**Reading and Discussion**

13. April 2015

12 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**Mahmoud Ahmad Abdulkadir**

(Lamu/Kenya)

At the Swahili coast, poetry is not only regarded as an aesthetic verbal art, but is an essential mode of communication utilized in both private and public controversies current in society. Particularly, themes of socio-political relevance within Swahili society are negotiated through oral art forms.

The Swahili poet Mahmoud Ahmad Abdulkadir (alias *Ustadh* Mahmoud Mau) from Lamu, an historical island in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Kenya is *imam* in his hometown and, hence, the mouthpiece of his society. He stems from a poet`s family, and from early on was aware of social problems in his environment, communicating them to his people through his poetry. In the 1970s he became locally renowned for his poetic contributions to the general elections at Kenyas coast (Amidu 1990, 1993, 2004, Njogu 2001). Today, his poetry, which is composed in the dialect of his hometown Lamu, is gradually becoming internationally recognized, for instance, his poems dealing with social injustices affecting women (Kresse 2013).

On April 13th he will be our guest in Berlin where he will present two of his poems: "*Mama musimlaumu*" (Don`t blame the mother), a composition which arose from a news headline about a dog that rescued an infant from the forest; and "Swahili", which deals with his fellow Swahili coastal people`s use of the poet`s mother tongue.

The reading and follow-up discussion will be held in Swahili and English.

You are cordially invited to join both the reading and discussion.

Kind regards,

Jasmin Mahazi

Convenors:    Vitale Kazimoto and Dr. Lutz Diegner (Swahili Department, HU Berlin)
Conception, translation and presentation: Jasmin Mahazi (Doctoral candidate, FU Berlin)

Venue:          Seminar für Afrikawissenschaften,
                Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin,
                Invalidenstrasse 118, Raum 410 (Seminarroom, 4th floor)
Time:           12 a.m. - 2 p.m.

All interested are cordially invited!

*Karibuni sana!*