



Call for papers

Asixoxe – Let's Talk! Conference on African Philosophy 2025

Understanding Decolonisation and the Return of African Cultural Heritage

The debate on decolonisation is far from over, as critics endlessly examine the many signs of colonisation over time. The current debate on the restitution of African cultural heritage removed from the continent during colonisation illustrates the issue. Critics and protagonists of the return of this heritage to its original owners clash over various issues including the nature and the extent of the removed heritage; the legality and legitimacy of the repatriation of artefacts displaced from their original environment; the philosophical and anthropological significance as well as the political impact of the restitution of African heritage; the aesthetic value of the artefacts to be returned, as well as their subsequent social and economic value for both Europe and Africa; the relevance for African countries to recover, in a globalised and constantly changing world, a legacy that has been exiled for so many years.

In 2025, the *Asixoxe – Let's Talk! Conference on African Philosophy* aims at exploring this complex debate through multidisciplinary approaches. It strives to go beyond conventional discourses for which the return to the past and the (re)discovery of the pre-colonial African legacy represents the key to decolonising the continent. The conference aims at exploring the meaning of the idea of "return" and its meaning for the decolonisation of Africa. "Return" becomes a mythical category in African cultural imaginary that underlies various theoretical frameworks including concepts such as Ubuntu, Ujamaa, Sankofa, African authenticity, Negritude, the return to the "roots", and so on. The conference aspires to assess the scope and relevance of this "metaphysics of return", as well as their potential alternatives responding to the challenges facing Africa now.

We invite papers that explore issues regarding the concept of decolonisation and theories of return in an African framework. The conference interrogates a range of philosophical, political, literary, artistic, and communicational topics, such as:

- The colonial gaze on precolonial and modern African artefacts.
- Theories concerning the concepts of restitution and return.
- The philosophy and profile of institutions dealing with African cultural legacy, such as museums, art galleries, African film industry, publishing houses, and so on.
- The nature and the extent of African cultural heritage.
- The idea of justice and reparation with respect to the African cultural heritage in the context of decolonisation.
- The reception and the enhancement of restituted artefacts by African people, governments, educational and cultural institutions.
- African and Afro-diasporic philosophies of arts.
- Property and copyright associated with African artefacts removed during colonisation.

Asixoxe – Let's Talk! Conference on African Philosophy is jointly organized by the Professorship of African and Afrophone Philosophies of the University of Bayreuth and the Department of Political Philosophy and Globalization Research of the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences. The conference will be held in a **hybrid form, at the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague, Czech Republic, and online, on 23-24 June 2025.**

Titles and abstracts of 200–250 words, as well as any queries, should be sent by 31 May 2025 to Dr Albert Kasanda, kasanda@flu.cas.cz. Please include a short bio of the presenter(s). Each speaker will be given 20 minutes for the presentation, with subsequent 10 minutes for questions and discussion. We envisage a publication of selected papers from the conference. There is no registration fee for presenters and other participants. English is the working language.