



AFRIEUROTEXT Austria



AFRIEUROTEXT Cameroon



KITONG-KIASS INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE 3RRR

RESTITUTION, REHABILITATION and RECONCILIATION
targeting the Austrian Cultural and Political Context

From August 31st to September 2nd of 2022 AFRIEUROTEXT and fresh Magazine are organizing an international symposium on the return of illegally acquired African Artifacts in Austrian Museums.

The **3RRR** constitute in fact the focal point of this project and are a compilation of aspects of the past, present and future of our world, the history of colonial violence, oppression, economic exploitation, racial segregation etc. The African Continent and Africans were and are still the *terrain par excellence*, where subjects and objects had made and are making the experience of trauma, the trauma of colonial exploitation and exclusion. And the scars and aftermaths of those traumatic experiences are still alive in our present and are even threatening to still be haunting the future of people of African descent locally and globally.

The restitution issue is in fact a framework, a chance for a differentiated dialogue between Africa and Europe, based on mutual respect. (See Achille Mbembe). Cultural Artifacts from African Countries kept in European Museum Institutions are a dimension of the cultural DNA of African Societies. Their captivity in European Museums and their absence in African Countries as well as the various claims of getting them back to Africa have put the debate on restitution in the center of actual political, cultural and societal awareness. European museum institutions deal with all forms of argument and tend to pass the “hot potato” of returning stolen works of art from Africa to their respective political decision-makers. However, the life of political decision-makers is always dependent on winning or losing legislative periods and every party fears unpopular decisions. Why should the return of looted art from Africa be held captive in such a calculated dilemma? The return of some looted art objects made by some European countries so far are courageous signs in the right direction. But let's not be fooled by salami tactics. The development of return models and above all the clear return of stolen African art treasures is the prerequisites for that Justice and Reconciliation at the global scale and especially as far as people of color and people of African descent are concerned.

This INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM is conceived and carried out by **AFRIEUROTEXT Austria** in cooperation with *fresh, Black Austrian Lifestyle Magazine* and it is creating a triple impact through the (tri)logic of Restitution – Rehabilitation and Reconciliation in the Austrian Cultural and Political Context. It seeks to raise the awareness of the Austrian Civil Society, political establishment and of the classical Austrian Institutions producing discourses on/about Africa, on the necessity of a **(govern)mentality turn** as far as the Restitution Issue, the Rehabilitation of



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the African Subject, Justice and Reconciliation both locally and globally are concerned. The Restitution Issue cannot be limited on everlasting research on the provenance of the looted African Artefacts – (Provenienzforschung). This could be seen in a certain way as a strategy to lose time and at the end no concrete return of looted African Artefacts kept in Austrian Federal Museums will happen.

Speaking of African Arts, it is a misconception to ignore African Literatures, since both societal fields or disciplines are intertwined, and as well as in the Arts fields looting, dispossession, misrecognition, distortion and trivialization of what could be called “African Literatures” has happened and is still happening, especially in the enterprise of western European academic, historiographic and literary institutions to define African Literature. As far as African art objects or subjects – kept in Austrian museums – are concerned, one should not overlook/overhear "African textualities" that resonate and reverberate not only in a concrete work of art (e.g., a carved stone, an ebony sculpture, etc.) but also in the various manifestations of African literary genres that have shaped and continue to shape African societies. The *mvét* or *mvett* (e.g.) is trivially visually a wooden musical instrument and on display in Austrian museums among other objects, but the *mvét/mvett* is in fact a rich literary genre from the Beti Fang mythologies of the Central African area and the Congo Basin. One of the tasks of this symposium is also to shed light on repressed/suppressed dimensions of “African textualities”, which are often neglected and disqualified in/by European academic institutions when it comes to defining what African Literature is or is not. This also has to do with the Rehabilitation of African subjects/objects.

Proposal of contributions or papers from various fields are solicited: cultural, social and natural sciences (African Arts and Literatures, Anthropology, Political Sciences, Geography, History, Sociology, Biology, Architecture, Mathematics, Arts and Law, street/town/village Arts etc.). Multifarious activities, debates, panel discussions, exhibitions, plays, festivals, film projections and workshops from different social and political fields are welcome in order to achieve not only that **(govern)mentality turn** but also to inspire, initiate, accompany and testimony concrete returns of African Cultural Artefacts kept in Austrian Museums to Africa. **Your contributions should touch and address the core issues of the symposium mentioned here in order to be selected. For selected contributions there is an honorarium as an expense allowance rewarded at the end of the symposium. For symposium participants who arrive from abroad, travel expenses will be reimbursed, and accommodation costs will be covered.** If the Covid situation does not allow large numbers of people to gather in one place, the symposium will take place online.

Kindly send your proposals for contributions to office@afrieurotext.at by April 30th, 2022 at 00:00 hour the latest. Telephone: 0043 650 7235099

The project coordination of AFRIEUROTEXT can only be reached by telephone again from February 9th, 2022.

The **AFRIEUROTEXT INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE 3RRR** will take place from August the 30th to September the 2nd of August 2022 in Vienna/Austria und will be a magnetic event for keynotes speakers from all over the world.



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AFRIEUROTEXT is a non-profit Cultural Association and Educational Library based in Vienna/Austria and specialized in Africa related issues, with a branch in Africa, exactly in Yaounde, the capital city of Cameroon. AFRIEUROTEXT's Mission could be summarized to the following points: Participation in educational policy - sustainable broadening of knowledge and horizons - promotion of differentiated thinking and action - intercultural exchange of experience and knowledge - contribution to peaceful intercultural togetherness - Focus on the non-monolithic dimensions of cultures - Promotion of a culture of mutual respect - Focus on global and local asymmetries. AFRIEUROTEXT fosters peace through critical contrapuntal and productive dialogue based on texts, in order to achieve the above defined mission. The word "TEXT" must be understood here in its broader definition as a metaphor for all human productions in the fields of art, literature, sciences, politics etc. AFRIEUROTEXT also places emphasis on discussing questions of global and local asymmetries, global and local cultural differences and interdependencies. The term AFRIEUROTEXT paradigmatically stands for the special focus on the unifying, the common and the non-monolithic dimensions of cultures, a focus on the textual or contrapuntal third spaces of cultural exchanges. <https://www.afrieurotext.at> <https://afrieurotextshop.at>

AFRIEUROTEXT Cameroon, the Africa based branch of AFRIEUROTEXT is specialized in vocational training and in the creation of sustainable jobs for young women and men from poor social layers and thus contributes to a sustainable amelioration of their living conditions. Its vocational bakery school started in July 2021. Young women are trained and employed at the sale points of the vocational bakery school. <https://kilet-kiass.afrieurotext.at/de>

fresh, Black Austrian Lifestyle Magazine - www.blackaustria.info – is the partner of AFRIEUROTEXT in the implementation and concretization of the 3RRR-Projekt and its international symposium on Restitution. fresh is the magazine of the first, second and third generation of the African diaspora (Africa, Europe, Caribbean, USA, Latin America) in Austria and other German speaking countries. One of the focuses of the magazine is Art and Culture but we also focus on lifestyle, fashion, studying, traveling and business as perceived by Austrians of African origin and its Diaspora.

Sponsors:

