

Chair of African Legal Studies
Universität Bayreuth, 95440 Bayreuth

Bayreuth, 20.02.2025

Einfaches Seminar: Researching Key Issues in African Law

(Summer Semester 2025 Course No. 30348)

This seminar focuses on key emerging legal issues in Africa. A number of topical questions ranging from human rights, sustainability governance, regional integration, constitutionalism, and comparative law will be discussed in light of epistemological and decolonial approaches from the Global South. The contributions developed in this seminar shall inform and flow into an edited volume that is currently developed and will be titled "Multimedia Handbook on African Legal Systems". In this context, participants will be asked to submit a multimedia contribution alongside their seminar paper such as a photograph, cartoon, interview, video, map, personal story, or any other relevant format. The seminar is designed to be attended by students without previous knowledge in the individual problem areas and students still in their early semesters. It takes place as a block seminar with the following main days:

Assignment of topics:	17 th April 2025, 0900 - 1100 am (online via Zoom)
Kick-off Day:	08 th May 2025, 0900 am - 1600 pm
Intermediate meeting:	05 th June 2025, 0900 am - 1600 pm
Submission of papers:	26 th June 2025 (digital submission via eLearning)
Final presentation:	11 th July 2025, 0900 am - 1600 pm



Prof. Dr. Thoko Kaime

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Topics

1. Analyse transitional justice approaches for addressing mass human rights violations against LGBTIQ+ individuals in Africa. How effective have these efforts been? What challenges do you observe? Please critically consider different cultural views of sexuality and family and reflect on them.
2. Examine the incorporations of traditional justice mechanisms into ongoing peace negotiations in South Sudan. Which specific approaches can be observed? Choose one mechanism you consider especially effective. What is the historical and societal background? Why is it especially effective and which prospects do you imagine for future cases of application?
3. Make yourself familiar with the situation of legal pluralism in many African countries. Choose one country. Analyse the prospects and chances of the digital transformation and AI in traditional justice systems. How can these tools help to effectively integrate traditional justice systems into the pluralistic legal system of the respective state?
4. Research fundamental approaches of African legal philosophy. Which role does the community inhabit in comparison to many European systems? Having that in mind: Discuss the role of the importance of environmental protection in both systems especially looking at the aims put down in the green deal.
5. Analyse the influence of colonial legal systems on the sense of belonging of indigenous communities today. Which challenges do many communities on the African continent endeavour whilst reclaiming practices of traditional justice?
6. Give an overview over the legal frameworks in place to ensure data protection in African human rights. Choose one. How would you evaluate the chances and opportunities to ensure data protection?



7. How has the colonial legacy shaped citizenship laws and concepts of belonging in African states, and what challenges does this pose for human rights and constitutional development?
8. To what extent have African countries succeeded in balancing national unity with diversity in their constitutional frameworks, and how does this impact notions of belonging and human rights protection?
9. Evaluate the progress and limitations of constitutional reforms in African states aimed at enhancing political freedoms and multi-party democracy. How have these reforms affected citizens' sense of belonging and human rights?
10. Examine the relationship between citizenship laws, statelessness, and human rights in Africa. How do exclusionary citizenship practices impact sustainable development and state stability?
11. Assess the effectiveness of regional institutions like the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights in strengthening constitutionalism and protecting human rights. How do these institutions contribute to a pan-African sense of belonging?
12. Critically analyse the concept of "the right to equal belonging in a democratic society" in the African context. How does this concept intersect with human rights, constitutionalism, and sustainable state formation?

Participation

Please register by sending us your name, semester, study programme, faculty, matriculation number and your desired topic to: (1) Nelson.Okeyo@uni-bayreuth.de and copy to: (2) Carolin.Hauenstein@uni-bayreuth.de by **20 March 2025**. However, the final topic allocation will take place on the prescribed date for assignment of topics. After the allocation of topics, students are to bindingly register for the seminar on CmLife.



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Formalities:

An essay must not exceed 25 pages. The cover sheet, abstract, table of contents, bibliography, list of abbreviations and final declaration will not be taken into account.

The thesis must be written in the font "Times New Roman", font size 12, 1 ½ linespacing, in block heel. The following page margins are to be observed: 2.5 cm left, top and bottom; 5.5 cm right. The footnotes are basically in the same formatting, but in font size 10, single line.

Only the usual abbreviations may be used in the text (AU, UN, ICC etc.). Self-created or invented abbreviations, which only serve to save space, are not permitted.

Structure:

1. Cover sheet
2. Abstract
3. Table of contents
4. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms
5. Main text
6. Statement of authenticity
7. Bibliography

Sources:

All sources cited in the footnotes must be listed in the bibliography in alphabetical order (name of the author). Conversely, the bibliography may not contain any works that are not cited in at least one footnote. Since the bibliography - as the name implies - contains only literature, court decisions are not to be listed there. The bibliography should follow the [OSCOLA style reference](#).

All essay submissions shall be made in digital form (pdf) only through eLearning.

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