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Cases of Restitution

Recent Cases of Repatriation and Restitution from Germany to Namibia

From Two Perspectives

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Claudia Andratschke and Nzila M. Libanda-Mubusisi

Abstract

This chapter was written by Claudia Andratschke and Nzila M. Libanda-Mubusisi. In the first part, Andratschke uses the example of three individuals whose remains were returned from the State Museum Hanover, Germany, to the Republic of Namibia in 2018 to illuminate the discussions around anthropological investigation prior to a repatriation that were taking place in Germany at the time. This section also shows that, when dealing with human remains, the moral-ethical responsibility does not end with their return. On the one hand, the role of German institutions and disciplines in the unethical and illegal transfer of human remains as well as in the formation and distribution of racist stereotypes in the colonial era and afterwards must be examined and made transparent. On the other hand, it is important to start a dialogue with the now preserving institutions and curators in Namibia.

The second part, by Nzila M. Libanda-Mubusisi, shows that the collection of human remains preserved in the National Museum of Namibia has more than doubled in the last ten years between independence and the present day, following the return of ancestral remains and cultural objects from the Charité University Hospital and other collections in Germany in 2011, 2014 and 2018. As a result, a growing number of human remains and objects of cultural and historical

significance are now accumulating in various storage facilities at various Namibian institutions, including the National Museum of Namibia, the National Archives of Namibia, and others. These returns have raised awareness in the Namibian culture and heritage sector regarding the challenges of managing human remains and heritage objects. Restitution debates can therefore assist in developing comprehensive guidelines on how human remains and other cultural objects can best be handled. This chapter urges that countries should be obligated to ensure the proper restitution and repatriation of looted and illegally acquired human remains, objects and related material culture currently held in foreign museums, institutions, and other places, that originated in nowadays Namibia.

Cas récents de rapatriement et de restitution d'Allemagne vers la Namibie – de deux points de vue (Résumé)

Ce chapitre a été rédigé par Nzila M. Libanda-Mubusisi et Claudia Andratschke qui, dans la première partie, utilise l'exemple de trois individus qui ont été renvoyés du musée de Hanovre (Allemagne) à la République de Namibie en 2018 afin d'illustrer les discussions qui ont eu lieu à l'époque en Allemagne sur les enquêtes anthropologiques préalables à un rapatriement. Cette partie indique également que la responsabilité morale et éthique dans la gestion des restes humains ne s'arrête pas à leur restitution : d'une part, le rôle des institutions et des disciplines allemandes dans le transfert contraire à l'éthique et illégal de restes humains ainsi que dans la formulation et la diffusion de stéréotypes racistes à l'époque coloniale et ensuite doivent être analysés et portés à la connaissance de tous jusqu'à aujourd'hui. D'autre part, il est important d'entamer un dialogue avec les institutions de conservation et les conservateurs de Namibie.

La deuxième partie, rédigée par Nzila M. Libanda-Mubusisi, montre que la collection de restes humains conservée dans le Musée national de Namibie a plus que doublée au cours des dix dernières années, depuis l'indépendance jusqu'à aujourd'hui, à la suite du retour des restes ancestraux et des objets culturels de l'Hôpital universitaire Charité et d'autres collections en Allemagne en 2011, 2014 et 2018. En conséquence, un nombre croissant de restes humains et d'objets d'importance culturelle et historique s'accumulent aujourd'hui dans des entrepôts de différentes institutions namibiennes, notamment le Musée national de Namibie, les Archives nationales de Namibie et d'autres institutions. Ces restitutions ont sensibilisé le secteur de la culture et du patrimoine namibien aux défis que représente la gestion des restes humains et des objets du patrimoine culturel. Les débats sur

la restitution peuvent donc contribuer à la mise en place de lignes directrices sur la manière dont les restes humains et autres objets culturels peuvent être gérés le plus efficacement possible. L'article insiste sur le fait que les pays devraient être obligés de garantir la bonne restitution et le rapatriement des restes humains, des objets et de la culture matérielle qui ont été pillés et obtenus illégalement dans la Namibie d'aujourd'hui, conservés dans des musées étrangers, des institutions et d'autres lieux.

