



**Strengthening
African-European
connections**

sharing past and future

**'Sharing past and future: Strengthening African-European
connections'**

Brussels, 17-19 September 2018

Draft agenda

**17 September 2018: Official opening (Royal Museum for Central Africa,
Tervuren)**

18.00-20.00: *Welcome*
Dr. Guido Gryseels, Director General, Royal Museum for Central Africa
H.E. Ambassador Johan Verbeke, Director General, Egmont – Royal Institute for International Relations

Key-note speakers

Prof. dr. Jean-François Bayart, Professor of Anthropology and Sociology and Yves Oltramare chairholder, The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva
H.E. Mr. Abdou Latif Coulibaly, Minister of Culture of Senegal

20.00-22.00: *walking dinner*

18 September (Royal Library, Brussels)

9.00-11.00: ***Panel Debate: Sharing and representing the colonial past in Europe***

In recent years, a dynamic and oftentimes heated public discussion emerged about how to deal with and memorialize the colonial past. Both in Africa and Europe, (aspects of) this shared past is critically scrutinized, causing controversy and debate and is echoed in political discourse. This panel wants to take a closer look into the different strategies of memorialization of the colonial past without seeking to redefine the past itself. Speakers will share their perspectives on these public debates, both in Africa and Europe. They will also investigate how the colonial past can and should be



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publicly memorialized and what is needed to process those aspects that are still controversial.

Chair:

Dr. Patricia Van Schuylenbergh, Head of Service, Department of Cultural Anthropology and History, AfricaMuseum

Introduction:

Dr. David Van Reybrouck, Author

Speakers:

Dr. Margarida Ribeiro, Senior Researcher, Centro de Estudos Sociais, University of Coimbra

Dr. Pascal Blanchard, Founder, Groupe de Recherche ACHAC, Researcher LCP (CNRS, Irisso, Paris-Dauphine)

Mr. Andrew Mwenda, Founder, The Independent

Prof. Dr. Bob Kabamba, Professor in Political Science, University of Liège

11.00-11.30: *coffee and tea*

11.30-13.00: ***Parallel sessions: Accessing archives, The politics of resistance, and African scholarship***

(1) Accessing Archives

Shared colonial histories resulted in shared archival reserves. Some of these archives remain not or limited accessible though. In this session, participants examine the different archival practices, and look at the accessibility of (post-)colonial archival collections. It will be investigated how these archives can be made accessible and can be shared between Africans and Europeans. The 'digital turn' in the archives sector is also worth considering, for it altered the ways of doing research and provides new opportunities for conservation and consultation.

Chair:

Mr. James Lowry, Lecturer, Liverpool University Centre for Archive Studies



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Speakers:

Prof. Dr. Karel Velle, Director General, Belgian State Archives and Archives in the Provinces
Dr. Ellen Ndeshi Namhila, Pro Vice-Rector, University of Namibia

(2) The politics of resistance

Popular and elite resistance against colonial regimes forms a red thread throughout the history of European colonialism in Africa. This contestation always had a multifaceted character, which led to various (academic) perspectives on resistance. What were the drivers of this resistance? When did they resort to armed means, and when was peaceful resistance preferred? Moreover, rural resistance did not always follow the same logic as urban resistance. And what about resistance in Europe against colonialism?

Chair:

Prof. Dr. Koen Vlassenroot, Director, Conflict Research Group, University of Gent

Speakers:

Prof. Dr. Herbert Weiss, Emeritus Professor of Political Science, City University of New York
Dr. Jean Omasombo Tshonda, Political Scientist, Department of Cultural Anthropology and History, AfricaMuseum

(3) African scholarship

African Scholarship encompasses both writings of Africans and writings about Africa. Methodological debates are oftentimes oriented towards the positionality of different voices and its underlying power structures. This panel discusses which voices dominate current thinking about Africa and looks into strategies how to strengthen African scholarship and how to reverse hegemonic narratives about, rather than from Africa.

Chair:

Dr. Valerie Arnould, Senior Research Fellow, Egmont Institute

Speakers:

Prof. Dr. Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, Professor of African and Global Studies, University of



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North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Dr. David Mwambari, Postdoctoral Fellow, Conflict Research Group, University of Ghent

13.00-14.00: *lunch*

14.00-15.45: **Panel Debate: Representing and memorializing of African-European connections in contemporary arts**

While African and diaspora artists have gained increased visibility at international events and outlets, they are still being considered as 'exotic'. In contrast to other artists, their 'otherness' seems to be of major importance. This panel gives voice to African and African diaspora artists and investigates how they deal with the memorialization and representation of African-European connections in their work. It also looks into how their art can be re-situated in the African and European contexts and spaces that inspire them, this with the ambition to move beyond their mere 'otherness'.

