

International Alumni News University of Bayreuth

Issue II/2014



Honorary Doctorate for Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o



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Maseno University at the University of Bayreuth



After Plenary Discussion of UBT faculty and Kenyan delegation from Maseno University

The University of Bayreuth welcomed and hosted a delegation of four Kenyan scientists from Maseno University (Vice-Chancellor of Maseno University, Prof. Dominik Makawiti, the Director of the Maseno Botanic Garden, Prof- John Inyango, a Social Development Consultant, Prof. Omondi Ahawo and the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Lake Victoria Basin Development Authority, Dr. Peter Abuko) from 30th June to 4th July 2014 at the second CREATE Workshop. CREATE (Consortium for Research in East African Tropical Ecosystems) is a joint initiative between both universities promoting the improvement of livelihoods in the Lake Victoria Basin. The workshop also resulted in strengthening the close collaboration between both partners.

The second CREATE workshop concluded in numerous results, such as implementing long-term goals for the Lake Victoria Basin, the aim to establishing A Flagship Centre involving Maseno University, other cooperation's and initiatives of the Lake Basin Authority. The Flagship Centre should demonstrate how to effectively implement environmental problem solving and building understanding to improve livelihoods in the Lake Victoria Basin. The participants also discussed the third CREATE Workshop scheduled for February 2015 at Maseno University. Both universities intend to extend geographically to the locations Nzoia River Basin and Ruma National Park. The hope is to integrate a broad spectrum of livelihoods by expanding to these regions, whilst keeping the interests of stakeholders locally in mind.



Prof. Dr. Stefan Leible, President of the University of Bayreuth and Prof. Dominik Makawiti, Vice-Chancellor of Maseno University

The current MOU between both partners was also extended during the second workshop and builds a strong foundation for the partnership and implementation of the projects.

http://www.bayceer.uni-bayreuth.de/CREATE/en/workshops/gru/html.php?id_obj=123922

Text: Prof. John Tenhunen, BayCEER
Shortnend version: International Office

7 Days on an International Campus and the Successful Ending of the “Bayreuth International Summer School“



Participants and lecturers from the third Bayreuth International Summer School (BISS)

Many participants coming from across the world attended the third Bayreuth International Summer School (BISS). We welcomed participants and lecturers coming from four continents and more than 14 countries, such as Brazil, South Africa and India. The first evening will surely remain memorable to all participants and lecturers from Germany and abroad, as they bore witness to the World Cup final and the festivities following the German football team's victory.

The following five days were devoted to intensive technical discussions of current research topics in small groups. A total of seven courses of the internationally acclaimed profile fields of the University of Bayreuth were offered in English: European and International Consumer Law, International Business and Management, Economic Growth and Development, Business Process Management, Advanced Polymers in Engineering and Energy, Health Politics and Policy in Comparative Perspective and International Trends in Sport Management.

Our international guests explored the baroque town of Bayreuth in the warm summer evenings and became acquainted with the German culture, networked and exchanged experiences in a variety of restaurants and beer gardens. These evenings in the university town of Bayreuth showed intense group

cohesion amongst the participants and lecturers – “Highly enjoyable and a lot of fun!”

The Summer School concluded in a trip to a pleasant, “magical” Franconian city festival in the UNESCO World Heritage City of Bamberg.

The University of Bayreuth will be providing English-speaking intensive seminars conducted by esteemed international guest scholars within the research fields to international participants during the fourth Summer School in 2015. We are already eagerly awaiting future guests coming to Bayreuth from across the world next year!

Text and Translation: International Office

The University of Bayreuth: Highly Attractive to International Scholars



In the eyes of high-flying academics beyond Germany's borders, the University of Bayreuth is considered one of the most attractive in the country. The new league table from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation puts it at number 9, and thereby amongst the nation's top 10.

The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation has ranked all German Universities according to the number of research periods spent there by foreign recipients of its scholarships and prizes, between 2009 and 2013. This figure was then presented in connection with the total number of professors at the respective institution. This is where Bayreuth stands out from the crowd: one of the very few smaller universities in Germany with such an exceptional ability to draw the top brains from the international academic market. In fact, when measured by its number of professors, Bayreuth is the smallest of the universities listed in the top 10.