The Repatriation of Three Individuals from the State Museum Hanover, Germany, to the Republic of Namibia in 2018

Human remains in public collections require an even higher level of careful handling as sensitive objects,¹ being the mortal remains of ancestors or individuals whose origins often date back to contexts of colonial injustice or violence, such as assassinations, martial conflicts or the desecration of graves. Moreover, after their entry into the collections in Europe where many still continue to be preserved, human remains frequently became “objects” or the subject of racial anthropological research and were thus additionally dishonored and misused for colonial or colonial-revisionist racist purposes.² In Germany, there have been various recommendations or other publications on the handling and the repatriation of human remains since 2013.³ In contrast to the still very different and controversial handling of claims for the restitution of objects, there is political and public consent on the repatriation of mortal remains to their countries of origin, and indeed such remains have been returned – mainly to Australia, New Zealand and Namibia – over the past decade.⁴

First of all it is important to note that human remains are not at the focus of the various PAESE subprojects in collections in Lower Saxony, but have been or are being studied in separate projects.⁵ For the Lower Saxon State Museum of Hanover (*Landesmuseum Hannover*), where a position for provenance research was established in 2008, this has been the case since 2011. The department of Ethnology, for example, decided not to exhibit human remains at the permanent exhibition which opened in 2015, and returned the remains of a young woman to Australia in 2017. Subsequently, the department of Natural History repatriated the remains of three individuals to Namibia in 2018.⁶

Unlike university, medical or anthropological collections the State Museum of Hanover has never actively collected or conducted research on human remains. In fact, for a long time there was not even a systematic collecting strategy concerning the ethnographic collection, other than the general effort in the colonial period to preserve objects from the colonies.⁷ Only a few human remains therefore entered the museum in the colonial period as incidental “additions” from collectors who were mainly offering animal preparations (taxidermy) and ethnographic objects, or through exchanges with other museums. In the case of Namibia, these were three skulls donated to the then Provincial, later State Museum of Hanover by a merchant named August Rautenberg (1872–1932) in 1909 and 1913.⁸

Traces of August Rautenberg, who was an authorised signatory for the Lüderitzbucht Company L. Scholz & Co (Ltd.) from Berlin in a branch office in Keetmanshop,⁹ can be found in the museum and the municipal archives of Hanover as well as in several sources of the colonial records.¹⁰ The museum received the first gifts from him in 1905 and then from 1909 onwards, and thus always in periods when Rautenberg spent some time in his hometown before going back to Keetmanshoop.¹¹

The presence of these skulls and the general willingness to return them have been repeatedly reported by the museum to the relevant authorities, such as the Foreign Office or the Namibian embassy, since 2011.¹² But it was only when the third of the three repatriations mentioned above were being discussed in 2018 that the skulls were finally taken under consideration, and then repatriated following a ceremony in the French Cathedral at *Gendarmenmarkt* in Berlin on 29 August 2018. Before the repatriation, research was carried out in collaboration with the Namibian embassy, accompanied by a controversial discussion about anthropological investigations that, while they used non-invasive methods, drew on literature and methods that reproduced colonial and racist stereotypes.¹³ But for the historical research it was important to at least be able to name the gender of the person in the report, with the aim of rehumanising the skulls after they had been turned into “objects” in the museum with inventory numbers and labels. The museum therefore decided to have an anthropologist look at the skulls.¹⁴ The anthropological report revealed a number of contradictions with the museum records. According to the information provided by Rautenberg and documented on the index card, the skull was supposed to have belonged to a “warrior” who had “attacked” a “farmer during a riot” and then had been “shot by him”. It turned out, however, to be the upper skull of a young woman that had been assembled with the lower jaw of a young man.¹⁵

From 1909 until 2018, the remains had been regarded as one individual but then proved to be those of two individuals with traces of earth and sand. The latter indicated that both had lain in the earth and therefore must have been illegally exhumed or graves had been desecrated.¹⁶ According to the current state of research, however, it remains unclear whether August Rautenberg appropriated the individuals in the colony of German Southwest Africa from an unknown person or mediator with a false indication of origin, or whether it was Rautenberg himself who gathered them from a burial site, put the remains of two individuals together and handed them over to the museum with an invented “bloody” story.

At the beginning of July 1913 Rautenberg handed over another human skull which, according to the files of the Natural History department, came from a burial ground at “Anichab bei Lüderitzbucht, Deutsch-S. W. Afrika”, was inventoried as male and “cleaned”. This skull turned out to be the remains of a female individual.¹⁷

So it did prove important to have an anthropologist briefly examine the skulls before repatriation. The anthropological examinations provided the decisive clues with which to ascertain for the first time that the remains were of two unrelated individuals, to address the bones as male or female persons, and thus to “re-humanise” them at least in basic terms, and finally to be able to expose the story of a shot warrior that had been handed down for decades in the archives of the museum as false. Similarly, the skull from Lüderitzbucht, supposedly belonging to an Indigenous man, was attributed to a female person. Without this brief anthropological research, the State Museum of Hanover would have returned only two skulls, with incorrect information, instead of the remains of three individuals, and would have repeated the false story that Rautenberg told in 1909.

The act of the illegal desecration of graves and transfer of remains to Germany is of course no “better” than the false story of a shot warrior, but it is just another story. At the time of the handover, it presumably gave the skull the additional meaning, questionable from today’s perspective, of a “trophy” from the colony, which says a lot about the actors on the side of the colonisers and the institutions and people who profited from them, including museums. While their names and activities can be reconstructed at least to some extent, the fates of the three ancestors whose remains were unlawfully taken to the then German Empire by a merchant and subsequently preserved in Hanover for over a hundred years until their repatriation to Namibia remain completely unknown to us.

This inequality is ultimately one of the many consequences of the colonial asymmetries and the “colonial archive”. These continue to have an effect in European collections to this day and their reappraisal constitutes a task to which the State Museum of Hanover has actively dedicated itself within the framework of its own provenance research as well as in special exhibitions and projects like PAESE. In this regard, the moral-ethical responsibility when dealing with human remains does not end with their return or repatriation. On the one hand, it is the duty of each institution to research and render transparent the involvement of local actors in the illegal transfer of human remains from the countries of origin as well as its own role in the subsequent formation and distribution of racist stereotypes in the colonial era and afterwards. It is their task to help make the public aware of these inglorious episodes and to distance themselves from it.¹⁸ In the State Museum of Hanover, for example, a “colonial exhibition” and a “Provincial Office for Demographic and Racial Studies” (*Provinzialstelle für Bevölkerungskunde und Rassenpflege*) were affiliated to the department of Archaeology in the 1930s, at the time of colonial revisionism. Both propagated racist terminology and evolutionary models, and are now being investigated by the department of Provenance Research.¹⁹

In the case of the skulls from Namibia, the results of both the anthropological and historical research were recorded in a report and handed over together with the remains to the Namibian embassy and representatives of the National Museum of Namibia on 29 August 2018.²⁰ All human remains returned from Germany since 2011 have been preserved there until today.

Recent Cases of Repatriation and Restitution from the Perspective of a Namibian Curator

The National Museum of Namibia is the repository institution of cultural and natural heritage resources. The collection of human remains preserved there has more than doubled in the last ten years between independence and today. The first return of the remains of 20 individuals in 2011 received international publicity due to the direct and well-documented link between these and the 1904/08 Herero and Nama genocide in Namibia.²¹ Photographs of some seventeen decapitated heads that had been used for research and published in a German scientific journal in 1913 were republished in the media.

The heads had been taken from prisoners held in the notorious concentration camp on Shark Island at Lüderitz for racial studies.²²

In 2014 the human remains of a further 35 individuals were returned. These had been collected between 1898 and 1913; here not only the human remains of Herero and Nama but also of San, Ovambo, and Damara individuals were repatriated. In 2018 the remains of a further 27 persons were returned. Therefore, a total of 82 individuals has, to date, been returned to Namibia, which means that there is now a total of 137 individuals in the collection of the National Museum of Namibia.

The Witbooi Bible and Whip

In February 2019, two sacred heritage objects – a Bible and a whip that had belonged to the famous anti-colonial resistance leader, Captain Hendrik Witbooi (c. 1830–1905) – were returned by the Linden Museum in Stuttgart, Germany, to Namibia.²³ The official handover, in a State Ceremony, took place on 1 March 2019, in Gibeon, Hardap Region, at the former residence of Captain Hendrik Witbooi and during the coronation of the Nama Chief in Gibeon.²⁴ After the handover to the Nama Traditional Chief, the Bible was deposited at the National Archives in view of its national significance and value.²⁵ The whip was deposited at the National Museum of Namibia for safekeeping.

The Hendrick Witbooi Bible and whip were exhibited to the public under unsuitable conditions – harsh weather and sun – during the handover ceremony. Here, a compromise was made in favour of public exposure. Afterwards and now in the National Museum the sacred objects are treated following scientific principles of conservation to stabilise and prolong their lifespan. Managing knowledge about the whip created opportunities for the production of knowledge, access to historical objects and engagement with the communities.

