

In the Shadow  
of Colonialism

21

**Exhibition texts  
in large format**



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# Exhibition texts in large print

On the following pages you will find all the exhibition texts in large print. There is a separate copy for each exhibition room, labelled with the respective room number.

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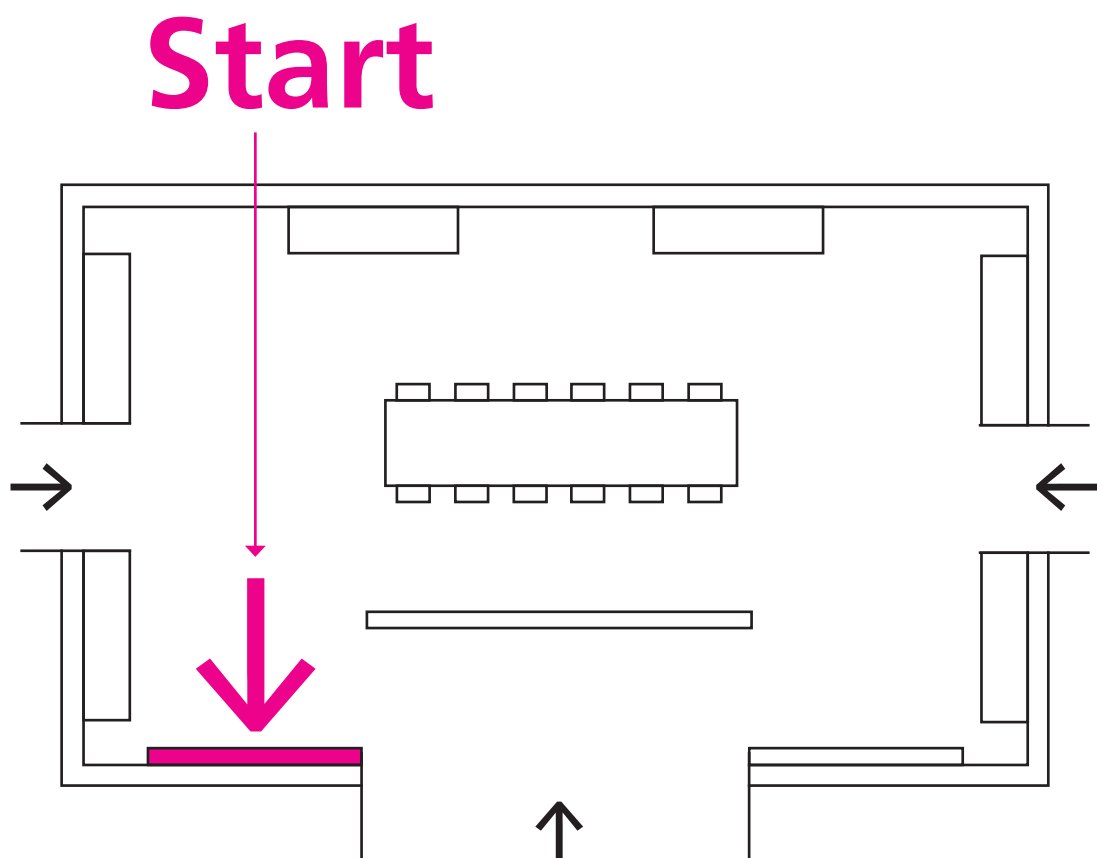


We hope you enjoy your visit to the Weltmuseum Wien!

Vienna, December 2024



# Room 21



# In the Shadow of Colonialism

Most of the world's population was dominated by foreign powers in the years between 1500 and 1920. This foreign rule was defined by conflicts and exploitation. Against this backdrop, ethnographic museums flourished in the 19th and 20th centuries and shaped stereotypical beliefs of lost or colonised cultures. As our Museum was one of those benefitting from Europe's colonial expansion, the stories behind many objects and how they were acquired deal with appropriation and colonial violence.

Although the colonies gradually fought for and were granted their independence after World War II, it was as if time stood still in ethnographic museums. The cherished and seemingly timeless conceptions of "us" and "them" were only hesitantly challenged as late as in the 1980s.

Today we face our colonial past not only to raise awareness but also to learn from it. After all, how we deal with our collections and the people related to them in the present will shape the image of ethnographic collections in the future.

## Why Questions instead of Answers?

This gallery is dedicated to one of the most difficult and pressing issues of ethnographic museums: their relationship to colonialism and imperialism. Central to the gallery is a confrontation with introductory questions that cannot be easily or clearly answered. Instead, they are intended as food for thought and discussion, while the central media table offers selected examples and encourages visitors to take a stand.

The issues we are raising are also reflected in our other museum galleries. Sometimes we address them right out in the open. In other cases, they stay in the background in favour of other topics. Nevertheless, they are always there and dealing with these fundamental issues characterises how we see ourselves as an institution.

"I come from the point of view that if you are going to do a native exhibition or a native gallery, whatever the case may be, you don't consult with Native American people. [...]. You use them as partners, so they have equal voice in the objects that are being presented."

Joe Horse Capture, Director of American Indian Initiatives, Minnesota Historical Society, July 2016

"There were strong colonial tendencies [in the Habsburg Monarchy], which is why the country never really took a stance against colonialism and racism. This legacy of cultural arrogance is still with us today."

