

Re-connecting "Objects": Epistemic Plurality and Transformative Practices in and beyond Museums

Initiative: Globale Herausforderungen – Integration unterschiedlicher Perspektiven

Ausschreibung: Integrating Different Perspectives on Heritage and Change

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Laufzeit: 3 Jahre 6 Monate

In the context of major social and environmental emergencies at a global scale, and amidst civil societies' restitution claims across the world, this project intends to critically interrogate the histories of collections assembled during the colonial time, engage in the re-connection of interrupted chains of knowledge and examine alternative forms of custody, objecthandling and display in African and European museums. For this purpose, the project brings together researchers who will work in close dialogue with artists, museum professionals, students and various stakeholders on both continents. The overarching common endeavor is the creation of two complementary, site-specific research exhibitions held simultaneously in Oxford and Dakar during the 2024 Dak'art Biennale. Epistemic plurality is at the core of this project: all its components are thus designed to allow for the crossfertilization of multiple approaches, to open up the sedimented meanings of objects and to foster learning from practices beyond the museum. To this aim, a digital working tool, the "anticatalogue", will be developed which enables sustainable long-distance collaboration. Drawing relationships between the studied objects and documenting their historical evolution without reifying them, it can both act as a transversal working instrument to be used by all researchers across continents, and form a visual element of the exhibition in its own right.

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