The Stone Cross from Cape Cross

Additionally, a more than 500-year-old Portuguese stone cross from Cape Cross, erected in 1486 and removed by the German colonial powers in 1893, was returned to Namibia in August 2019 from the German Historical Museum in Berlin, Germany. This restitution was a result of years of discussion and a symposium which took place in Berlin in 2018 and sought to determine where the cross belonged and whether Namibia's claim for restitution was justified.²⁶ The stone cross arrived in Namibia on 6 August 2019. Bilateral consultation was held between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Namibia regarding an official handover, which did not take place, however, with the result that the cross remains in a storage – in its box.²⁷

Conclusion

One consequence of the various returns and repatriations to date has been that a growing number of human remains and objects of cultural and historical significance are now accumulating in various storage facilities at Namibian institutions, including the National Museum of Namibia, the National Archives of Namibia, and others across the country. These returns have therefore raised awareness in the Namibian culture and heritage sector regarding the challenges of managing human remains and heritage objects. The inventorying, verification and authentication through curation of human remains, associated objects and significant heritage objects in regional and foreign institutions should therefore be a collaborative work – and considered before or during repatriation and restitution processes. Debates around the latter can therefore assist in developing comprehensive guidelines on how human remains and other cultural objects are best handled.

Accordingly, provenance research should be a cooperative task of the countries involved and those countries should be obligated to ensure proper repatriation and restitution of looted and illegally acquired objects from nowadays Namibia and related cultural material. As the Namibian nation and or communities can demonstrate a genuine link to the human remains and to heritage objects which have over time become of demonstrable value to the nation and or the communities in question, there is, finally, no need to call them “so-called” societies of origin.²⁸

- 1 On sensitive objects see Lange, Britta (2011): "Sensible Sammlungen", in: Margit Berner, Annette Hoffmann, Britta Lange (Eds): *Sensible Sammlungen. Aus dem anthropologischen Depot*, Hamburg, pp. 15–40; Fründt, Sarah (2015): Was sind eigentlich sensible Sammlungen? Und warum sind sie sensibel?, 9 December 2015, on: *Museum und Verantwortung*, <https://sensmus.hypotheses.org/117>, accessed 31 March 2023; Brandstetter, Anna-Maria; Hierholzer, Vera (2018): "Sensible Dinge. Eine Einführung in Debatten und Herausforderungen", in: Anna-Maria Brandstetter, Vera Hierholzer (Eds): *Nicht nur Raubkunst! Sensible Dinge in Museen und universitären Sammlungen*, Mainz, pp. 11–28.
- 2 Stoecker, Holger (2016): "Human Remains als historische Quellen zur namibisch-deutschen Geschichte: Ergebnisse und Erfahrungen aus einem interdisziplinären Forschungsprojekt", in: Geert Castryck, Silke Strickrodt, Katja Werthmann (Eds): *Sources and Methods for African History and Culture. Essays in Honour of Adam Jones*, Leipzig, pp. 469–492; Förster, Larissa; Henrichsen, Dag; Stoecker, Holger; Axas, Hans (2018): "Re-individualising Human Remains from Namibia: Colonialism, Grave Robbery and Intellectual History", in: *Human Remains and Violence*, Vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 45–66; and the contributions in Fjorde, Cressida; McKeown, C. Timothy; Keeler, Honor (2020) (Eds): *The Routledge Companion to Indigenous Repatriation: Return, Reconcile, Renew*, London.
- 3 See ICOM Germany (2010) (Ed.): *Ethical guidelines for museums*, https://www.icomdeutschland.de/client/media/364/icom_ethische_richtlinien_d_2010.pdf; German Museums Association (Ed.) (2013): *Empfehlungen zum Umgang mit menschlichen Überresten in Museen und Sammlungen*, <https://www.museumsbund.de/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/2013-empfehlungen-zum-umgang-mit-menschl-ueberresten.pdf>; *Ibid.*, revised 2021: <https://www.museumsbund.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/dmb-leitfaden-umgang-menschl-ueberrest-de-web-20210623.pdf>; Fuchs, Jakob; Gabler, Diana (2021): *Menschliche Überreste im Depot. Empfehlungen für Betreuung und Nutzung, Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden*, 2. revised edition, Dresden, <https://wissenschaftliche-sammlungen.de/de/service-material/materialien/menschliche-ueberreste-im-depot-empfehlungen-fuer-betreuung-und-nutzung/>, Winkelmann, Andreas; Stoecker, Holger; Fründt, Sarah; Förster, Larissa (2022): *Interdisziplinäre Provenienzforschung zu menschlichen Überresten aus kolonialen Kontexten: Eine methodische Arbeitshilfe des Deutschen Zentrums Kulturgutverluste, des Berliner Medizinhistorischen Museums der Charité und von ICOM Deutschland*, Heidelberg: arthistoricum.net (Beiträge zur Museologie, Vol. 11), <https://doi.org/10.11588/arthistoricum.893>, all accessed 31 March 2023.
- 4 See Förster, Larissa (2020): "The Face of Genocide: Returning Human Remains from German Institutions to Namibia", in: Fjorde et al., 2020, *Routledge Companion*, pp. 101–127; Winkelmann, Andreas (2020): "Repatriations of Human Remains from Germany, 1911 to 2019", in: *Museum and Society*, Vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 40–51; Gram, Rikke; Schoofs, Zoe (2022): *Germany's History of Returning Human Remains and Objects from Colonial Contexts: An Overview of Successful Cases and Unsettled Claims between 1970 and 2021* (Working Paper German Lost Art Foundation, Vol. 3), <https://doi.org/10.25360/01-2022-00019>, accessed 31 March 2023; the "Framework Principles for Dealing with Collections from Colonial Contexts", by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media in Germany, the Cultural Affairs Ministers of the Federal States et al. in March 2019, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/blob/2210152/b2731f8b59210c77c68177cdcd-3d03de/190412-stm-m-sammlungsgut-kolonial-kontext-en-data.pdf>, accessed 31 March 2023.
- 5 For the PAESE project see <https://www.postcolonial-provenance-research.com/?lang=en>, for projects with a focus on human remains in Lower Saxony see e.g. the repatriation of two Maori ancestral skulls (*Toi moko*) from the Ethnographic Collection of the University of Göttingen to New Zealand on 20 October 2020, <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/617641.html>; a project at the *Landesmuseum Natur und Mensch Oldenburg*, 2019–21, https://www.kulturgutverluste.de/Webs/EN/ResearchFunding/ProjektFinder/Projektfinder_Formular.html;jsessionid=4035ED-3633517876DEFE4193BC1887A5.mo?queryResultId=null&pageNo=0&docId=1189524&cl2Categories_Themen=FBKK&sortOrder=cl2Addresses_Adresse_sort+asc&show_map=0&cl2Addresses_Adresse_Country=xa-de-ni, all accessed 31 March 2023.