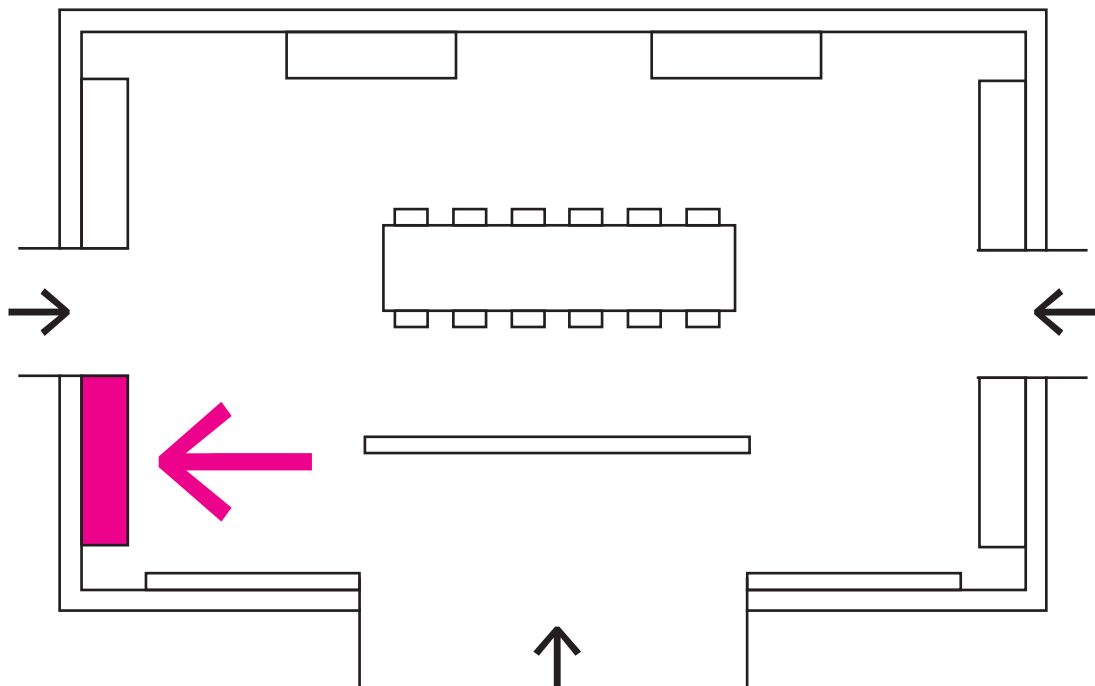
Walter Sauer, Professor of Social and Economic History, University of Vienna, September 201







# Room 21



# WHAT DOES AUSTRIA HAVE TO DO WITH COLONIALISM?

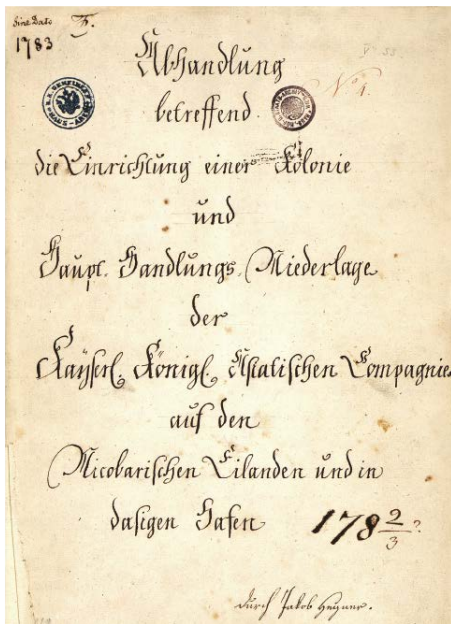
The notion that Austria does not have a colonial past has long been considered obsolete. The country benefitted from the European expansion and was part of the colonial system. Although Austria did not have any significant overseas colonies despite its multiple attempts, it was heavily involved in the colonial project and kept toying with the idea of owning land outside Europe time and again.

Parts of our collections stand testament that both the Habsburg Monarchy and individual Austrians were implicated in European colonialism through political alliances, trade interests, missionary work, or allegedly scientific expeditions. Austria's overseas experiences and related material legacy not only shaped colonial perceptions of the world but also continue to have an effect to this day.

1775–1785

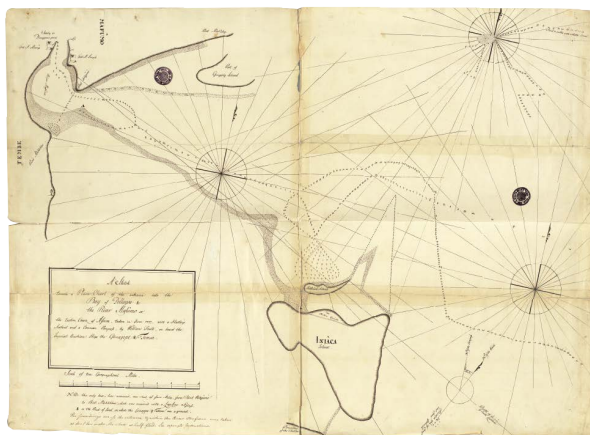
## **East India Company**

Maria Theresa founded the East India Company to play a part in Europe's colonial ambitions. As of 1776, her ship "Joseph and Theresa" set off from Trieste under the command of the merchant William Bolts. In Mozambique, he took possession of Delagoa Bay and gained exclusive control of the local ivory trade. Moreover, he established trading stations in India and China, and founded a colony on the Nicobar Islands. Trade became increasingly difficult, however, due to severe competition from other seafaring powers as well as a lack of ship crew members. The Company was declared bankrupt in 1785.



"Treatise on the establishment of a colony and principal trading station of the Imperial and Royal Asian Company on the Nicobar Islands and their local port by Jakob Hegner. 1782/83."

© HHStA StAbt Ostindische Kompanie  
Triest-Antwerpen K 1-7 fol. 291r



Map of Delagoa Bay  
in Mozambique

William Bolts, 1777

© HHStA StAbt  
Ostindische Kompanie  
Triest-Antwerpen K 5-3  
fol. 43v

1814–1815

## Congress of Vienna

After defeating Napoleon, the victorious powers convened the Congress of Vienna to reorganise Europe and create a balance of power. The Congress was also dedicated to global affairs, as Europe's major powers held enormous colonial possessions in Africa, Asia, and America. As a result, the negotiations in Vienna also addressed territorial changes overseas as well as the transatlantic slave trade. The Congress of Vienna settlement shaped the international politics of Europe until the outbreak of World War I.



Congress of Vienna,  
group picture of the  
senior statesmen  
Print by Jean Godefroy,  
1814

© ÖNB/Wien 449740 – B

1848–1860

## **Austrian Mission in Central Africa**

In 1846 Pope Gregory XVI established the Apostolic Vicariate of Central Africa with its principal mission station in Khartoum. The Habsburg Monarchy sent numerous missionaries and even put the mission under imperial protection in 1850. Their missionary work promoted Austria's ambitions of opening up Sudan as a new trade area. The missionaries explored uncharted terrain, gathered resources, and initiated barter trade with the local population. As many of them died from illness and far too few arrived as reinforcements, the mission was terminated as of 1860. The Mahdiya, an anticolonial rebellion, ultimately ended Austria's presence in Sudan.



