled from eastern-, southern-, western- and central regions of Africa, as well as from China and Germany. They gained an insight into the field of international relationship and cooperation. The following programme brought them to Bayreuth, their “Alma Mater“, after their visit to Frankfurt.

One highlight of the one-week workshop was the International Alumni Day on 14 November 2013 which took place at the University of Bayreuth (UBT). The coordinators of the UBT’s international alumni networks, their representatives and further guests were invited to the meeting. A series of presentations were held by speakers from funding agencies and international networks, such as the Bavarian Academic Center for China (BAYChina), the German Aca-

demie Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Tanzanian-German Center for Postgraduate Studies in Law (TGCL).

The event was opened by Professor Emanuel Tonye, Vice President of the University of Yaoundé I. In his speech, he presented the faculties and institutions of his university. “I look forward to good collaboration between the two universities”, he said in his speech.

Professor Stefan Leible, President of the University of Bayreuth, offered particular praise to the organisers, coordinators and alumni, all of whom, through their engagement, support the internationalisation strategy of the University of Bayreuth and the development of a worldwide alumni network.

The newly elected Vice President for International Affairs, Equal Opportunities and External Contacts at the University of Bayreuth, Professor Anna Köhler expressed: “I am glad about the great number of alumni representatives and the step towards global, scientific and economic networking of the alumni platforms. Since the establishment of the University of Bayreuth in 1975, the university has developed into a research oriented Campus-University with a

wide range of interdisciplinary fields of research. By regional and international cooperation with other universities and research institutions, the economical- and scientific transfer will be strengthened. This interaction is of high importance for science and industry at home and abroad."

Philipp Dengel, who holds a degree in business, introduced the Bavarian Academic Center for China (BAYCHINA) in his opening talk. The BAYChina supports the collaboration between Bavarian and Chinese universities and academic institutions of all scientific fields and academic levels.

In addition to the report from Philipp Dengel, Xiao Zhao from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Section 423 for China, Mongolia, detailed the range of funding opportunities from the DAAD intended for international alumni.

Further speakers at the event were Dr. Lulu Jiang, coordinator for the international alumni network for

China, established in 2012 in Shanghai. The motto of her presentation was: "Embrace the world, go global and cross borders".

"Alumni are our most important actors in changing the university education", commented Dr. Florence Indede, coordinator for the international alumni network for Eastern- and Southern Africa. Other speakers included Dr. Gratien Atindogbé, Dr. Rosalyn Mutia and Dr. Emelda Samba Ngufor, coordinators of the international alumni network in West- and Central Africa, which was launched in July 2013 in Cameroon. More talks followed by Johannes Döveling and Professor Ulrike Wanitzek, as well as Naomi Nyambura Gichuki from the TGCL and Dr. Gerd Ulrich Bauer, Institute for Intercultural German Studies. He spoke particularly about the Stakeholder Workshop and "Five Years, (2008 – 2013) of African Alumni Networking."

Text and Translation: BIAC

Founding of the Alumni Network for Western and Central Africa in Cameroon



The University of Bayreuth established its second African Alumni-Network on July 22 2013. 25 alumni from all over Africa, as well as official representatives of different institutions from Yaoundé, such as May Mahnken from of the German embassy, took part at the official launch event at the University of Yaoundé I. Professor Maurice Sosso, rector at the University of Yaoundé I, hailed the initiative of the

University of Bayreuth and the quality of collaboration in his opening speech. With cooperative funding programmes, he sees a promising opportunity for positive development in both teaching and learning at his university.

The establishment of the western and central African alumni network is a further step towards the building

of a global academic network between the University of Bayreuth and its alumni, as an essential part of the work of the Bayreuth International Alumni Centre (BIAC).

The Bayreuth International Alumni Centre supports the academic and personal exchange of ideas between scholars, alumni and students, through establishing links between international alumni groups. The focus of the one-week workshop "Project Development and Project Management" in Yaoundé and Buea was on the joint research project "Virtual Working Places for Scholars", which was introduced by Stefan Jablonski, former Vice President for

Teaching and Students at the University of Bayreuth. The project not only contributes to the improvement of academic dialogues, but also collaboration with other universities.