- 6 See Winkelmann, 2020, *Repatriations*, p. 40ff.; Gram and Schoofs, 2022, *Germany's History*, p. 20 and 26f.; Andratschke, Claudia (2023): "Geschenkte Schädel. Menschliche Überreste aus Namibia im Provinzialmuseum Hannover", in: Katja Lembke (Ed.): *Die Haifischinsel. Das erste deutsche Konzentrationslager*, Oppenheim, pp. 85–91.
- 7 The ethnographic collection was initially administered by the prehistoric department and it was not until 1954 that a separate department was established. See Schmid, Anna (2006) (Ed.): *Mit Begeisterung und langem Atem. Ethnologie am Landesmuseum Hannover*; Steffen-Schrade, Jutta (2012): "Die Geschichte der Ethnographischen Sammlung im Landesmuseum Hannover", in: Jutta Steffen-Schrade, Gundolf Krüger, Ulrich Menter (Eds): *TABU?! Verborgene Kräfte – Geheimes Wissen*, Hannover, pp. 114–121; Andratschke, Claudia (2016): "Provenienzforschung in ethnologischen Sammlungen", in: Alexis von Poser, Bianca Baumann (Eds): *Heikles Erbe. Koloniale Spuren bis in die Gegenwart*, Dresden, pp. 304–309.
- 8 Lower Saxony State Museum Hanover, Department of Natural History, inventory book, File II.3.1 (Acquisitions, Gifts, 1909) and index cards.
- 9 The *Lüderitzbucht-Gesellschaft L. Scholz & Co. mbh* in Lüderitzbucht was founded in 1902 as the successor of the *Lüderitz'sche Faktorei*, which had acquired the first land from Captain Joseph Fredericks on 1 May 1883 on behalf of Adolf Lüderitz. The company had branches and estates in Lüderitzbucht, Seeheim, Keetmanshoop and other places, and operated an import and export business. See *Deutsches Koloniallexikon* (1920), Vol. 2, p. 465, http://www.ub.bildarchiv-dkg.uni-frankfurt.de/Bildprojekt/Lexikon/php/suche_db.php?suchname=L%FCderitzbucht-Gesellschaft; von der Heydts Kolonialhandbuch (1912), p. 226, <https://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/dsdk/periodical/pageview/2093850>, all accessed 31 March 2023.
- 10 The "*Kaufmann* [Merchant] *A. Rautenberg*" mentioned in the files could be identified as August Karl Wilhelm Heinrich Rautenberg, born 12 October 1872 in Hanover as the son of Karl G. F. Rautenberg and Friederike J. D. M. Rautenberg, née Schwabe. See Municipal Archives of Hanover, resident registration files; births and baptisms in the register of the *Gartenkirche* Hanover, 1873, p. 254, No. 331; Hamburg, deaths register, 1874–1950, Hamburg No. 22b, No. 323. In 1910, various colonial organs reported that the merchants John Payne and August Rautenberg had been granted joint procurator to represent and sign for the company in Lüderitzbucht and Keetmanshoop; this expired in July/August 1913. See Federal Archives (BArch) Berlin, File R 8024/206, <https://invenio.bundesarchiv.de/invenio/direktlink/022bb7e4-7b2d-40b9-a9de-b9f49a29a3a1/>; German Colonial Handbook (*Deutsches Kolonial-Handbuch*) (1908), p. 126; *ibid.* (1909), p. 157; *ibid.* (1910), p. 99, Online University of Bremen, Digitale Sammlung Deutscher Kolonialismus, <https://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/dsdk/periodical/search/2012295?query=Rautenberg>; accessed 31 March 2023.
- 11 Lower Saxony State Museum Hanover, Department of Ethnology, Inventory Numbers 4624 and 4625, registered on 12 October 1905; *ibid.*, Department of Natural History, File II.3.1 ("Acquisitions 1905 to 1907"). August Rautenberg can be found on two passenger lists of the Hamburg Woermann Line, first on the list of *Eduard Woermann*, which shipped from Cuxhaven to West Africa on 16 November 1905, then on the steamship *Ernst Woermann*, which left for Africa on 30 March 1906. On both lists, the then 33-year-old Rautenberg had indicated "*Kaufmann* [Merchant]" as his profession and "*Lüderitzbucht*" as his destination. See State Archives of Hamburg, 373-7 I (Office for Emigration), VIII A 1, Vols 172 and 176.
- 12 The official requests from Australia and Namibia were sent via the Foreign Office and the Lower Saxon Ministry for Science and Culture to all State Museums in Lower Saxony. See the Coordination Office of Decolonize Berlin e.V. (Ed.): *We Want Them Back: Scientific Report on the Presence of Human Remains from Colonial Contexts in Berlin*, https://decolonize-berlin.de/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/We-Want-Them-Back_english-web.pdf, p. 13, accessed 31 March 2023, criticising that the returns of the Charité Berlin from 2011 onwards were only made in reaction to this, rather than proactively.

