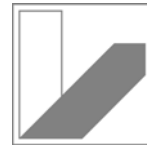




Swahili Colloquium
Bayreuth



UNIVERSITÄT
BAYREUTH

28th SWAHILI COLLOQUIUM **in Bayreuth, from 31st May to 2nd June 2015**

12th November 2014

Dear Colleagues,

We would like to cordially invite you to the 28th Swahili-Colloquium in Bayreuth: *karibuni sana*.

The Swahili Colloquium

The Swahili Colloquium has become a well-established forum in Bayreuth. Every year, we invite scholars and researchers from different disciplines, who work on various aspects of the language and the respective culture(s) to this unique colloquium. The multidisciplinary approach and the wide range of contributions from linguistics, literary studies to anthropology and history particularly account for the appeal of the colloquium. We are always looking forward to welcoming you all including new participants at the Swahili Colloquium.

This year's thematic focus

The 28th Swahili Colloquium will have the following thematic focus: ***Linganisha! Comparative Perspectives on Swahili Linguistic, Literary and Cultural Practices***. First of all, this focus implies a consideration of language, literature and culture as social practices rather than systems and discrete entities. The comparative angle akin to it invites two different kind of approaches: 1. To consider Swahili practices essentially as grounded in multilingual and multicultural realities in Eastern Africa and 2. To consider Swahili varieties, literature and culture in a global perspective, i.e. in comparison to other linguistic, literary and cultural practices from all over the world to point out (typological) similarities and differences.

Concerning the first comparative angle on **Swahili in its East African context(s)**, we would like to suggest a perspective on Swahili which essentially highlights its interconnectedness with other East African languages, literatures and cultures to adequately address the multilingual and multicultural complexities of contemporary societies in Eastern Africa. We would like to question the notion of Swahili as discrete entity and hermetic system by focussing on the multilingual and multicultural competence and repertoire of most Swahili speakers and by essentially considering Swahili realities in terms of their connection with other languages, literatures and cultures. How do linguistic, cultural and literary frames, like speech genres, overlap or contradict each other in interaction? How do cultural definitions of literary genres influence each other and the works of contemporary authors and poets? How do concepts and repertoires coming from local languages but also the former colonial

languages influence Swahili and how does Swahili change the structure but also the semantics and pragmatics of local languages? Is there a dialogue of languages, texts, authors, critics and scholars across different languages and literary and cultural traditions as well as across national borders?

The second thematic focus invites contributions which consider **Swahili linguistic, literary and cultural practices in terms of more global comparisons** beyond the East African context. Although since the postcolonial turn comparisons of linguistic, cultural and literary practices across the globe (also from the global South) have increased substantially, African languages and literatures have hardly been taken into consideration. While comparisons between Swahili and the former colonial languages have rarely been drawn by either specialists of English and French literatures and languages, comparison of Swahili practices with other Afrophone traditions from across the continent are even more strikingly absent. Comparative approaches which would link Swahili to other linguistic and literary repertoires in Africa and elsewhere are still largely missing. How are speech genres characterized in Swahili in contrast to other languages like Yoruba or Zulu? How have genres, like the novel, arisen in different African contexts? How does politeness influence interaction in Swahili in contrast to other languages? How are social roles defined, for instance, by gender, status and age, negotiated in interaction in various communities? Cognitive questions on conceptualization also invite comparison: How are, for instance, emotions encoded in Swahili in comparison to other languages? How do authors from different contexts conceptualize and respond to important historical events and ruptures, like independence, in their works? How do social/political institutions shape interaction in Swahili in contrast to other languages? What is the role of publishing and literary criticism and how do readerships differ? What is the role of translation? How do authors adapt texts to various media?

Although we would like to suggest comparative perspectives as a common point of discussion, this does not mean that we will not consider papers dealing with other topics, as the Swahili Colloquium tries not only to stimulate thematically-oriented interdisciplinary discussions, but also intends to provide a forum open to various contributions related to Swahili.

Registration

We would like to ask you to give your paper either in Swahili or English. Each contribution will be granted 30 minutes (including ten minutes of discussion). Please register via email (to swahili@uni-bayreuth.de) and send us a provisional title of your presentation as soon as possible (latest until till **22nd November 2014**), because we need to draft the programme now to be able to apply for financial support. You can send us an abstract later until **10th February 2014**. If your presentation is going to be in Swahili, we kindly ask you for a short English summary. Please also register if you merely intend to participate without giving a paper.

Location/time

The conference will take place in the new **Iwalewa-House**, the centre of African studies of Bayreuth University which recently moved to Wölfelstraße 2.

In 2015 Swahili Colloquium will start on **Sunday 31st May** and will end on **Tuesday 2nd June**. We moved the Colloquium to this date because of two other major events: Firstly,

Iwalewa-Haus will reopen with a show on Kenya on 30th May and right after the Swahili Colloquium the conference of the African Literature Association will take place in Bayreuth from 3rd to 6th June 2015. The title of the conference which you might want to attend as well is "African Futures and Beyond. Visions in Transition." The deadline for the submission of papers will be 30th November 2014. For more information see <http://www.ala2015.com>

At the beginning of next year, we will send you a second letter (containing more information on the programme and other issues, like accommodation).

If you have any questions, please, do not hesitate to contact us. You can reach us via the following email address: swahili@uni-bayreuth.de

We are looking forward to welcoming you at the 28th Swahili Colloquium in Bayreuth.

Kind regards,

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