

A historical black and white photograph of a tropical railway station. In the foreground, a steam locomotive is pulling a train of coal cars. To the left, several workers in hats are loading coal into a large cart. The background shows a steep, rocky hillside with a mine structure and palm trees. A map is overlaid on the top half of the image.

Heisenberg Colloquium

Of Rails and Mines: Networks of Tropical Coloniality

6-7 July 2026

Programme - Participants

S 145/S 146 (FZA)



UNIVERSITÄT
BAYREUTH

Programme

Monday, 6 July 2026

09:00 – 09:30 - Welcome Address

- *Gilbert Shang Ndi*, Host
- *Stefan Ouma*, Director, Institute of African Studies, University of Bayreuth

09:35 – 10:50

- **“The Kenya–Uganda Railway: Civilization or Colonial Extraction”**
Christopher Odhiambo Joseph (Moi University, Kenya)
- **“Cultural Resistance in Afro-Colombian Music and Literature: Territoriality, Extractivism, and Infrastructure in Tropical Coastal Regions”**
Florian Homann (Münster University, Germany)

10:50 - 11:00 Coffee Break

11:00 – 12:20

- **“Before and After La bruja de las minas (1947) by Gregorio Sánchez Gómez”**
Hugo Hernán Ramírez (Universidad de los Andes, Colombia)
- **“Struggle over Abandoned Landscapes: Mining Infrastructures, Politics, and the Re-Making of Extractive Spaces in Ghana”**
Augustine Gyan (University of Bayreuth, Germany)



Monday, 6 July 2026

12:20 – 14:30 - Lunch Break/Campus Tour

14:30 – 15:50

- **Beyond Beneficiary Status: Ubuntu, Legal Personhood, and Community Sovereignty in Burundian Mining Governance**

Ange-Dorine Irakoze (Mzumbe University, Tanzania)

- **“Material and Sentimental Extractivism: Gold and (Dis)love in 19th-Century Literature Written by Women”**

Rocío Ferreira (DePaul University, USA)



Tuesday, 7 July 2026

09:00 – 10:20

- **“Indian Railways and (Post)colonial Modernity”**
Anuradha Ghosh (Jamia Millia Islamia, India)
- **“Capitalist entanglements and narrative forms: the “coltan” novels of Jean In Koli Bofane and Fiston Mwanza Mujila”**
Gilbert Shang Ndi (University of Bayreuth)

10:20 – 10:30 – Coffee Break

10:30 – 11:50

- **“The mounds of greenish earth resemble diseased, rotting, foul-smelling breasts: extractivism and disease in Cerro de Pasco”**
Victoria Guerrero-Peirano (Pontifical Catholic University of Peru)
- **“From France to Africa and Back: The Routes of Miners in Joseph Wengler’s *Une vie en rose et noir*”**
Laude Ngadi Maïssa (Institute for Research in the Humanities, Gabon)

11:10 – 12:30

- **“From a Train of Death (1962) to a Train of Death (2016): On Political Repression and Double Extractivism in Cameroon”**
Nsah Mala (Köln University, Germany)
- **Closing Remarks/Publication Plan:** Gilbert Shang Ndi
- **12:30 -14:00 – Lunch**
- **18:30 Dinner – Ganesha**



Participants

Christopher Odhiambo Joseph is a distinguished scholar, educator, and theatre practitioner with extensive experience in African literature, performance studies, and higher education leadership. He has served in key academic and administrative positions at Moi University, including Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, Research and Innovation and Head of the Department of Literature, Theatre and Film Studies. He has supervised numerous postgraduate scholars and examined theses across leading African and international universities. His work spans theatre for development, cultural studies, media, postcolonial African Literature, oral literature, and social transformation. Widely published in respected journals and books, he is also an accomplished keynote speaker, consultant, drama adjudicator, and community engagement advocate. His scholarship and creative practice continue to shape African theatre, literature, and cultural discourse.