- 13 See Stoecker, 2016, *Human Remains*, p. 469ff.; Stocker, Holger; Förster, Larissa; Fründt, Sarah et al. (2017): "A Good Starting Point? Critical Perspectives from Various Disciplines", in: *Forum: Human Remains in Museums and Collections. A Critical Engagement with the 'Recommendations' of the German Museums Association*, H-Soz-Kult, 3 February 2017, <https://www.hsozkult.de/debate/id/diskussionen-3955>, accessed 31 March 2023.
- 14 The non-invasive anthropological examinations were carried out in June 2018 by Dr Barbara Teßmann, Berlin. All information provided here on the results of these examinations refer to her reports submitted in July 2018.
- 15 Ibid.; State Museum of Hanover, Department of Natural History, former index cards of "Homo sapiens, male, Namibia".
- 16 For the early history of grave robbery in Namibia see Henrichsen, Dag (2020): "Demands for Restitution – A Recent Phenomenon? Early Histories for Human Remains Violation in Namibia", in: *Contemporary Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 7, No 1, pp. 38–46; for very early examples of restitution claims Müller, Lars (2021): *Returns of Cultural Artefacts and Human Remains in a (Post)colonial Context. Mapping Claims between the Mid-19th Century and the 1970s* (Working Paper German Lost Art Foundation, Vol. 1), Magdeburg, accessed 31 March 2023.
- 17 Barbara Teßmann, *Anthropological Report*, Berlin, July 2018.
- 18 von Poser, Alexis; Baumann, Bianca: "Einleitung", in: von Poser and Baumann, 2016, *Heikles Erbe*, pp. 14–25.
- 19 Jachens, Maik (2021): "Die Rassenkundliche Abteilung des Landesmuseum Hannover 1933–1945. ein Zwischenbericht" on: *Retour. Freier Blog für Provenienzforschende*, 14 April 2021, <https://retour.hypotheses.org/1419>; accessed 31 March 2023.
- 20 State Museum of Hanover, *Case Report/Provenance Analysis for Three Specimens from Namibia*, compiled by Claudia Andratschke and Barbara Teßmann, August 2018.
- 21 For the following see also Gram and Schoofs, 2022, *Germany's History*, pp. 25ff.
- 22 See also Förster, Larissa (2013): "You are giving us the skulls – where is the flesh?" Die Rückkehr der namibischen Human Remains", in: Holger Stoecker, Thomas Schnalke, Andreas Winkelmann (Eds): *Sammeln, Erforschen, Zurückgeben? Menschliche Gebeine aus der Kolonialzeit in akademischen und musealen Sammlungen*, Berlin, pp. 416–446; Winkelmann, Andreas; Stoecker, Holger (2014): "Rückgabe von Schädeln und Skeletten aus Namibia. Überreste einer fragwürdigen 'Rasseforschung'", in: *Ärzteblatt*, Vol. 111, no. 18, pp. 792–793, <https://www.aerzteblatt.de/archiv/159510/Rueckgabe-von-Schaedelund-Skeletten-an-Namibia-Ueberreste-einer-fragwuerdigen-Rasseforschung>, accessed 31 March 2023.
- 23 See Köbler, Reinhart (2019): *The Bible and the Whip – Entanglements around the Restitution of Robbed Heirlooms*, Freiburg (in German: "Die Bibel und die Peitsche: Verwicklungen um die Rückgabe geraubter Güter", in: *PERIPHERIE – Politik, Ökonomie, Kultur*, Vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 78–87); von Bernstorff, Jochen; Schuler, Jakob: "Restitution und Kolonialismus. Wem gehört die Witbooi-Bibel?", on: *Verfassungsblog. On Matters Constitutional*, 4 March 2019, <https://verfassungsblog.de/restitution-und-kolonialismus-wem-gehoert-die-witbooi-bibel/>, accessed 31 March 2023.
- 24 See *The Official Return of Kaptein Hendrik Witbooi's Bible and Whip from Germany, Gibeon*, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Td4-v-3RQXw>, accessed 31 March 2023.
- 25 In 1996 two copy letter books, called Hendrik Witbooi Journals II and III were returned to the National Archive of Namibia from the *Übersee-Museum* in Bremen, Germany. See Gram and Schoofs, 2022, *Germany's History*, p. 40.
- 26 German Historical Museum (*Deutsches Historisches Museum*) (2019) (Ed.): *Die Säule von Cape Cross. Koloniale Objekte und historische Gerechtigkeit* (Historische Urteilskraft. Magazin des Deutschen Historischen Museums, Vol. 1), Berlin; Silvester, Jeremy (2019): "Museumsobjekte, Erinnerung und Identität in Namibia", in: *ibid.*, pp. 43–47; Sandkühler, Thomas (2019): "Restitution and Historical

Judgment", on: *Public History Weekly*, 14 March 2019, <https://public-history-weekly.degruyter.com/7-2019-9/colonial-restitution/>, accessed 31 March 2023.

- 27 In 2021 the government of the Federal Republic of Germany declared that the ceremony could not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic; see <https://www.bundestag.de/presse/hib/845318-845318>, accessed 31 March 2023.
- 28 On strengthening the African perspective in the restitution and repatriation debates see also Moilola, Molemo (2022): *Reclaiming Restitution: Centering and contextualizing the African Narrative*. Report commissioned by Africa No Filter, <https://openrestitution.africa/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/ANF-Report-Main-Report.pdf>, accessed 31 March 2023.