## Showcase 1 Showcase 2



## Showcase 4



## Showcase 4

### Cross

This cross was presumably the property of the missionary Ignaz Knoblecher. He was the vicar general apostolic of Central Africa and resided in the capital of Sudan, Khartoum, as of 1848. From Khartoum, Knoblecher travelled along the White Nile to expand the influence of the mission. After founding the "Society of Mary for Promoting Catholic Missions in Central Africa" in Vienna, he travelled to the region of today's South Sudan and established the mission stations Gondoroko and Heiligenkreuz.

Sudan, ca. 1850; Wood

Ignaz Knoblecher, Maximilian Ryllo Coll.

1857–1859

## **Novara Expedition**

The Austrian Navy's expedition of the frigate Novara was a large-scale mission of circumnavigation. It was intended not only to conduct scientific research on overseas areas but also to explore business opportunities and acquire colonial possessions. Its relatively long stay in the Nicobar Islands reflected the concrete assignment of returning the island chain to its former status as a crown colony of Austria. The name of the island Teressa, in honour of Maria Theresa, is still reminiscent of the colonial presence of Austria.

### **Showcase 1**

#### **Female figure**

This figure of a seated woman was collected in the course of the Novara Expedition in the Nicobar Islands. She has expressive facial features and is one of the most significant objects of the Nicobar Islands Collection. Aside from the still preserved black paint, and except for her face, the entire body was originally covered in white lime glaze. The red stripes might represent face

painting. The sculpture shows traces of usage and was positioned in a house.

Great Nicobar, Nicobar Islands, India, 1858; wood  
His Majesty's Frigate Novara Coll.

## Showcase 2

### Wood figure

This small wooden figure with top hat originates from the Nicobar Islands. It either represents a European or a local person. Finding European hats was not unusual at that time. For a limited period, European hats and clothes were in demand as trading goods and demonstrate the long relationships of contact between Europeans and the population of the Nicobar Islands.

Nicobar Islands, India, 1858; wood  
Museum Miramar Coll.

1869

## Opening of the Suez Canal

Not only the French empress but also Emperor Franz Joseph I attended the opening of the Suez Canal as a prominent guest. As the port of Trieste had enabled Austria to become a player in the maritime trade of the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal offered economic benefits by connecting the Mediterranean Sea and Asia without having to sail all the way around Africa. For this reason, it was no coincidence that Austria-Hungary was involved in planning and building the Canal. After its completion, the Austrian maritime trade company experienced a rapid expansion.



Arrival of the Austrian emperor at Port Said, Egypt

Édouard Riou, 1869

© ÖNB/Wien 290504F\_  
S42

1884–1885

## **Berlin Congo Conference**

At the invitation of German Imperial Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, the representatives of 13 European nations as well as the United States and the Ottoman Empire took part in the "Berlin Conference". Austria-Hungary was among the states signing the General Act of the Berlin Conference, the so-called "Congo Act". The document provided legal validation for colonially conquered territories, which had significant consequences for today's Democratic Republic of the Congo. Under the name Congo Free State, the country's territory became the private property of King Leopold II of Belgium and suffered from severe crimes against the population under his rule.

1892–1893

## **Franz Ferdinand's Voyage around the World**

Archduke Franz Ferdinand's round-the-world trip took him from Trieste to India, Indonesia, Australia, Japan, Canada, and North America. Sending such a high-ranking family member came with great symbolical value for the Habsburgs. After all, the Danube Monarchy intended to demonstrate its special interest in the Middle and Far East. Franz Ferdinand travelled to Japan aboard the Torpedo Ram Cruiser, His Majesty's Ship, Empress Elisabeth ("Torpedo Rammkreuzer SMS Kaiserin Elisabeth"). The Imperial and Royal Navy's state-of-the-art warship enabled Austria-Hungary to present itself as a modern naval power on the world's oceans.

1894–1918

## Austro-Hungarian Colonial Society

A group of colonial propagandists attempted to direct the Habsburg Monarchy closer towards a colonial overseas policy. After founding the Austro-Hungarian Colonial Society ("Österreichisch-Ungarische Kolonialgesellschaft"), they initially focused on establishing and settling colonies as well as developing new markets for domestic products. Later they began concentrating on settlements of Austrian emigrants and expected them to exert influence on local politics and trade opportunities. The Society was dissolved without any major "achievements" in 1918.

### Kolonial-Zeitung

<small>Die Kolonial-Zeitung erscheint während des Krieges in zwangloser Folge. Jährlicher Bezugspreis der Kolonial-Zeitung für Österreich-Ungarn 8 Kronen für das Ausland 10 Kronen</small>	<b>Offizielles Organ der österreichisch-ungarischen Kolonialgesellschaft</b> <b>Schriftleitung:</b> Zentral-Ankunftsstelle: Wien, VII. Bez., Zieglergasse Nr. 32. Telefon 32.267. Präsidium der Oesterr.-ungar. Kolonial-Gesellschaft: Wien, VII. Bez., Kirchengasse Nr. 48. Telefon Nr. 33.000.	<small>Verordnung, Bezugs- anmeldung und Entnahme von Beilagen: Wien, IX., Bähringasse 1. Beilagenpreis: 40 Heller für die 3 gewöhnl. non-Zelle.</small>
13. Jahrgang.	Mittwoch, 15. Dezember 1915.	Nr. 56.

Colonial Newspaper ("Kolonial-Zeitung"). Official medium of the Austro-Hungarian Colonial Society, Vienna 1915

© ONB/Wien 536094-D

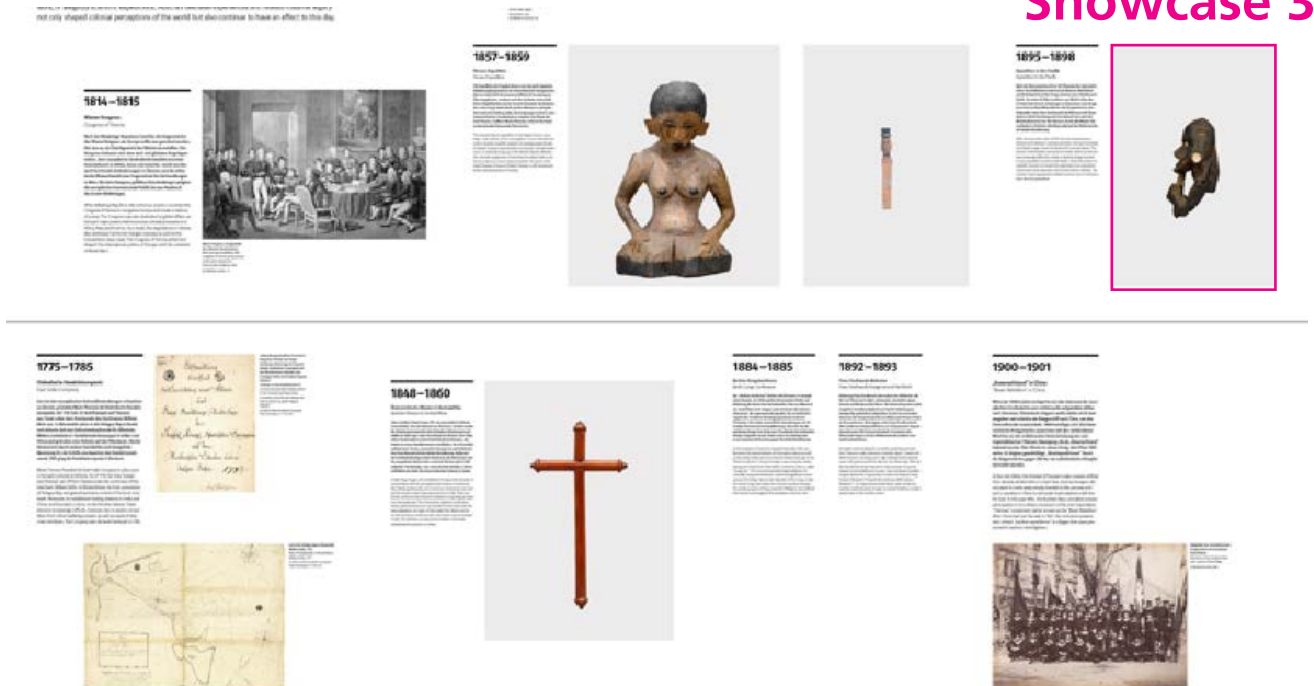
1895–1898

## **Expedition to the Pacific**

After the economic crisis of 1873, Austrian entrepreneurs showed vivid interest in overseas activities. One such merchant was Arthur Krupp, owner of a factory for metal products. The success of his business was based on nickel, which was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain in Austria. Krupp invested in navy expeditions to the South Pacific. Under the pretext of scientific interest, he funded the exploration and acquisition of land with nickel deposits, such as the Solomon Islands. The mission of land appropriation failed, however, due to resistance from the local population.



## Showcase 3



## Showcase 3

### Canoe bow figure (nguzunguzu)

This canoe bow figure was collected in the course of the Austrian Pacific Expedition in the Solomon Islands. This type of figure was mounted at the front of war canoes, so it would stay just above the water surface to protect those inside the canoe from various threats, such as storms, dangerous waters, or water spirits. The deep eyes and long ears are decorated with mother-of-pearl shell inlays.

Solomon Islands, 1896; wood, pigment, mother-of-pearl

Heinrich Freiherr Foullon von Norbeck Coll.

1900–1901

## **“Boxer Rebellion” in China**

In the mid-1890s, the interest of Europe’s major powers shifted from already divided Africa to East Asia. Austria-Hungary did not want to come away empty-handed in this process and sent a warship to China to stimulate trade relations with the Far East. In the year 1900, the Austrian Navy and allied powers participated in the military repression of the anti-imperialistic “Yihetuan” movement, better known as the “Boxer Rebellion”. After China had lost the war in 1901, the victorious powers sent violent “punitive expeditions” to villages that were presumed to harbour rebel fighters.



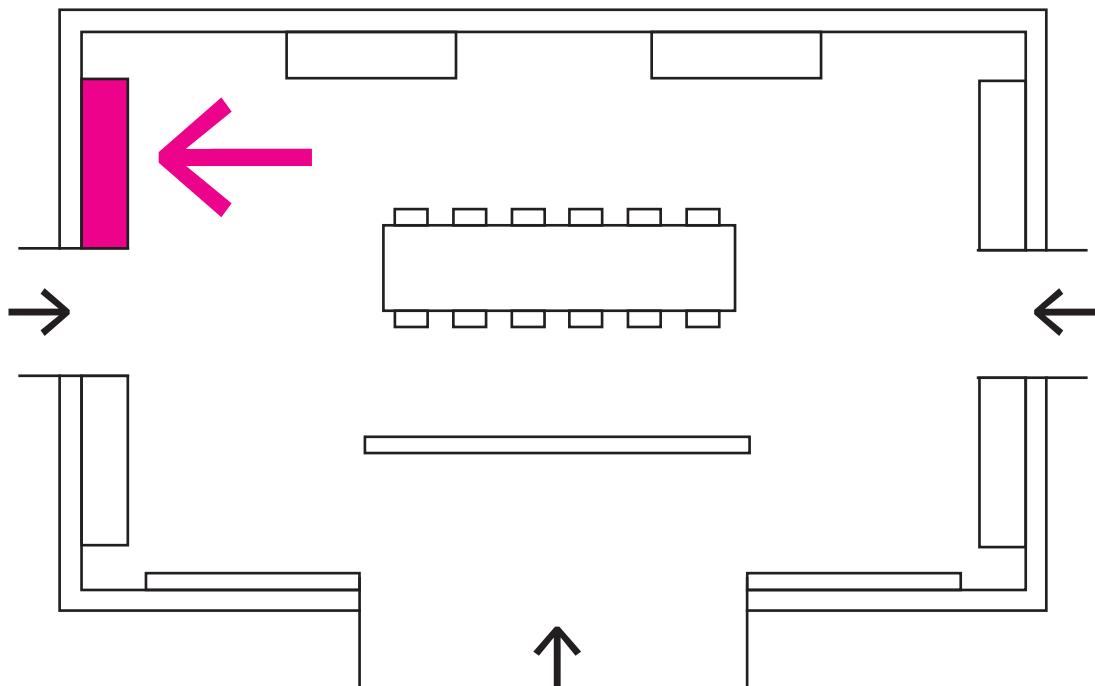
Members of the Austrian Navy with captured Boxer flags

