

PRESS RELEASE

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Tanzania
Dar es Salaam
National Museum

Beyond Collecting: New **Ethics** for Museums in **Transition**

The conference "Beyond Collecting: New Ethics for Museums in Transition" will shed light on future museum concepts in Africa. At the invitation of the Goethe-Institut, experts from several African countries, Germany and overseas will come together to translate the design of cultural cooperation into concrete guidelines for action and formats. The first part of the **non-public conference** will take place on Thursday 5th and Friday 6th March, the second part is planned for September 2020. The keynote address will be given by Dr. Winani Thebele, curator at the Botswana National Museum.

Background

In many African countries, museum directors and curators are facing great challenges: Dealing with colonial heritage, questions of restitution, the integration of local communities and the design of future concepts are among the most pressing issues. How can the often incongruent interests of communities and countries of origin be dealt with in the context of possible returns? What alternative models for museum work exist on the African continent - and to what extent can "Western" museums learn from them? Which professional networks are necessary for meaningful capacity building? These and other questions are at the centre of the conference in Tanzania, which is being realized with the support of the German Federal Foreign Office.

Review of the status quo

The conference will open with a keynote address by Dr. Winani Thebele, curator at the Botswana National Museum, who will discuss the philosophical and ethical foundations of future museum cooperation. Five panels are organized around the central aspects. Among other things, one panel will take a critical look at provenance research as it is currently practiced in Europe. In addition, there will be a discussion of what forms of capacity building are necessary to organize the return of objects and future cooperation.

Impulses also for European museum work

Another panel will present alternative museum concepts in Africa and the Pacific region that can provide impulses for German and European institutions. The topic of restitution, which is currently attracting a great deal of attention in the Tanzanian public, will be the subject of the concluding panels on the return of human remains and the handling of natural history collections. The reason for this is the demand by Tanzanian politicians and activists for the return of dinosaur bones that are exhibited in the Natural History Museum in Berlin but were excavated in former colonial Tanzania.

Public events open to press and media

In addition to the internal conference discussions, there is an **artistic intervention** "Vinyago - Indigenous Voices" - a multimedia dance performance by ASEDEVA (Art for Social and Economic Development in Africa) on **5th March at 7:30pm in the auditorium of the House of Culture**. This performance explores the role of African spiritual objects in today's global society by focusing on Tanzanian masks that came to Germany in a colonial context.

A **public discussion** on **6th March at 7pm, also in the auditorium of the House of Culture**, among others with Ciraj Rassool, Professor African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies, University of Cape Town, South Africa, will be the closing event of the conference.

Complete list of speakers

Prof. Safua Akeli Amaama (National University of Samoa), Nelson Abiti (Uganda Museum), Subhadra Das (University College London), Johannes Ebert (Goethe-Institut), Edith Ekunke (Museums, National Commission for Museums and Monuments), Ms. Golda Ha-Eiros (CEO, Museums Association of Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia), Dr. Charles Kabwete (University of Rwanda), Mr. Moses Kashure (Curator, Igongo Cultural Centre, Mbarara, Uganda), Wandile Kasibe (Iziko South African Museum), Mr. Konradin Kunze (Artist, Director, Author, Germany), Flower Manase Msuya (National Museum of Tanzania), Prof. Bertram Mapunda (Jordan University College), Dr. Fidelis T. Masao (University of Dar es Salam, National Museum of Tanzania), Dr. Oswald Masebo (University of Dar es Salam), Mnyaka Sururu Mboro (Berlin Postkolonial e.V.), Dr. Léontine Meijer-van Mensch (Director of Staatliche Ethnographische Sammlungen Sachsen, Germany), Dr. El Hadji Malick Ndiaye (The Théodore Monod Museum of African Art, IFAN), Tonya Nelson (Arts Council England, ICOM UK, The National Gallery), Mr. Gabriel Mzei Orio (Old Moshi Cultural Tourism Enterprises, Organisator of the Mangi Meli Remains exhibition, Moshi, Tanzania), Prof. Barbara Plankensteiner (MARKK Hamburg), Prof. Ciraj Rassool (University of Cape Town), Prof. Dr. Friedemann Schrenk (Head of Section Paleoanthropology, Senckenberg Research Institute, Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany), Dr. Winani Thebele (Botswana National Museum), Ms. Elisabeth Wolbers (Head of the Cultural Heritage Department, Auswärtiges Amt, Berlin, Germany).

An event of the Goethe-Institut, MARKK Hamburg (Museum am Rothenbaum) and Berlin Postkolonial e. V. in cooperation with the National Museum of Tanzania. With the support of the German Federal Foreign Office.



Links

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