

Berlin Postkolonial e.V.

PRESS RELEASE

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All human remains from colonized countries must be prepared for repatriation

Non-government organization Berlin Postkolonial welcomes the decision of the state-funded Foundation of Prussian Cultural Heritage (SPK) to start provenance research on the more than 1,000 human remains taken for racist researches to Berlin during Germany's colonial rule in today's Tanzania, Ruanda and Burundi, 1885-1918.

We see this decision as a result of our long-term protests against further research on the victims of European and German colonialism.

At the same time we want to emphasize:

- 1 that not only the Foundation of Prussian Cultural Heritage but also the Berlin Society of Anthropology, Ethnology and Prehistory (Rudolf-Virchow Collection) is in possession of thousands of human remains from colonized countries
- 2 That both institutions possess numerous human remains from other regions colonized by Germany and Europe

We call on both institutions to check the provenance of their anthropological collections, to inform the source communities and to offer the repatriation of human remains shipped to Germany.

Tanzanian activist Mnyaka Sururu Mboro from Berlin Postkolonial:

"I can hardly believe that the remains of our ancestors are now to be returned. The Foundation has not been active for more than five years despite various promises. Should it come to a repatriation I can only hope that the German government will not return them without an apology. We have never ceased to remember colonialism and the injustice done to our ancestors as well as to ourselves."

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Conference on 2017/10/14-15: "Prussian Colonial Heritage – Sacred Objects and Human Remains", Centre Francais Berlin, Müllerstra.e 74, 13349 Berlin