© Manfred Litscher, Wien





# Room 21



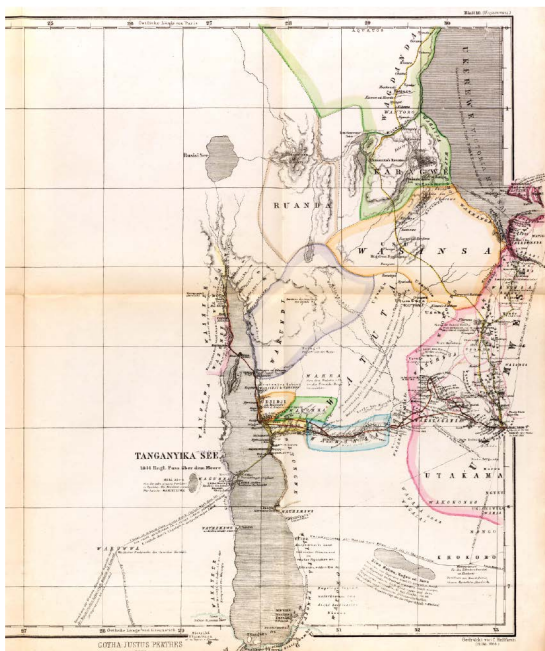
# PLUNDERED? GIVEN? EXCHANGED?

The relationship between people and objects is reflected in how and by whom objects were collected. This becomes particularly apparent in the face of dramatic geopolitical changes. Examples from the collections of Alfred Ludwig Sigl examine the acquisition histories behind objects in today's Tanzania and adjacent states at the end of the 19th century.

Things once made by one individual are today managed and looked at by others. The context of acquiring such objects was also characterised by immediate and structural violence – although documents, photographs, and other objects may help to better understand the history behind an object, it is hardly ever possible to know the whole story. While the exhibited objects manifest certain colonial aspects, not least because of the collector and his biography, their complex meanings cannot be reduced to this single perspective.

## Tanzania 1863

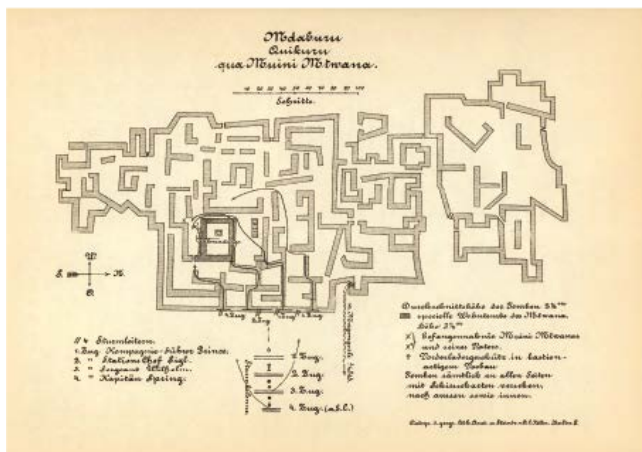
The map shows the demarcation and designations of a part of the coast with detailed information based on two British geographers of the 1850s as primary sources. Therefore, the map also illustrates which information was relevant for planning further expeditions and trade missions. As such it included ethnic designations, resource deposits, expedition routes, residences of known rulers, or distances in day's marches



Unyamwesi, autographed  
by H. Habenicht, printed  
12 October 1863

## Alfred Ludwig Sigl (1854 –1905)

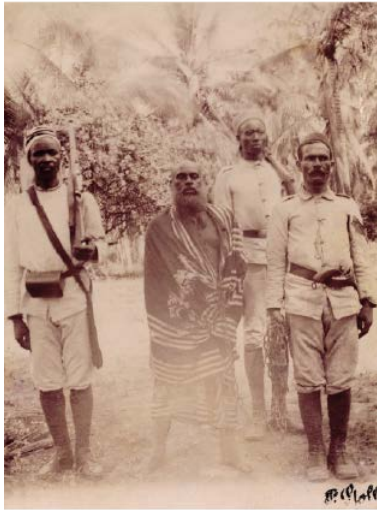
The son of an industrial magnate, Sigl entered the service of the German East Africa Company and later the colonial army (Schutztruppe) of the German Empire already at an early stage of Tanzania's colonisation. While staying in the colony, he held several military positions, lastly District Commissioner in Pangani. Sigl's interests in implementing the colonial concept and its related hierarchies can be clearly deduced from his activities and reports.



Sketch for attacking Muini Mtwana, in which Alfred Sigl acted as platoon leader

Lt. Prince im Deutschen Kolonialblatt, 1. Juni 1893





Bushiri bin Salim, leader of  
the 1888/89 insurgents  
before his execution  
Photograph: Oscar Baumann,  
1895

## Object History

Reconstructed overlaps and entanglements provide insight into how the objects might have been acquired. The information is based on the objects' geographical sources as orally transmitted to the Museum by Alfred Sigl as the collector, his official sojourns, and documented military conflicts with proven participation of Sigl.



//// Areas of influence (names from the 19th century)

- Mentioned town names from the 19th century
- ◎ Citie
- ◎ Towns and smaller places

## **Status, Spears, Skirmishes**

The attitude of colonial masters and how they dealt with local structures is also reflected in the note of a “Dawa (medicine) – spear” as it was excavated from the tomb of a sultan. Some of the exhibited spears are listed as “sultan spears”; so they belonged to politically influential men. Particularly when it comes to objects used in armed conflicts, we can assume they were collected after related skirmishes. In this regard, the intention of the collection did not come to the fore.

## Showcase 4



## Showcase 4

### Lances, spears

Weapons are also regarded as prestigious objects or trophies. The difference between lance and spear is not always clear: lances are usually not thrown. Forged iron lances were predominantly intended for representative purposes; spearheads were also used as currency.

Ganda, Uganda;

Ujiji & Uvinsa, Tanzania;

Nonda, DR Congo, before 1896;  
wood, brass, iron, silver, copper, plant cord  
Alfred Sigl Coll.

## **Trade Competition and Trophies**

The sword's owner, Mohamed bin Kassim, was court-martialled and executed in 1890. Aside from the allegation of being involved in the shooting of the merchant Giesecke three years earlier, the judgement was based on his imputed plans for an upcoming raid. Wilhelm Junker recorded the exact circumstances of the shooting in his diary, even though he only speculated about the perpetrators. Bin Kassim and Giesecke were competitors, as the Hamburg-based ivory company wanted to benefit from the profitable local circumstances as well.