Rocío Ferreira is the Director of the Department of Women's and Gender Studies and an Associate Professor of Latin American literature, culture, and cinema at DePaul University, Chicago. She earned her Ph.D. in Latin American literature and women's, gender, and sexuality studies from the University of California, Berkeley. She specializes in 19th-century and contemporary visual and literary culture written by women. Her areas of research include foundational narratives and 19th-century journalism, war literature (19th–21st centuries), and contemporary themes related to the configurations of memory in literature, culture, and film. She is the author and editor of several books, including *From the Literary Salons of Lima (1876–1877) to Eclectic Cuisine: Women, Nation, and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Peru* (2025), *Dawns: A Poetic Anthology. Poetry in April 20/21-2025* (2025), *Antonio Cornejo Polar. Clorinda Matto de Turner, Novelist. Studies on Aves sin nido, Índole, and Herencia* (2021), as well as numerous critical articles in specialized books and academic journals. She is currently working on a book titled: *Women Shoot: Images and Poetics of Political Violence (1980–2000)* in Contemporary Peruvian Literary and Visual Culture.

**Christopher
Odhiambo Joseph**



Eldoret, Kenya

Rocio Ferreira



Chicago/USA

Anuradha Ghosh is a Professor of English in Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. She completed her PhD from JNU, in the area of cinema studies with special focus on the genre of protest — Bengal of the '60s & '70s. Her specialization is in the area of literature, cinema, and cultural studies, translation & adaptation studies, performance studies, with special focus on Bengal. She has keen interest in comparative literature, Indian philosophy, semiotics and semiological studies, minority studies and area studies. Her co-edited books are - *Politics of Imperialism and Counter Strategies* (2004), *Filming Fiction, Ray, Tagore and Premchand* (2012), *Premchand on National Language - Rashtrabhasha* (2019), *Language, Literature, Culture and Cinema* (2025) and *Mahasweta Devi in Defence of the Human: The Poetics of Translating Resistance* (2025). She has more than seventy-five research articles published in specialized journals and short stories from Bengali and Hindi into English, primarily of Tagore and Premchand. She successfully completed an ICSSR major Research Programme on “A Study of the Muslim Question on Malayalam and Bengali Cinema of the Indian Subcontinent” (2016–2018) with M. H. Ilias.

Anuradha Ghosh



New Deli, India

Victoria Guerrero Peirano is the recipient of the 2020 National Literature Prize. She holds a Ph.D. in Latin American Literature from Boston University and a master's degree in Gender Studies from the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (PUCP). She has served as a visiting professor at the University of Bonn and is a member of the Trans.arch Project: *Archives in Transition*. As a writer, she has published “*Todas las poetas peruanas tienen cancer*” (2025), the transdisciplinary essay “*And Death Shall Have No Dominion/killing the mother*” (Lima, 2019–San Francisco, 2026), “*La mujer*” (Lima, 2022. Bordeaux, 2022), and “*Diario de una costurera proletaria*” (Lima, 2021– Providence, 2025). She has been invited to numerous poetry festivals. She participated in the Poetry Salon at the FIL Guadalajara (2021) and was a writer-in-residence at the Maison des écrivains étrangers et des traducteurs (MEET, 2025).

Victoria Guerrero Peirano



Lima, Perú

Augustine Gyan is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Bayreuth, affiliated with the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS). His interdisciplinary work draws on anthropology, sociology, and development studies to explore the everyday realities of people living in resource-rich regions of Ghana. Using ethnographic methods, his research investigates the intersections of natural resource extraction, governance, resistance, and both digital and non-digital forms of activism. Augustine is particularly interested in how communities respond to environmental and political pressures, and how these responses shape livelihoods, land relations, and the broader politics of development and sustainability.

Augustine Gyan



Bayreuth, Germany

Florian Homann obtained his PhD in Romance Philology from the University of Cologne, Germany, in cotutelle with the University of Seville in 2019, with a dissertation on flamenco poetry. Since 2021, he has been working as a research assistant in the Department of Romance Studies (Ibero-Romance Literary Studies) at the University of Münster, where he is pursuing his postdoctoral habilitation project on Colombian narrative literature. From 2024 to 2026, he led the project “*Voice and Visibility for Marginalized Memories in Colombia*”, funded by the DAAD through the PRIME in collaboration with the University of Antioquia in Medellín. He is a member of the research groups Grupo de Estudios Literarios, ECOFEM, and +PoeMAS. His research, published in numerous papers and in the monograph *Cante flamenco y memoria cultural* (2021), focuses on oral tradition, performance theory, collective memory, and intermediality in Spanish and Latin American literature.