The Humboldt Foundation awards scholarships and prizes to international scholars in recognition of outstanding contributions to the work of foreign institutions of higher education and research. Which university in Germany they wish to base themselves at for the duration of their research, funded by the foundation, is then at the discretion of the recipient. When a particular German university is selected time and time again by recipients, this represents a clear vote of confidence in the international standing of its research and services. A total of 70 foreign academics with scholarships and prizes from the Humboldt Foundation were welcomed to University of Bayreuth between 2009 and 2013.

"We are always delighted to be able to welcome so

many excellent international scholars to Bayreuth, all with cutting-edge research ideas for the future. Our top ranking in the league table of the Alexander von Humboldt foundation reflects not only the potency of our research, but also the close cooperation fostered here on Bayreuth campus", enthuses the university's President Dr. Stefan Leible. "This spurs us on to seek the expansion of our research capabilities and reputation at an international level, whilst ensuring that the world's top minds continue to feel well at home here in Bayreuth."

A particular boon to the services offered for international scholars at the University of Bayreuth is its "Welcome Centre", established back in 2009 and funded for many years by the Humboldt Foundation, the German Telecom Foundation and the Association of Germany Academic Foundations. The university seeks never to lose contact with its "research-alumni" when they return to their home countries either. Its strategy in this area earned it a place amongst the winners of the Humboldt Foundation's "Research-Alumni-Strategy-2014" competition. Through its much-acclaimed project, financially supported by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF), the University of Bayreuth seeks to bolster its alumni networks within its primary partner countries around the world, whilst facilitating easier access for its own international alumni in finding funding for new research projects.

Original version (in German): Press release 161/2014 of the University of Bayreuth, <http://www.uni-bayreuth.de/pressemitteilungen-html/161-Humboldt-Ranking/index.html>

Translation: BIAC

Language as the Vivid Voice of Mankind's Orchestra

Public ceremony to award honorary doctorate from the University of Bayreuth to Professor Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o

One of the most important contemporary authors, the Kenyan literary scholar, author and critic Prof. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Bayreuth at a public ceremony on 5th May 2014. The Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) nominated him for the honour. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, who has been teaching for many years as a distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine (UCI), was – according to the honorary doctorate certificate – honoured for his “outstanding to profiling African literatures, especially works in African languages”.

In his welcoming address at the ceremony, the President of the University of Bayreuth bestowed the award upon Prof. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o in the context of the African Studies at the University of Bayreuth: a “background of excellent research, interdisciplinary and intensive networking and exchange around the African continent”. The Mayor of the Town of Bayreuth, Brigitte Merk-Erbe, emphasised in her welcoming address the engagement of the world-renowned author for a “variety of cultures” and the “dynamic of being together”, highlighting the importance of African Studies at the University for the town of Bayreuth.

The chairman of the BIGSAS, Prof. Dr. Dymitr Ibrizimow, presented the honorary doctorate certificate to Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. He pointed out that the University of Bayreuth is the first university in Germany to award an honorary doctorate to the internationally esteemed author. Furthermore, it is the first time that an honorary doctorate from the University of Bayreuth has been awarded by the Graduate School for African Studies, which has links to all faculties. The deep respect and congratulations of the University of Bayreuth and the African partner universities in the network of BIGSAS go out to the recipient.

Prof. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o accepted his honorary doctorate with a passionate speech, expressing his desire for a world of variety of languages and cultures. Despite or perhaps due to globalisation,



Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o - Image rights/Bildrechte: A1-Verlag/Foto: Daniel A. Anderson/University Communication

there is a widely-held perception that there are hierarchical relationships between cultures, languages, social and ethnic groups. However, this perception is wrong. Every language, every culture is, as every other human, part of a balanced and mutual give and take. Those bridges are the reason for the dynamic. The multiple Nobel Prize-nominated author strives empathically against the “absolute dominance of European languages in the economical, political and cultural life of Africa”. The use of this language by the African middle class was strategically appropriate in the clash with colonialism. Since political independence, however, the progressive takeover of European languages, coupled with an aggressive rejection of intellectual and cultural resources on the continent.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o based his programmatic written polemic “Decolonising the mind” on these critical views. 30 years ago, in May 1984 he began to write his worldwide influential text – during a two-month guest professorship at the University of Bayreuth, which, in retrospect, became a turning point in his life. The physical proximity to the festival theatre of