The event in Cameroon was part of the Bayreuth International Alumni Centre project, commissioned and funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

Text and Translation: BIAC

UNIVERSITY OF BAYREUTH GRADUATE SCHOOL

Opening of the University of Bayreuth Graduate School

A Milestone in Improving the Qualifications and Support for Doctoral Students at the University

Doctoral student Weeraya Donsomakulkij from Thailand was welcomed with a bouquet on May 14 2013, the first member of the University of Bayreuth Graduate School, as in the presence of more than 200 graduates, professors and administrative staff members from the university.

In addition to the bouquet, she was also given a budget from the university for her personal Graduate School Account. Any scientific publications shall also be supported. She has the freedom to plan how she wants to forward her research work independently, for example by visiting a congress, buying books or research materials, through an excursion or by inviting renowned scholars in the field to Bayreuth.

This is part of a fresh and trend-setting concept that Vice-president Professor Hans-Werner Schmidt, director and mastermind of the University of Bayreuth Graduate School, came up with together with his colleagues.

The Graduate School connects the structured doctoral programmes of the Graduate Centres of the University of Bayreuth and the individual doctoral programmes of all faculties under one umbrella. The

membership of the doctoral students is voluntary. As expected by the university's management, due to an increased financial flexibility during the research work, interdisciplinary exchange and a higher level at graduation, most of the 1.100 doctoral students complete their qualifications quickly.

All members are invited to help shape the design of the University of Bayreuth Graduate School, also meaning that doctoral students are brought together and recognised as a group.

<http://www.graduateschool.uni-bayreuth.de/de/index.html>

Translation: BIAC



Helga Simper

Holder of the University Medal

For decades, Helga Simper has worked voluntarily for the International Club of the University of Bayreuth.

She was chairman of the International Club from 2005 to 2011 and truly made her mark on its work. It is due to her outstanding engagement and behind-the-scenes effort, together with that of her boards, that the families of both the teaching staff as well as foreign guests of the University of Bayreuth are integrated so well into life in Bayreuth.

Thanks to her support, the International Club has been able to establish itself as a hub for members as well as a valued source of funding that works closely together with the university management and the International Office.

One of her most notable contributions was founding the International Club Award. Outstanding foreign scholars are awarded in recognition of their efforts to overcome cultural antagonisms. The prize was awarded for the first time in 2012 to Alejandro Baer, who worked for two years in the department of Culture- and Religious Sociology at the University of

Bayreuth, and is now the professor for sociology at the University of Minnesota.

Since the International Club of the University of Bayreuth was established (founding president Claudia Hoffmann), members clearly see voluntary engagement as a valuable contribution to the intercultural integration of students and scholars.

The exchange of experiences and perspectives of different cultures is the key to mutual understanding.

Text: Stabsabteilung Presse, Marketing und Kommunikation

Translation: BIAC

Language, Identity, Post-Colonialism: A World Full of Paradoxes



Dr. Eric Anchimbe

With his dissertation “Cameroon English: Authenticity, Ecology and Evolution” Dr. Eric Anchimbe laid the foundation for his further research in Bayreuth. His work concerns the socio-cultural context and pragmatic features of the English language in western Africa. His dissertation deals with the various linguistic characteristics of Cameroon English and focuses on processes of its indigenisation, as well as its place in the local socio-cultural landscape.

In his innovative work, Dr. Eric Anchimbe has created a model of filtration processes for the general description of indigenised post-colonial variations of English.

His approach considers social, linguistic and ecological conditions of the former colonial communities and maps out nativization processes of post-colonial variations of English. The model, developed by Dr. Eric Anchimbe, is adapted by colleagues.

This, along with the publication of two monographs and five works since 2007, shows him to be an outstanding scholar.

Dr. Eric Anchimbe’s habilitation dissertation, with the working title “Offers and Offer Refusals: A Postcolonial Pragmatics Perspective” investigates the strategic behaviour of communication partners in determined contexts – here: in the realization of speech acts of offers and rejection, for example in the service

sector. From a comparative perspective, he describes these speech acts in the western- and central African countries Ghana and Cameroon.

Alongside this substantial research project, Dr. Eric Anchimbe took responsibility for a range of international publications, all received with great interest, including the publication of several anthologies with international academic publishing companies, as well as the co-editing (with Richard W. Janney) of a special volume of the renowned magazine *Journal of Pragmatics*, in which the concept of Postcolonial Pragmatics is brought to a wider audience for the first time.

Linguistic pragmatics, the research of situational and contextual meaning, has for a long time been primarily based on Anglo-American research. The shift towards the multilingual and post-colonial contexts of West Africa, as well as other post-colonial areas, is a refreshing new take on the subject, and has already been taken up by further scholars.