Florian Homann



Münster, Germany

Ange-Dorine Irakoze is a Visiting Scholar at Mzumbe University, Tanzania, teaching Oil, Gas, and Mining Law. She holds a PhD from the University of Bayreuth, Germany, and carried out her research under the Chair of African Legal Studies. Her scholarly work spans critical minerals governance, mining law reform, social justice, sustainable development in Africa, and contemporary African legal discourse on extractives. She has published extensively, including peer-reviewed pieces, blog scholarship, and policy-oriented mining alerts across the extractives sector. She is a former Junior Fellow Representative at the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) in Germany. In addition, she is a Partner and Head of the Energy and Mining Sectors at RUBEYA & Co-Advocates, a leading law firm in Burundi and a member of DLA Piper Africa. With 13 years of experience, her areas of legal practice include natural resource and energy transactions, mining taxation, and cross-border trade and investment within Regional Economic Communities.

Laude Ngadi Maïssa is a permanent researcher at the Institute for Research in the Humanities (IRSH-Gabon) at CENAREST. Doctor of the University of Lorraine (2018), he was Assistant Professor at the University of Bayreuth where is affiliated with the Cluster of Excellence Africa-Multiple (2024-2026). He was also a postdoctoral fellow at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (2019-2022) and winner of the Swiss Confederation Postdoctoral Excellence Fellowship, University of Lausanne (2022-2023). His research in General/Comparative literature lies at the intersection of World literature, postcolonial studies, literary history, the sociology of translation and reception. He has edited a special issue of the journal *Alternative francophone* about Anthologies of World literature and co-edited a special issue of *French Studies in Southern Africa* (51.1, 2021). He is the author of a monograph, *L'Œuvre-monde d'Olivier Rolin* (2022) and several articles.

Ange-Dorine Irakoze



Bujumbura, Burundi

Laude Ngadi Maïssa



Mounana, Gabon

Gilbert Shang Ndi is Heisenberg Professor of Comparative Literatures and Cultures, with focus on Africa and Latin America, at the University of Bayreuth. An alumnus of the Young Colleague Programme of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities, he was Feodor Lynen Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation at the Universidad de los Andes, Colombia. He holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of Bayreuth in Germany (2014), where he completed his Habilitation in 2022. Gilbert is the author of *State/Society* (2017), *Memories of Violence in Peru and the Congo* (2022) and *Corporeality in the Texts of Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Sony Labou Tansi: Bodies in (Con)texts*. He has co-edited *Of Worlds and Artworks* (2024); *Tracks and Traces of Violence* (2017) and *Re-Writing Pasts, Imagining Futures* (2017). He is author of two creative works: *Letter from America* (2019) and *The Radio, and Other Stories* (2021).

Nsah Mala (born Kenneth Nsah) is an award-winning Cameroonian scholar, futurist, writer, and journalist specializing in Comparative Literature, Environmental Humanities, and Futures Studies. He holds a PhD in Arts, Literature and Cultural Studies from Aarhus University (Denmark) and an Erasmus Mundus Master's degree in Crossways in Cultural Narratives from universities in France, the United Kingdom, and Spain. His research explores the intersections of literature, environment, politics, social justice, and foresight, with a particular focus on Africa and the Congo Basin. His doctoral dissertation, "*Can Literature Save the Congo Basin?*" won the 2022 Prix de thèses francophones en Prospective awarded by Fondation 2100 and the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie. Widely published in academic research, creative writing, journalism, and policy, he is affiliated with the University of Cologne, the University of Lille, the University of Nottingham, and the School of International Futures.

Gilbert Shang Ndi



Bayreuth, Germany

Nsah Mala



Lille, France

Hugo Hernán Ramirez Sierra focuses his teaching and research on 16th- and 17th-century Hispanic and Spanish-American literature, as well as on 20th- and 21st-century Latin American narrative. His work involves analyzing texts through the lenses of discursive traditions and textual criticism. He has published books, articles, and book chapters on these subjects in Colombia, Mexico, the United States, Spain, and Germany. He pursued his undergraduate studies at the National University of Colombia (on scholarship), completed master's degrees at the Caro y Cuervo Institute and the CSIC's Institute of Language, Literature, and Anthropology, and earned his doctorate at El Colegio de México. For his postdoctoral research at the University of Tübingen, he held a scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and subsequently received a postdoctoral Fellowship awarded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH-Stiftung). He is currently an Associate Professor at the Universidad de los Andes (Colombia), where he has served as Director of the Department of Humanities and Literature (2012–2015) and of the Department of Languages and Culture (2015–2020). He recently served as editor of **Perífrasis: Revista de Literatura, Teoría y Crítica** (2022–2026).

Hugo Hernán Ramirez Sierra



Bogotá, Colombia

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