Prof. Dr. Stefan Leible, President of the University of Bayreuth, Njeeri wa Ngũgĩ, Spouse of the author, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Prof. Dr. Dymitr Ibriszimow, Chairman of the BIGSAS (from left)

Richard Wagner influenced his thoughts greatly. If the world was dominated by only a few languages, it would be as if you were to reduce the orchestra of an opera by Richard Wagner to just a few brass instruments. The Bayreuth honorary doctor repeatedly emphasised in his speech the important part that music plays in his life, especially his encounters with German musical tradition. In Kenya, he tried to integrate a performance of “Ride of the Valkyries” in his play “Maitu Njugira/Mother sing for me”, but this was prohibited by African authorities. His taxi driver in California always tells him enthusiastically about the music of Johann Sebastian Bach and the Thomas Church in Leipzig. The death of every culture, every language – emphasised the Kenyan author – shrinks the global orchestra of mankind. If the honorary doctorate awarded by the University of Bayreuth helps him reminding the world about the continuously battle for linguistic diversity, he would accept it gratefully.

The variety of languages that characterise the work of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and his worldwide reception, were also reflected in his lectures on his work. The literary scholar and BIGSAS-graduate Samuel Ndogo from Eldoret/Kenya, the translator Dr. Thomas Brückner from Munich, the scientist and translator Dr. Wangui wa Goro from Great Britain, the BIGSAS doctoral student and journalist Nadja Ofuatey-Alazard from Munich as well as the literary scholar

and BIGSAS graduate Ndi Gilbert Shang from Kenya all recited texts in three different languages: in Kikuyu, the Kenyan mother tongue of the author, as they were originally written, as well as in English and German translations. Aly Keita from Mali, playing the balafon, and Cervenec from Bayreuth, playing the electric piano, filled the audience with enthusiasm with their musical interlude.

The renowned literary scholar Anne V. Adams, professor emerita at the Cornell University in New York made speech in the author's honour. She turned to the term world literature, developed by Goethe, which Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o took up in his essay “Glo-

baletics: Theory and the Politics of Knowing” – whereby he understands “globaletic” as “liberation of literature from the straitjacket of nationalism”. In her look back at the author's life work, she detailed how Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o managed to bring the term “world literature” out of the restrictions of the 19th century and to transfer it to a modern version of post-colonial literature in the 21st century.

Original version (in German): Press release 077/2014 of the University of Bayreuth, <http://www.uni-bayreuth.de/presse/Aktuelle-Infos/2014/077-Ehrendoktorwuerde.pdf>

Translation: BIAC

Climate, Environment and Vegetation in the West African Sahel

New research: it's not just global climate change, but also the actions of local that shapes the environment

Will the earth's deserts expand unstoppably? Or will vegetation penetrate into the present areas of desert? Data gathered up to now in the West African "Sahel" area, which covers the southern edge of the Sahara from the Atlantic all the way to the Red Sea, pointed to a variety of different possible forecasts. Extreme droughts in the 1970's and 1980's were seen as confirmation that an increase in the earth's total desert area was inevitable. "Desertification" was the buzz word. However, for the past two decades, an increase in precipitation in the West African Sahel has been observed. This has led to the popular opinion that the "desert is getting greener."

Land use as pivotal factor

In light of this controversy, an international research team led by Dipl.-Geogr. Martin Brandt of the University of Bayreuth investigated the development in the West African Sahel. Satellite images and data gathered over the past decades provided insight into climate and vegetation trends; field investigations brought to light local and regional-level trends. It was found that there is in fact no uniform development in the West African Sahel. It is not just the climate, but also the various forms of land use – whether farming, forestry or the building of a village – which play a crucial role in determining the current landscape and the resources that are available for local people.

"Human action, on a local level, for example the sustainable cultivation of certain types of foliage or the afforestation of woodlands, can alter the face of a landscape significantly", explains Martin Brandt. "Such actions by the local population depend far less on large-scale climatic trends than has been assumed up to now. This demonstrated why environmental and climatic research should avoid clinging to buzz words such as 'desertification' or 'greening Sahel'.