“The testimony of Dr. Junker was instrumental in determining beyond doubt that Mohamed bin Kassim was involved in the criminal act, either as instigator or perpetrator, and was therefore executed as enforced by the court martial on June 6th [...].”

Colonial Yearbook 1890

## Showcase 1

### **Sword in sheath of Mohammed bin Kassum**

Wrapped in cotton fabric, the wooden sheath is in part severely damaged, yet a floral ornament made of sheet silver is found on the underside. Alfred Sigl himself provided the museum with information on the sword's origin and former owner, Mohamed bin Kassum. Hardly anything more than his occupation is currently known about bin Kassum.

Tanzania, before 1893; steel, sheet silver, wood, ivory, cotton fabric

Alfred Sigl Coll.

## **Captured Booty?**

On 8 December 1893, Alfred Sigl joined a so-called punitive expedition against Sultan Kandi as platoon leader at his own request. He had previously reported on behaviour he found to be unacceptable and intended to use Sultan Kandi as a warning to prevent potential insurrections. In response to Kandi's surrender, Sigl deposed him and banished both him and his family. The region under Kandi's rule was then distributed among pro-administration rulers.

“Kandi's insolent bearing sufficiently proves that the complaints about him are justified, and so I decided to immediately destroy this rebellious chieftain [...].”

Alfred Sigl, Deutsches Kolonialblatt (German Colonial Gazette), 4 January 1894

## Showcase 2

### **Game board of “Sultan Kandi” with game pieces**

Kahama, Shinyanga, Tanzania, before 1896;

wood, cotton

Alfred Sigl Coll.

### **Throne of “Sultan Kandi”**

Kahama, Shinyanga, Tanzania, before 1896; wood

Alfred Sigl Coll.

### **A Gift! Still Booty?**

According to the inventory list, the “throne of a sultan” was a gift by the influential East African merchant Tippu Tip, whose real name was Hamed ben Mohammed ben Juma el-Murjebi. European travellers, explorers, and merchants sometimes used to join his trade caravans. The most influential man of Maniema became rich in the slave and ivory trade. Time and again, armed conflicts with the local population took place along trade routes; the elaborately decorated throne might serve as evidence of such conflicts.





Portrait of the merchant Tippu  
Tip (1835? – 1905), Zanzibar  
1901

Original title: "Tipo Tip,  
notorious slave trader from  
Zanzibar"

Künstler: Ludwig Karl Strauch  
(1875–1959)

Reproduktion des Ölgemäldes

### Showcase 3

#### "Throne of the Sultan"

This throne was not actually made to sit on. It rather serves as a symbol of political authority and power. The elaborate decoration with selected trade goods, such as cowries, blue glass beads, and copper nails is just as much evidence of this function as the leopard skin covering the throne's inner segments.

Maniema, DR Congo, before 1893;

wood, leopard skin, cowries, copper nails, glass beads, copper sheet, tendons

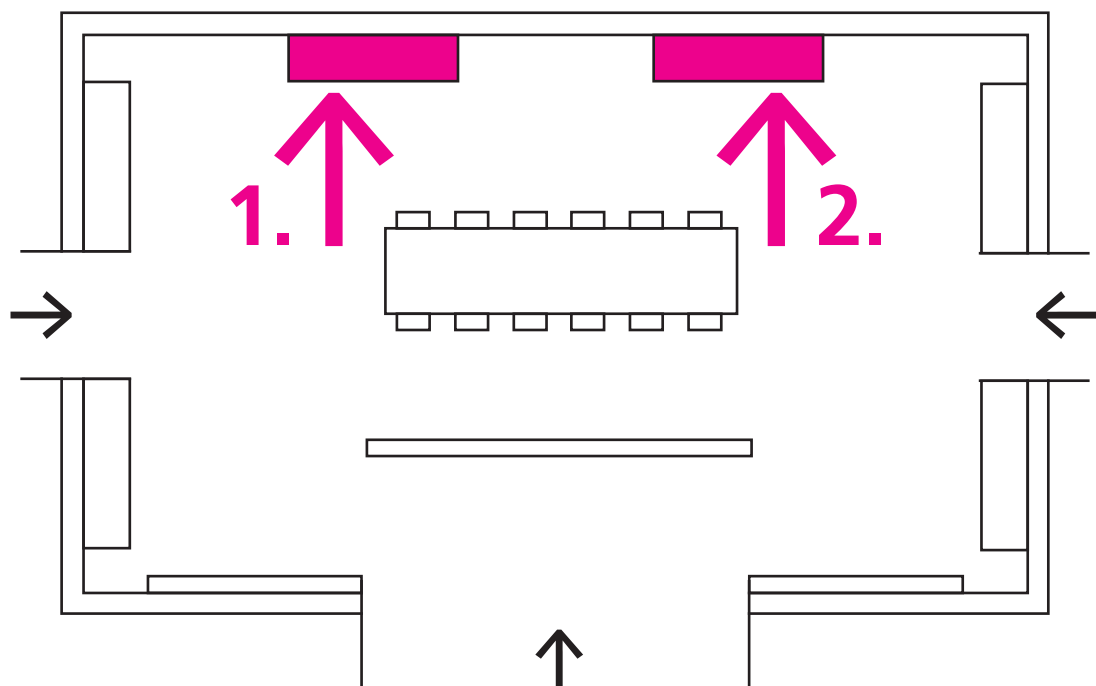
Gift by the merchant Tippu Tip to Alfred Sigi







# Room 21



1.

