



PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Humanities
Council

IHUM READING GROUP 5

THE REPATRIATION

DEBATE:

AN AFRICAN FOCUS

Moderated by:
Cecelela Tomi, MSW



PRINCETON
UNIVERSITY

inter
disciplinary
doctoral
program
in the
humanities

23 February, 2024





Schedule

- 01 Reader (Literature)
- 02 Samba Yonga (Zambia)
- 03 Motsane Gertrude Seabela (South Africa)
- 04 Dr. Bulami Edwards (Cameroon)
- 05 Q & A Session
- 06 Closing Remarks



Arts and (re)Creation from Africas to the World

This reading group seeks to answer the question “what is African arts” beyond the geographic boundaries imposed on it. From Africas to the Worlds, this reading group will attempt to survey the representations of African arts by Africans from Africa and its diasporas, by Western scholars and artists from slavery to postcolonialism in a bid to find answers to possible delimitations of what African arts is. If it is arts from Africa, then what is Africa? If it is, Arts of African inspiration, what influence does African worldviews have on its arts? What is that worldview all about from the artist to the work of arts as well as from the work of arts to the public? What role does the African diaspora play in shaping what African arts is? Can we think of African arts as a practice? A theory? A specific/shared/global/cosmopolitan cultural heritage? What role does the sociocultural context of the artist play in thinking about his style? What can oral memory/literature/history, audiovisual media and literature tell us about what African arts is?



This reading group will meet once a month and will entail both the reading and the discussion of a proposed monthly reading list.

Contact: Murielle Sandra Tiako Djomatchoua (mt2200@princeton.edu)

Calendar of meetings for the FALL SEMESTER 2023 :

September : The atlas of African arts : a Survey of arts from French speaking African countries

October : The patrimonialization of francophone African arts in literature, cinema, traditional and popular cultures

November : African arts in museums : representations and worldviews

December: Patriarchy and matrimony in African arts: a gendered biopolitical approach

Reader



Benedicte Savoy. *Africa's Struggle for Its Art: History of a Postcolonial Defeat*. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2022.

Brown, Michael F. "The Possibilities and Perils of Heritage Management." *Cultural Heritage Ethics: Between Theory and Practice*, edited by Constantine Sandis, 1st ed., Open Book Publishers, 2014, pp. 171-80. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1287k16.17>.

Butler, Shelley Ruth. "The politics of exhibiting culture: Legacies and possibilities." *Museum Anthropology* 23.3 (2000): 74-92.

Eyssette, Jérémie. "The renovation of paradoxes: decolonising the Africa Museum without restituting DR Congo's cultural heritage." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 40.2 (2022): 206-221.

Dan Hicks. *British Museums: The Benin Bronzes, Colonial Violence and Cultural Restitution*. London: Pluto Press, 2020

Wróblewska, Magdalena, and Csilla E. Ariese. "Improving Transparency." *Practicing Decoloniality in Museums: A Guide with Global Examples*, Amsterdam University Press, 2022, pp. 81-96. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv23dx2pf.8>. Accessed 19 Sept. 2023.

IN FRENCH : Jean-Luc Martinez. *Patrimoine partagé : universalité, restitutions et circulation des œuvres d'art*. (2023)

Samba Yonga

Samba Yonga is an award winning journalist, communications specialist and cultural curator based in Lusaka Zambia. She is co-founder of the Women's History Museum of Zambia, established in 2017 with the mandate to research and restore African indigenous narratives, knowledge and 'living histories' focused on women. Samba is also founder and managing partner of Ku-Atenga Media, a firm specialised in designing strategic communications for African landscapes that has a client network across the African region and the globe. Samba has been recognised as 100 most influential Africans by Quartz, New York, and one of 40 most influential Africans. She is also a Google Podcast Creator, TEDx Lusaka speaker and is a Museum Lab Fellow for 2022.

She has curated exhibitions, designed digital creative content and written papers focused on indigenous African knowledge systems and narratives in Zambia and Africa. The museum has collaborated with National Museums of World Cultures in Sweden, Museum of Women in Umea, Windybrow Art Centre in South Africa, Europeana in the Netherlands, University of Shanghai, China, International Council of Museums (ICOM) and many others.

The museum has identified indigenous African cultural heritage of women from Zambia and the African continent and is exploring the use of digital and AI platforms as tools to transition and provide access of this heritage to African and global publics in collaboration with indigenous source communities to correct misrepresentations of colonised objects.

She is a graduate of the Evelyn Hone College School of Journalism and holds an MA in Transnational Communications and Global Media from Goldsmiths College, University of London.





Gertrude Motsane Seabela



Motsane G. Seabela is currently Curator of Anthropology at Ditsong Museums of South Africa. She is pursuing a PhD in Heritage and Museums Studies at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. Seabela researches the muted narratives pertaining to black people in museums and has contributed book chapters and articles researching public museums perpetuating colonial legacies in a democratic South Africa. Her recent creative work includes a co-curated exhibition entitled *Inherited Obsessions* and seeks to ask questions around the idea of preservation and its purpose. She also deals with attempted erasures and transformation of museums from places entrenched in violence to places of healing. Seabela also is interested in the marginalisation of women in the memory and heritage of the South African liberation struggle.

23/02/2023



Indigenous conservation: a primary preservation approach towards knowledge reclamation of African 'collections'

IHUM READING GROUP : ARTS AND (RE)CREATION IN
AFRICA TO THE WORLD



M...ela

Dr. Bulami Edwards



Dr. Bulami Edward Fonyuy is a native of Nso in Bui Disney of Cameroon. He holds a PhD in Literatures in English with Specialty being Postcolonial Literatures from the University of Bamenda Cameroon, same University from where he obtained his Master Degree. Bulami is a teacher by profession, a Cultural researcher and Promoter of his culture. He is equally passionate about the restitution of African heritage from colonial contexts. He serves as cultural consultant in National media in Cameroon and organizations. He is presently working as Case Study Researcher at Open Restitution Africa (Second Cohort). Bulami has equally published works the most recent being his PhD thesis titled "Bioethical Foundations of Nso Oral Poetry" published with Generis Publishing in 2023.



Q & A Session

Closing Remarks



Shukraan

Mercí

Asante

Sana

Thank You



2. "Africa Room" installation from Into the Heart of Africa. Courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum.

6. The second room of Miscast. South African National Gallery, Cape Town. Photo courtesy of Pippa Skotnes.
in Butler, Shelley Ruth. "The politics of exhibiting culture: Legacies and possibilities." *Museum Anthropology* 23.3 (2000): 74-92.