Regional differences in agriculture and forestry – Case studies in Mali and Senegal

On the basis of satellite images, the research group



found that the vegetation density increased in the West African Sahel from 1982 to 2010, particularly in Senegal and western Mali. However, there are distinct regional differences in the species of plants that successfully propagated. This applies not only to naturally growing trees, bushes or grasses, but also cultivated plants, which could be thriving due to agriculture or forestry. All in all, it appears that in West African countries – with the exception of Gambia and the Cote d'Ivoire – the forests have clearly receded, even though vegetation density has actually increased.

The field investigations by Martin Brandt concentrated on two regions in Senegal and Mali. The area around the city of Bandiagara in the South of Mali has seen a complete transformation in its vegetation over the past 50 years – many species of trees and bushes that defined the landscape in 1960 have become extinct. Faced with periods of drought, local people attempted to compensate for their losses (due to the poor harvest) by felling trees to sell timber. However, recently a highly cultivated landscape, rich in vegetation, has developed – but not only due to plentiful precipitation. "Purposeful afforestation



Dipl. Geogr. Martin Brandt and his Senegalese colleague Ameth Lecor

and the cultivation of trees on land used for farming has changed the landscape significantly”, reports Martin Brandt, and adds: “This development would not have been possible without the considerable botanical and ecological know-how of the population.” The team of Bayreuth researchers observed this change in a further region as well: in the landscape of Senegal, to the north of the city of Linguère. The region is mainly populated by nomadic Fula people, who use the area intensively as grazing land. They cut back or fell trees and bushes during the dry season to provide food for their animals. Despite the afforestation and conservation efforts sponsored by the state, vegetation reacts more favourably to climatic fluctuation. Three specific resistant types of trees now constitute more than 90 % of the tree cover in the region of Linguère.

“In the direct vicinity of the city there are fenced-off areas totalling at least 5,000 hectares, where a special type of Acacia has been planted”, explained Martin Brandt. He also points out specific examples of damage due to over-exploitation of trees. The totally deforested soil will not be easy to replenish – and is an example of how human activity can destroy vegetation, when the long-term ecological picture is not properly taken into account.

**Human intervention is conducive a differentiated landscape –
A call for research to be carried out independent of the usual buzz words**

The public research results contradict the theory that the West African Sahel is subject to progressive de-

sertification, due to worldwide climate change. They also rebut the thought that the “greening desert” with annually increasing precipitation is simply a given. This moderate trend reversal after heavy drought periods supports the increase in vegetation density, but it neither causes a return to the conditions that existed before the extreme climatic event, nor does it cause an automatic explosion in vegetation. It is, on the other hand, clear that anthropogenic factors can have a decisive influence upon the landscape and vegetation. Intervention in agriculture and forestry, based upon scientific knowledge, can significantly foster the development of a differentiated landscape.

In this fact Martin Brandt, who will soon finish his doctoral project at the University of Bayreuth, sees cause for hope: “If the forecasts of the climate advisory board of the United Nations turn out to be true, the living conditions in dry and semi-dry West African regions will tighten again – especially in the Sahel. However, appropriate concepts in agriculture, forestry and environmental protection represent our chance to adapt these climatic developments in time to reduce their human costs.”

Shortened version

Original version (in German): Press release 121/2014 of the University of Bayreuth, <http://www.uni-bayreuth.de/presse/Aktuelle-Infos/2014/121-Sahelzone.pdf>

Translation: BIAC

Migration as the “Norm and its Innovative Potential”

Talk by Bayreuth geographer Prof. Dr. Martin Doevenspeck in the German Bundestag

Emergency shelters in refugee camps, overloaded boats at sea and endless treks along dusty roads dominate the image of ‘migration’ and ‘flight’ in the media, without the two terms being clearly distinguished. Even on a political level, discussion of the cause and effect of these processes often becomes emotionally-charged and alarmist. In order to effectively address the issues facing refugees and migrants, however, a sufficiently differentiated understanding of their individual living conditions, interests and goals is required. To this end, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development organised a series of public expert talks under the title “Refugees, Migration and Developmental Policy”. The first topic to be addressed was “Forms of Migration and Flight of Humans in Developing Countries – Causes, Motivation and Scale” delivered by Prof. Dr. Martin Doevenspeck of the Geographic Institute of the University of Bayreuth, who is also vice dean of the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS). In his talk, Prof. Doevenspeck drew on various aspects of his own long-term research concerning migration processes in West Africa and armed conflicts in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa, particularly in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Addressing the Bundestag panel, Prof. Doevenspeck stressed that international migration, defined as the comprehensive relocation of one’s main living base to another country, has in fact not risen when compared to the general global increase in population.