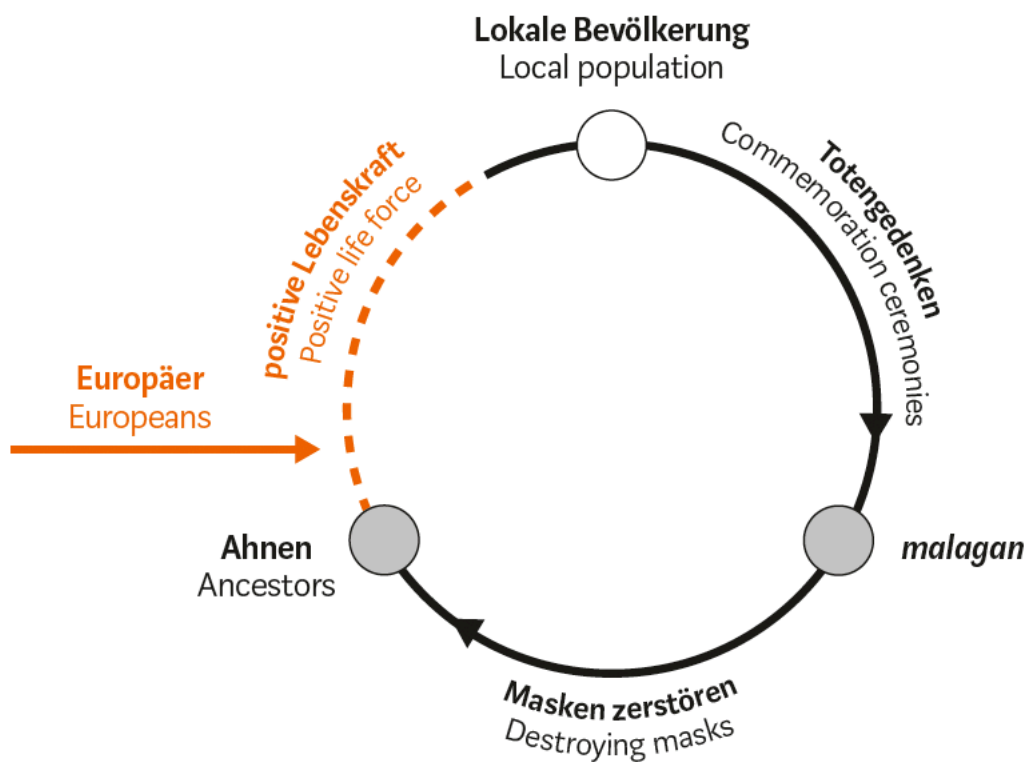
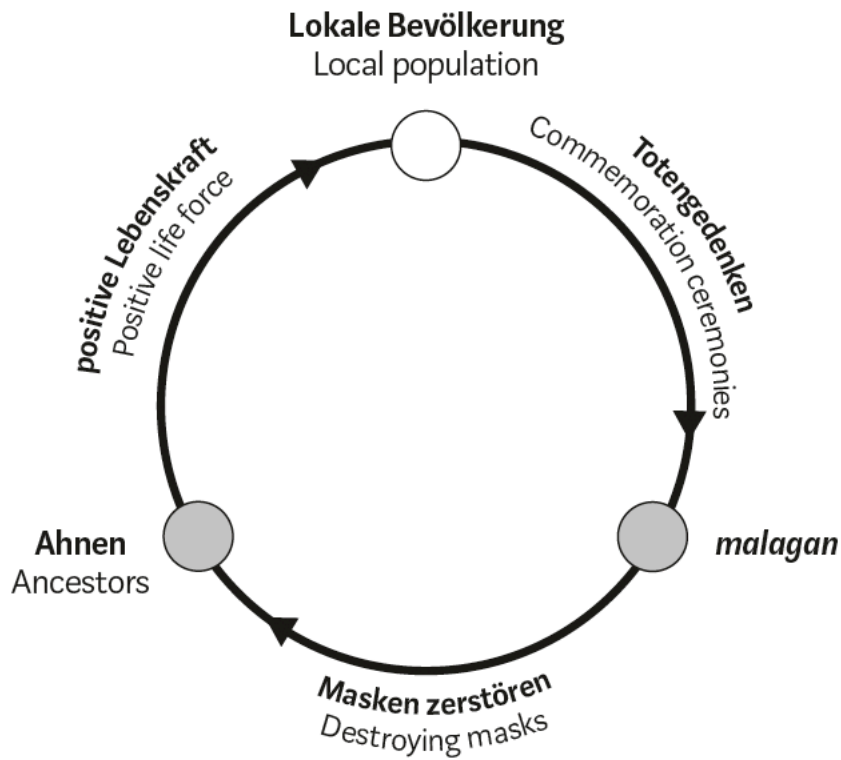
## STOLEN? BOUGHT? TRADED?

Many museum objects are associated with colonial power, force, and expropriation. Those colonised were not always helpless in the face of those in power. Some objects were withheld from trade, while others, such as worn-out ritual objects and innovative carvings, were actively introduced. malagan masks from the island of New Ireland in eastern New Guinea were highly coveted in the colonial art trade. In the second half of the 19th century, they were shipped to Europe in great quantities, some finding their way into museums. The expressive face masks with mythological animal and plant motifs were especially made for the annual malagan death rituals. Once the commemoration ceremonies for the deceased were completed, the masks lost their ritual function. The masks were only used once and then either destroyed or left in the woods to rot.

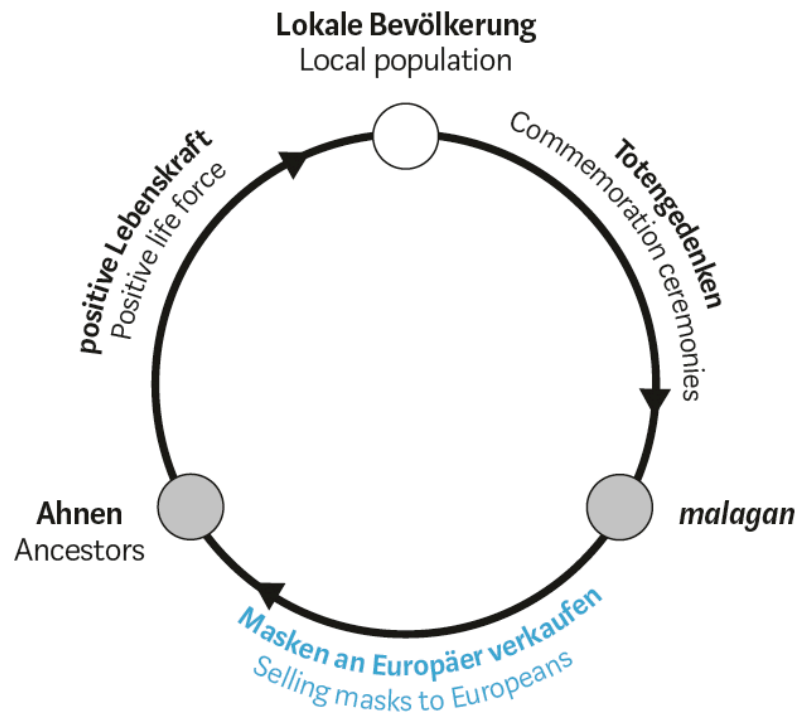
## **malagan Trade Cycle**

The commemoration ceremonies were the most important ritual in maintaining contact with the ancestors and ensuring their benevolence. In consequence, the gardens stayed fertile and the fishing nets full. When the Europeans arrived, they cut the connection between the population and their ancestors. They had become the new beneficiaries.