Chair:

Mrs. Christine Eyene, Art Critic and curator - *tbc*

Introduction:

Mrs. Géraldine Abrassart, Independent journalist

Speakers:

Mr. Sammy Baloji, Photographer

Mr. Ganza Buroko, Head of Office, Yolé! Africa

Mr. Daniel Cattier, Documentary film director

Mr. Jan Goossens, Director, Festival of Marseille – *tbc*

15.45-16.15: *coffee and tea*

16.15-18.00: **Panel Debate: Managing African cultural heritage in Europe**

African cultural heritage in Europe is increasingly discussed, thanks to its specific position in the public space. This heritage is diverse, ranging from artistic heritage to archives and accumulated knowledge resulting from the colonial context. This panel



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debate discusses how African cultural heritage located in Europe has to be treated. It discusses the existing controversies about ownership, destiny and preservation and looks into the challenges of conservation. It reflects on the modes of exchange of heritage and on collaboration efforts, and investigates the approaches to and modalities of restitution of African cultural heritage in Europe.

Chair:

Mr. Stijn Schoonderwoerd, General Director, National Museum of World Cultures

Introduction:

Prof. Dr. Josette Shaje Tshiluila, Professor in Art History, University of Kinshasa

Speakers:

Prof. Dr. Hamady Bocoum, Director, Musée des civilisations noires

H.E. Ambassador Robert Masozera, Director General, Institute of National Museums of Rwanda

Prof. Dr. Wayne Modest, Head, Research Centre for Material Culture, National Museum of World Cultures

Dr. Jos van Beurden, Affiliated Researcher, Free University of Amsterdam

Mr. Yves-Bernard Debie, Lawyer, MATTHYS & DEBIE, Brussels - *tbc*

19 September (Royal Library, Brussels)

9.00-11.00:

Panel Debate: Connecting societies and exploring sustainable forms of (cooperative) development

Within the framework of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) act as a plan of action for people, planet, and prosperity. Several goals are concerned with sustainable forms of cooperative development and connecting societies across State borders. This panel considers connecting societies and exploring sustainable forms of (cooperative) development in its broad sense. Perspectives on the different forms of cooperation and partnerships are viewed critically, from classic development cooperation to private investments. The objective is to formulate suggestions on how these approaches to cooperation could result in sustainable development, on how new partnership models can reinforce development cooperation and how new actors



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can be encouraged more actively in their efforts.

Chair:

Mrs. Nadia Nsayi, Policy Officer Central Africa, Pax Christi Flanders and Broederlijk Delen - *tbc*

Introduction:

H.E. Mr. Alexander De Croo, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Development Cooperation, Digital Agenda, Telecom, and Postal Services of Belgium

Speakers:

Mr. Bogdan Vanden Berghe, General Director, 11.11.11.

Mr. Koen Doens, Deputy Director General, Directorate-General International Cooperation and Development Cooperation (DEVCO) of the European Commission

Prof. Dr. ir. Louise O. Fresco, President Executive Board, Wageningen University & Research

Mrs. Katharina Vogeli, Senior Peace Advisor, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland

Dr. Paul-Simon Handy, Head, Conflict Prevention and Risk Analysis Division, Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria

11.00-11.30: *coffee and tea*

11.30-13.15: **Panel Debate: Connecting via diasporas**

African diaspora's provide a major contribution to European societies, yet their position and challenges have not always gained public visibility. A recent publication by the King Baudouin Foundation about African diaspora's living in Belgium, concludes that compared to other parts of society, they have higher levels of education yet are confronted with an exceptionally high unemployment rate and marginalized position in Belgian society. This panel reflects on Afro-European relations through the lens of diaspora communities. Taking stock of diasporas' position of 'in-betweenness', the panel examines their specific political, social, and cultural claims and challenges. It will also discuss the role diaspora's can play in connecting African and European societies and in fostering development. And finally, it will look into the potential and challenges of human mobility (including migration).



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Chair:

Dr. Katrien Pype, Assistant Professor in Anthropology, Catholic University of Leuven

Introduction:

Dr. Bambi Ceuppens, Anthropologist, Department of Cultural Anthropology and History, AfricaMuseum

Speakers:

Prof. Dr. Bruno Schoumaker, Professor, Catholic University of Louvain (UCL)

Dr. Joanne Hyppolite, Curator, Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington DC

Mrs. Assita Kanko, Founder, Polin political incubator

Mr. Ken Ndiaye, Anthropologist and Businessman

13.15-14.15: *Lunch*

14.15-16.00: ***Debate: sharing the past; connecting in the future***

How should and can African and European societies be connected, how can these connections be achieved and be strengthened, and how should the shared past be memorialized and represented based on equity, respect and solidarity? This final panel looks into options, ideas, challenges and opportunities, and questions dominant perspectives and well-established ideas on African-European connections and relations, and suggests what is needed to strengthen these connections and relations in the future.

Chair:

Mrs. Colette Braeckman, Journalist, Le Soir

Introduction:

Mrs. Véronique Clette-Gakuba, Research Fellow, METICES, Université Libre de Bruxelles – *tbc*

Speakers:

Mr. Fred Bauma, Member, Lucha (Lutte pour le Changement)

Mr. Yusuf Serunkuma Kajura, PhD Graduate Fellow, Makerere Institute of Social Research (MISR)



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Mr. Smockey Bambara, Founder, Le Balai Citoyen
Prof. Dr. An Ansoms, Professor at the Institute for the Analysis of Change in Contemporary and Historical Societies, Catholic University of Louvain (UCL)

16.00-17.00: **Closing Remarks**

H.E. Mr. Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs of Belgium
Prof. Dr. Achille Mbembe, Professor, Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of the Witwatersrand

17.00: *Reception*

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