

Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies

BIGSAS Colloquium in the Knowledge Lab of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence

Date: 22 January 2021; 12 pm – 3 pm, presented online via Zoom

12 pm	Opening of the virtual conference room
12:15 – 12:30 pm	Welcome Note by the Dean of BIGSAS, Prof Dr Martina Drescher
12:30 – 1:15 pm	Mihir Sharma "Skinfolk ain't always kinfolk": What might an anti-racist praxis in a racist system <i>do</i> ? <i>Introduced by Prof Dr Katharina Schramm</i> Discussant: Dr Jan Hutta
1:20 – 1:05 pm	Sheini Memunatu DagbanE: The Influence of the Dagbani Language on the Use of English in Ghana <i>Introduced by Dr Eric Anchimbe</i> Discussant: PD Dr Klaudia Dombrowsky
1:10 – 2:55 am	Ghadafi Saibu Political Parties Violent Youth and Electoral Insecurity: Cross-Sectional Evidence from Africa, 1990- 2017. <i>Introduced by Prof Dr Alexander Stroh-Steckelberg</i> Discussant: Dr Stephen Magu

Access via Zoom: <https://uni-bayreuth.zoom.us/j/91516354013?pwd=eWRKUUFo1TCtiOHlZUHg1UmhJSk5WUT09>

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Mihir Sharma, “Skinfolk ain’t always kinfolk”: What might an anti-racist praxis in a racist system *do*?

In this presentation, I will outline an operational use of the term Blackness in the context of my dissertation, propose questions that animate my inquiry therein, and finally discuss the case of local elections in St. Louis as a context of mobilization of Blackness. In analyzing Blackness as a relational category, I will examine how social movement actors, politicians, and publics seek to articulate and subvert contesting notions of Blackness preceding municipal elections in the city of St. Louis, U.S.A.. In other words, how is Blackness done as agentive praxis? These mobilizations of Blackness and an analysis thereof, I will argue, are likely to have effects and implications for and beyond the politics of representation as it pertains to race, racism, and what the Movement for Black Lives call “racial justice”.

Sheini Memunati, DagbanE: The Influence of the Dagbani Language on the Use of English in Ghana

This study investigates the influence of the Dagbani language on Dagombas’ use of English in Ghana. Dagbani is one of the Mabia (Gur) languages spoken in Northern Ghana. Dagbani and English have been in contact for decades; they exhibit differences both grammatically and phonologically. Scholars have discussed the grammar and phonology of Dagbani, but not the influence of the language on English, which leads the resulting language being classified as ethnolectal English. Therefore, I specifically investigate: 1) how the Dagbani perfective verb form, 2) the Dagbani imperfective verb form, and 3) the phonological features of Dagbani all influence Dagombas’ use of English. This is in the bid to terming the variety of English spoken by Dagomba(s) as an ethnolectal or ethnic variety of English.

The study is conducted using the dynamic model and grammatical replication theory. The dynamic model helps explain the influence of Dagbani phonological features on Dagombas’ spoken English, especially how the phonological features of Dagbani lead to the variation of Dagbani English (DagbanE) from Ghanaian English (GhE), RP, and British English (BrE). The grammatical replication theory helps explore how Dagbani’s perfective and imperfective forms are transferred by Dagomba(s) from Dagbani to English, as they speak English. Data for the study were collected from 89 basic to tertiary level students in Tamale (including

Sagnarigu) and Yendi. Data were gathered through sentence translation, picture description, and simple text reading. Simple sentence translation and picture description were employed to gather data for the grammatical influence, while text reading gathered data for phonological features. SPSS was initially used to interpret the raw data. Further interpretation of all data was made through the descriptive statistic method (DSM). Praat software was also used to further give a phonetic description of the phonological features. The analysis is presented in graphs and pie charts. This will help make the explanation of findings clearer. Findings show that DagbanE is marked by ethnic features, which distinguish it from GhE and BrE.

Ghadafi Saibu, Political Parties Violent Youth and Electoral Insecurity: Cross-Sectional Evidence from Africa, 1990- 2017.

In this presentation, I intend to present preliminary findings of my ongoing dissertation project. Following the “third wave” democratization process, multi-party electoral contests around the globe have experienced a surge in the prevalence of electoral violence and insecurity. Particularly, and more puzzling aspect about the phenomenon is the endemic but varied manifestation in the levels of electoral insecurity perpetuated across African countries. For example, whereas the most severe and notable cases have been documented in countries such as Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Kenya, and Ivory Coast, countries such as Zambia, Ghana, Benin, Senegal have experienced relatively less severe forms of instances of electoral violence and insecurity. A further worrying concern that should engage our interest with regard to electoral insecurity in the case of Africa is when we consider evidence that even countries like Ghana which are viewed as beacons of democracy on the continent are not exempted from instances of electoral violence. Most of the electoral violence related insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa are perpetuated with youth at the forefront of violent confrontations.

Despite many recent attempts to account for the causes and consequences of electoral violence in sub-Saharan Africa, cross – sectional studies on violent youth mobilization by political parties and party leaders are missing. In order to address this important gap, my main interest is to empirically show how exactly theories of rebel recruitment in civil war can help us explain and describe violent youth mobilization and electoral insecurity from macro, meso to micro level. To do this, I use nested mixed method comparative analysis leveraging on Large – N cases of 42 African countries and an in-depth qualitative comparative study of Nigeria and Zambia.

Following this, in the first part of my empirical section, I will present macro – level cross – sectional time – series analysis of empirical evidence of variation in nature and intensity of violent youth mobilization and electoral insecurity based on 287 electoral cycles across 42 sub – Sahara Africa countries spanning from 1990 – 2017. The data for this analysis is from the violent youth and electoral insecurity dataset which I compiled based on an integrated dataset of 8,453 events of incidence of electoral violence. Subsequently, I will present empirical evidence of macro – level causal mechanisms explaining why some countries are more likely to be at risk of experiencing high levels of violent youth mobilization and onset of electoral insecurity within the context of multiparty elections across sub-Saharan Africa. In the second part of the empirical section of the presentation, I move the discussions away from macro level explanation to micro level qualitative paired comparative analysis of Nigeria and Zambia. Drawing evidence from in-depth interviews with about 60 informants of violent youth, party leaders, journalist, and members from CSOs across Nigeria and Zambia, I try to show why joining violent youth groups and perpetration of electoral violence is attractive to young people even at the enormous risk of being killed before the life begins. Thus, demonstrating why the intensity of violent youth mobilization and electoral insecurity vary so significantly across these two countries.