International migrants today constitute no more than around 3 percent of the world’s total population, as was the case in 1960. It is “internal” migration, i.e. migration within the borders of a single country, which has gained momentum. It is estimated that there are currently around 760 million internal migrants worldwide, living in the most populous countries such as China, India, Indonesia, Nigeria and Brazil. Migration within the confines of greater regional units is also considerable. Seventy percent of all international migrants from West African countries remain in West Africa.

Prof. Doevenspeck emphasised that in the majority



Prof. Dr. Martin Doevenspeck

of cases, migration is not forced by poverty or violence, but rather is an expression of an individual’s life choices. He called for policies that view migration as an expression of personal decisions motivated by the hope of bettering of one’s living conditions or achieving a desired lifestyle. Globalisation is bound to lead to an increase in migration motivated by such considerations.

“The prevention of migration cannot be a political goal”, explained Prof. Doevenspeck to the Bundestag Committee. Economic progress in poorer countries is set to free up the necessary financial resources for personal mobility. On this point he added that migration processes are often viewed from a skewed perspective by those from wealthy western industrialised countries. Geographical mobility in the northern hemisphere is hailed as a symptom of success, wealth and freedom; when the same happens in the southern hemisphere, it is seen as a consequence of poverty and disorder.

This implies the idea that migration in southern

countries is somehow a deviation from 'normality', an issue to be addressed through political means. However, this whole outlook is based upon an outdated notion of residence, said Prof. Doevenspeck. Recent observations point to a 'generalisation' of migration processes, applying to all regions worldwide, and research has shown that geographical mobility in a globalised world is conducive to upward social mobility, and is even a decisive factor in this process. Networks formed by immigrants once in their respective target countries serve to perpetuate the process of international mobility: "Migration leads to more migration."

As to how these developments affect the target countries and countries of origin, whether conflicts will be sparked, whether a unilateral "brain drain" will take place or whether migration processes will prove equally advantageous for target countries and countries of origin – this all depends on how migration is handled on a political level.

Prof. Doevenspeck argues that these processes, including the conflicts that might ensue, must be perceived as "the norm with innovative potential and not as problems in themselves".

"My talk was well received by the Committee for Economic Cooperation and Development", reports the Prof. Doevenspeck. "During the course of the talk I think it became clear how important it is for us to steer away from stereotype-influenced ideas about the causes and scale of migration. The success of right-wing populist parties can largely be attributed to such falsifications. A realistic perspective is called for, which does not equate migration with 'flight', but rather acknowledges it as an integral part of globalisation. This will provide a basis on which policy makers can harness the innovative potential of migration processes."

Further information can be found on the German Bundestag website: www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2014/anhoeerung-zuwanderung/281420

Shortened version

Original version (in German): Press release 121/2014 of the University of Bayreuth, <http://www.uni-bayreuth.de/presse/Aktuelle-Infos/2014/109-Prof-Doevenspeck-Migration.pdf>

Translation: BIAC

TechnologieAllianzOberfranken (TAO) – Research Cooperations with a Focus on Energy and Mobility

Upper Franconian research organisations jointly investigate energy-efficient buildings of our time

The Universities of Bamberg and Bayreuth, as well as the Universities for Applied Sciences in Coburg and Hof, established the TechnologieAllianzOberfranken (TAO) in 2011 to selectively counteract against demographic change. These research institutions work closely together with a focus on energy, mobility and health, which are linked due to the overlapping issues of 'Human and Technology', 'Materials', and 'IT/Sensors'. TAO secures the effective transfer of the current research results to the regional economy, supports the enterprises with solutions to technological challenges and advises on research funding.

