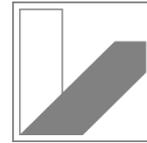




Swahili Colloquium  
Bayreuth



UNIVERSITÄT  
BAYREUTH

**Call for Papers:**

**33<sup>rd</sup> SWAHILI COLLOQUIUM**

**in Bayreuth, from 22<sup>nd</sup> May until 24<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

Dear Colleagues,

We cordially invite you to the 33<sup>rd</sup> Swahili Colloquium in Bayreuth!

Since its inception in 1987, when the colloquium was held to celebrate 100 years of academic Swahili teaching in Germany, the colloquium has come a long way. It has become a well-established forum hosted annually by the Iwalewahauss at Bayreuth University. Every year, it brings together a large international community of scholars and researchers from different disciplines, who work on various aspects of the language and the respective culture(s) in Eastern Africa and the diaspora. We look forward as always to welcoming you all, including new participants at the Swahili Colloquium.

**Thematic orientation**

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Swahili Colloquium will have the following thematic focus: **Global Swahili Studies**.

The aim of 2020 edition of the Swahili Colloquium is to bring together Swahili scholars from centres of Swahili Studies from all over the world (with a focus on the global South) to jointly engage in critical reflection on the field of Swahili Studies.

Swahili is not only the most widely spoken African language on the African continent and its diasporas, with a growing number of speakers, but the most widely taught African language in academia all over the world. Furthermore, it has been one of the most widely researched African languages. The Swahili language, as well as Swahili literature and cultural studies, are taught not only in East Africa, but in Europe, the U.S., China, Japan, and Brazil, Korea, Mexico, Russia, Iran, as well as in Ghana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa.

Radio stations broadcasting in Swahili, publishing houses publishing Swahili books, and foremost websites and social media in Swahili are not only hosted in the “West”, but also, for

instance, in China and Iran, which have both recently increased their engagement for Swahili Studies.

With its growing international participation of scholars and teachers from various disciplines, Bayreuth's international Swahili Colloquium, is evidence of the global networks and also hint at its increasingly interdisciplinary nature. Starting off as a German colloquium for linguists and Swahili language teachers thirty-three years ago, the colloquium has turned into an internationally reputed platform not only for linguists and literary scholars, but also anthropologists, archaeologists, geographers, historians and philosophers with Swahili language, culture(s) as well as East Africa and increasingly also its diasporas as common points of reference. It has witnessed an inspiring disciplinary opening and broadening of topics beyond text- and language based approaches, which we would like to critically address during the Swahili Colloquium.

We want to make both aspects – global diversity and relations as well as changing epistemologies of the field – the subject of discussion this year. What is Swahili Studies? What are its historical trajectories, present coordinates and future perspectives in different institutions? How do versions of Swahili Studies relate to, complement but also contradict each other? How do Swahili Studies relate to prominent current discussions in wider and adjacent disciplinary fields: What has been the relationship of Swahili Studies and African Studies? How does it position itself and which role does it play in current critical debates about area studies? Given the growing monolingualism of a global (mostly Anglophone) academia as well as the linguistic blindness of postcolonial inquiries on the one hand, and the growing interest in Southern epistemologies on the other, could it play an important critical role in the future? Which other critical vantage points do Swahili Studies offer which are of relevance to broader debates?

This critical inquiry also involves a consideration of the blind spots and fallacies of Swahili Studies and its colonial or postcolonial entanglements. In both East Africa and Europe, for instance, the study of Swahili is historically linked with colonialism. How can we critically account for this heritage while also carefully paying attention to current situations in which Swahili has been a language of domination and subjugation? How do our own globally positioned subjectivities construct multiple versions of the field?

### **Other Topics**

Although we would like to suggest the above as common points of discussion, presentations can also deal with other topics related to the Swahili language, literature and culture. The

Swahili Colloquium does not intend to thematically restrict discussions, but also to provide a forum open for broad interdisciplinary contributions.

### **Registration**

We 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](mailto:swahili@uni-bayreuth.de)) and send us the provisional title of your presentation before **15th February 2020**. 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 from 22nd May to 24<sup>th</sup> May 2020 in Iwalewahaush, the centre of African studies of the University of Bayreuth, located at Wölfelstraße 2.

### **Contact**

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](mailto:swahili@uni-bayreuth.de)

Karibuni nyote! Sincerely yours,

The organisational team

Serena Talento, Nikitta Adjirakor, Dyoniz Kindata, Duncan Tarrant, Okwiri Oduor and Clarissa Vierke

Swahili Colloquium

Prof. Dr. Clarissa Vierke

Literaturen in afrikanischen Sprachen

Universität Bayreuth

95440 Bayreuth

Telefon: + 49 921 55-3550

Fax: + 49 921 55-3641

Email: [swahili@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:swahili@uni-bayreuth.de)

[http://www.afrikanistik.uni-bayreuth.de/de/colloq/swahili\\_colloq/](http://www.afrikanistik.uni-bayreuth.de/de/colloq/swahili_colloq/)