

Dan Totica - Détail de Masque, Afrique, sculpté sur bois
Alamy Banque d'images

Decolonizing Heritage – The Return of Cultural Objects to Africa : An International Law Perspective

Thursday 23 September 2021, 18h15 - 20h (CET), Inaugural lecture

Friday 24 September 2021, 9h30 - 18h (CET)

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Conference organized by the

**UNESCO Chair in International Law of the Protection of Cultural Heritage,
Art-Law Centre, University of Geneva,**

and

**Department of Public International Law and International Organization,
University of Geneva,**

in partnership with

**Permanent Mission of the Republic of Senegal to the United Nations Office
and other international organizations in Geneva,**

**Global Studies Institute, University of Geneva,
African Union,**

and

International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)

Thursday 23 September 2021

Room U600, Uni Dufour

INAUGURAL LECTURE

Welcome: Prof. Nicolas Levrat, Director, Global Studies Institute (GSI)

Opening Speech: Prof. Yves Flückiger, Rector of the University of Geneva

Introduction: Gorgui Wade Ndoye, United Nations accredited Journalist, Director of the Pan-African Magazine Continent Premier

Lecture: Prof. Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Director, Institute of African Studies; Professor of French and of Philosophy, Columbia University, *Les objets d'art africains et leurs traductions* – online presentation

Discussant: Prof. Didier Péclard, Director of the Master in African Studies, Global Studies Institute (GSI)

Friday 24 September 2021

Auditorium Arditi, Avenue du Mail 1, 1204 Geneva

INTRODUCTION

*Chair: Gorgui Wade Ndoye, United Nations accredited Journalist,
Director of the Pan-African Magazine Continent Premier*

9h30

Opening speeches

Prof. Bénédicte Föex, Dean of the Law Faculty, University of Geneva
H.E. Mr. Coly Seck, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Senegal

10h00

Keynote address

Prof. Felwine Sarr, Anne-Marie Bryan Chair in French and Francophone Studies, Duke University

10h40

Coffee break

PANEL I – CHALLENGES TO THE RETURN OF CULTURAL OBJECTS

Chair: H.E. Kadra Ahmed Hassan, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Djibouti to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

11h00

H.E. Namira Negm, Legal Counsel and Director of the Office of Legal Affairs, African Union, *The African Union: policy and action for the return of cultural objects*

11h20

George Abungu, Consultant and Fellow of the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Studies, *The unfinished agenda of decolonization in relation to the return of cultural objects removed during colonialism: policy and practice of African states* – online presentation

11h40

Marina Schneider, Principal Legal Officer & Treaty Depositary, UNIDROIT, *The 1995 UNIDROIT Convention and colonial heritage* – online presentation

12h00

Dr. Alessandro Chechi, University of Geneva, *The return of colonial objects and international law*

12h20

Discussion and lunch break

PANEL II – A PANORAMA OF PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

Chair: Prof. Marc-André Renold, University of Geneva, UNESCO Chair

14h00

Irina Bokova, Former Director-General of UNESCO (2009 – 2017), *Cultural diplomacy and the decolonization of collections*

14h20 Robert Peters, Senior Officer, German Federal Foreign Office,
Dealing with collections from colonial contexts: recent developments in Germany

14h40 Verhoogt Robert and Boer Maurice, Senior policy officers, Dutch Ministry of Culture,
Redressing an injustice. Dutch policy on collections from a colonial context

15h00 Carlo Sommaruga, Council of States, Swiss Parliament,
Le retour des biens coloniaux: Quel rôle pour la Suisse ?

15h20 *Discussion and coffee break*

16h00 Prof. Clémentine Bories, University of Toulouse 1 Capitole,
Le retour des biens culturels coloniaux à l'Afrique : l'approche de la France

16h20 Prof. Carsten Stahn, University of Leiden,
The return of cultural objects: legal and ethical dimensions in museum practices

16h40 Boris Wastiau, Director, and Floriane Morin, Curator of the African Department,
Ethnographic Museum of Geneva (MEG),
Les biens culturels africains conservés au MEG : enjeux et défis

17h00 Prof. Marc-André Renold, *Establishing a platform for the diplomacy of cultural heritage at the University of Geneva*

17h20 *Discussion*

CONCLUSIONS

17h40 Prof. Makane Moïse Mbengue, University of Geneva, *An action plan for African States*

Attendance is free but registration is required by 19 September 2021,
using the online form available on the Art-Law Centre's website:

www.art-law.org

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