A research group from Bayreuth and Coburg jointly develops a new generation of batteries

Scientists of the Centre for Energy Technology (ZET) and the TAO-focus-area 'energy' are conducting research for the University of Bayreuth. The pre-existing centre will be expanded with TAO-funds and is set to receive new laboratories in the TAO-building in future. The ZET projects reflect how the TAO will be brought to life: new technologies for electricity storage are essential for the success of energy transitions – you also need electricity when the sun is not shining. That is why scientists from Bayreuth and Coburg are jointly investigating a new generation of zinc-air-batteries, in the field of electrochemical energy technology. These batteries could play an important role in the future as short-term memory for electric energy, in order to move excess solar electricity from midday to evening. The ageing process,

brought on by frequent charging and discharging of the memory, appear, however, to pose a particular challenge. These processes will be investigated in special laboratories and are subsequently tested at existing solar systems.

Research team from Bayreuth, Coburg and Hof jointly works on the 'Green Hospital Lichtenfels'

Projects for 'energy efficient buildings' are also part of the TAO-focus-area 'energy'. A team of scientists of Bayreuth, Coburg and Hof is jointly work on an energy system for the 'Green Hospital Lichtenfels', a flagship project of the Bavarian State Ministry for Health and Care, which shall set standards for ecologically optimised energy systems. New lighting concepts, a combined heat and power scheme based electricity and heat supply as well as the optimised insulation of buildings shall reconcile the ecological and economic interest of the hospital with the needs of the patient.

Research group from Bayreuth and Hof 'heating with ice'

In the context of research on energy-efficient build-

ings the teams are also investigating how to heat with ice. In this design, the energy released during the freezing process is re-used.

Highly-efficient heat pumps take over a part of the heating supply. In smaller buildings, like a single family house, the excess solar energy from summer days could be saved until winter and be used then.

Additionally, scientists thought up something special for the TAO-building itself, which shall be built by 2017 on the southern campus of the university. Besides the use of solar energy, the waste heat from the many laboratory and technological systems with also flow back into the energy system by passing the ice memory, instead of being emitted unused into the surroundings. The research group from Bayreuth and Hof are excited to discover, how this approach can be implemented in a real-world setting.

Original version (in German): Press release 121/2014 of the University of Bayreuth, <http://www.uni-bayreuth.de/pressemitteilungen-html/147-TAO/index.html>

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/>

The Working World and Life Cycles in West Africa

How strongly do the new technologies and organisational structures of the working world intervene in the ways of life of human beings, and how do they influence the relationships within families and between generations? Can one's own professional career and life be planned out reliably? An increasing number of people in West Africa, where traditional life and working life gradually break down and the traditional structures offer no security anymore, are faced with these important questions.

Prof. Dr. Isaïe Dougnon investigates the consequences that come about for the people in his home country Mali, as part of his work at the University of Bayreuth. He is professor for anthropology in the Malian capital city Bamako and came as a grant recipient of the Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation to Bayreuth to finish a new monograph about 'Life Cycles, Careers and Rituals in the modern Malian Working World'. In particular, he works together with Prof. Dr. Georg Klute, who is, due to his own field investigations, familiar with the social structures in Mali and who recently published a core work about the "Tuareg".

"Particularly young in West Africa have no clear picture of how working world they are heading into will pan out and which chances and risks it will offer them", explains Prof. Dougnon. "The fear of unemployment causes both anxiety as well as the prospect of an unpredictable working life and an inadequate pension upon retirement." Therefore, social rules and rituals will be more important for some branches i.e. public services and these can be newly created or reconstructed in accordance with social traditions, the Malian anthropologist stated. Prof. Dougnon particularly investigates the role of such rules and rituals from the view point, if they are able to give one's own 'life cycle' more security and predictable structures.



Prof. Dr. Isaïe Dougnon

The main reflections are on time. How is time seen by people in Mali who belong to different generations? The consequences, which result from the planning of the professional and family daily life up to lifelong planning, are not only relevant for the investigation of social structures in West Africa. The Bayreuth Humboldt grant recipient is convinced that they can and should shed light upon discussions on the structures of western industrial society.

Original version (in German): Press release 121/2014 of the University of Bayreuth, <http://www.uni-bayreuth.de/pressemitteilungen-html/142-Arbeitswelt-und-Lebenszyklen-Westafrika/index.html>

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