Text: Stabsabteilung Presse, Marketing und Kommunikation

Translation: BIAC

2013 DAAD Award to Ndi Gilbert Shang

State and Society: Narrating Transformations in selected African novels



Ndi Gilbert Shang

With the 2013 DAAD award, the University of Bayreuth honours Ndi Gilbert Shang as an outstanding young scholar, not only notable for his academic achievements as part of his doctoral studies, but also for his outstanding contribution to bringing Africa research to the public.

Since April 2010, Ndi Gilbert Shang has been a junior fellow of the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS). His interdisciplinary PhD-project is at the crossroads of literature and political science and is titled: "State and Society: Narrating Transformations in selected African novels". With impressive speed and a great passion for academic and intercultural exchange, Ndi Gilbert Shang has entered German academia. By comparing francophone and anglophone novels, he surpasses the usual restrictive language and subject boundaries and renders further interdisciplinary and quality through the integration of questions of "Good Governance". His international publications "Writing/Reading in Extremity: Body Politics and the Figure of Death in Sony Labou Tansi's *The Shameful State*" and "Ngugi's Poetics of Naming."- were published in 2012 and 2013.

In general, his engagement goes well above and beyond the usually expected. In 2012, Ndi Gilbert Shang became part of a group that offers a guided city tour called "Africa in Bayreuth", where participants are offered new and innovative perspectives of the city of Bayreuth, with its history and sights.

In March 2012, he represented BIGSAS at the DAAD launch event "Welcome to Africa" in Bonn and was one of six participating members in the panel discussion "Research Cooperation: Visions and Challenges for young scholars".

Through his active participation in the project BIGSAS@school, he supports dialogue between high school scientists and young scholars from Africa and Europe, imparting new perspectives on the African continent. Sitting on the judging panel at the 2013 BIGSAS Journalism Award, he was once again able to show his commitment and expertise.

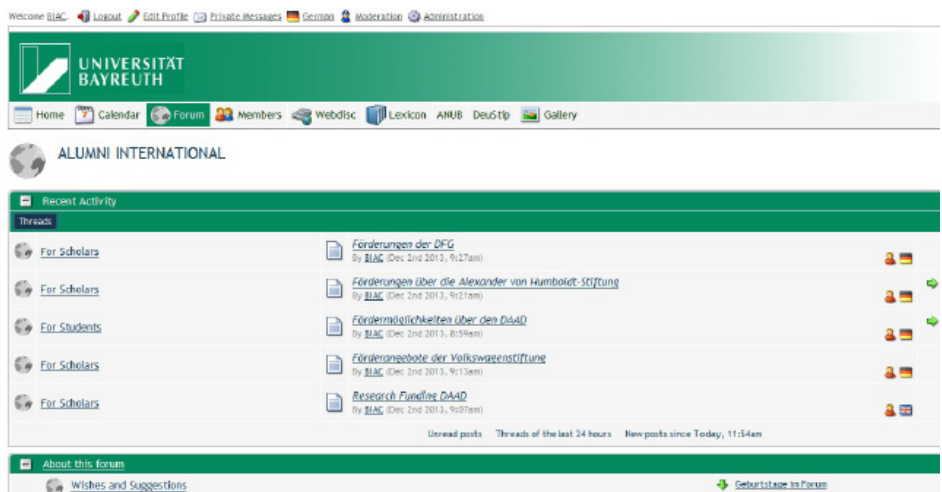
Text: Stabsabteilung Presse, Marketing und Kommunikation

Translation: BIAC

Discover Our New Web Portal for Bayreuth Alumni

Interaction with fellow alumni, an individual profile, forums on career and scholarship opportunities and news about the Bayreuth International Alumni Network: These are only some of the opportunities offered by the University of Bayreuth's new web portal for international alumni and friends.

We hope that the new portal offers you ample opportunities to stay in touch with the University of Bayreuth and fellow alumni, both on a social and professional level, and look forward to your registration:



<http://www.international-alumni-forum.uni-bayreuth.de/>



Impressum:

Herausgeber:

International Office
 Bayreuth International Alumni Centre (BIAC)
 Universität Bayreuth
 95440 Bayreuth
 V.i.S.d.P.: Dr. Arnim Heinemann

Redaktion und Layout:

Larissa Di Carmine, Birgit Slotta