Unbelievable amounts of transported trade goods served as visible evidence of this change. Selling the malagan masks was intended to reestablish their connection with the ancestors via Europe. The population was thus able to regain their agency and integrated the mask trade into their own worldview.







## Malagan Masks

The dancers at malagan death rituals, during which both creator spirits and ancestors came back to life for a short period of time, wore colourful mask costumes. The human features of the masks imaginatively blended with representations of birds, fish, pigs, and reptiles. Their eyes with snail shell inlays allow the carved masks to appear almost alive. The caterpillar-like hairstyle of these tatanua masks is reminiscent of the hair of close relatives during the months of mourning.

New Ireland, Bismarck Archipelago, 19th century;  
wood, pigment, turbo snail operculum  
Varia Coll.

## 2.

# WHERE DO THE ANCESTORS BELONG?

Repatriation claims trigger an intense examination of both colonial research practices and the storage of human remains in museums. On 20 May 2015, Weltmuseum Wien hosted a ceremony to officially return human remains including a Māori skull, the mummified body of a child, a coffin with skeletal remains, and nine human vertebrae with a piece of flax weaving, to a Māori delegation from New Zealand. Removed from Māori burial caves without any moral concerns by natural scientist Andreas Reischek in 1882, the remains were repatriated and formally welcomed at the Te Papa Tongarewa Museum in Wellington. After being handed over to close relatives, the remains of the Māori ancestors will be buried at home once again.



The caskets containing human remains are officially returned to the Māori delegation at the colonnaded hall of the WMW, 20 May 2015

Photo: Christian Mendez

© KHM-Museumsverband



Speech of Arapata Hakiwai (Māori co-leader, Te Papa Tongarewa Museum in Wellington) at the colonnaded hall of the WMW, 20 May 2015

Photo: Christian Mendez

© KHM-Museumsverband



The employees of the artwork forwarding company, hs art service austria, and the Māori delegation make preparations for the transport from the Weltmuseum Wien to the airport; Heldenplatz Vienna, 20 May 2015  
Photo: Christian Mendez  
© KHM-Museumsverband

1.1

Rückforderungen bewirken intensive Auseinandersetzungen mit kolonialen Forschungspraktiken und der Aufbewahrung menschlicher Überreste in Museen. Am 20. Mai 2015 fand im Weltmuseum Wien die feierliche Übergabe menschlicher Gebeine an eine Māori-Delegation aus Neuseeland statt. Es handelte sich dabei um einen Māori-Schädel, eine Kindermumie, einen Sarg mit Skelettfragmenten und ein Gefäß mit neun menschlichen Wirbeln. Nach ihrer Rückführung werden die Gebeine, die der Naturforscher Andreas Reischek von 1862 ohne große moralische Bedenken aus Māori-Begräbnisstätten entfernt hatte, im Te Papa Tongarewa Museum in Wellington in Empfang genommen. Nach Übergabe an nahe Verwandte werden die sterblichen Überreste der Māori-Vorfahren erneut in ihrer Heimat bestattet.

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Die Ausstellung zeigt die Überreste der Māori-Vorfahren, die von Andreas Reischek im Jahr 1862 aus Māori-Begräbnisstätten entfernt wurden. Die Überreste sind in einer Holzkiste aufbewahrt und werden im Te Papa Tongarewa Museum in Wellington in Empfang genommen. Nach Übergabe an nahe Verwandte werden die sterblichen Überreste der Māori-Vorfahren erneut in ihrer Heimat bestattet.

Aussparung Grafik  
für Monitor  
B 292 x H 216 mm

## Showcase 1

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Der wissenschaftliche Beirat des Weltmuseum Wien  
Beratungsausschuss  
Für Mensch und Natur

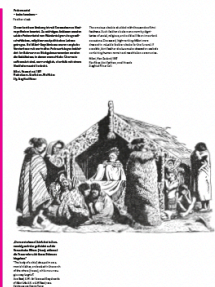
Repatriation Programme  
Te Papa Tongarewa  
Museum

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1.2

## Showcase 2



## Showcase 1

### House gable mask (wheku koruru)

After years of negotiations between various Māori institutions and the Austrian Federal Government, the remains of Waikato dignitary Tupahau were returned from our Museum to New Zealand in 1985. The wooden mask depicting the sea monster Parata is an “object of exchange” for the repatriation of the mummy. This “diplomatic act” profoundly discomfited both the Māori and the Austrian museum staff. The slanted eyes with inlays of Haliotis sea snail shell lend the wooden mask a truly furious expression.

Māori, New Zealand, 1985

Carver: Kerry J. Wilson

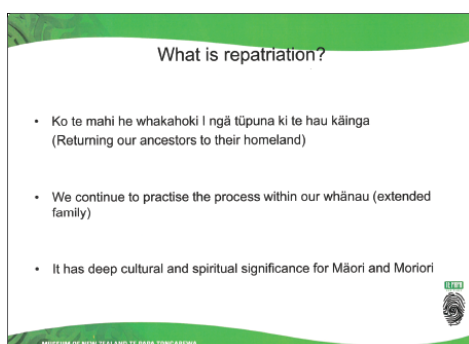
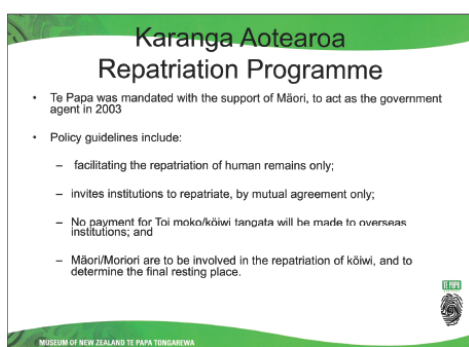
Māori Arts and Crafts Institute of  
Whakarewarewa, Rotorua

Hans Peter Coll.

# The New Zealand Repatriation Programme

## Karanga Aotearoa

The Māori have been actively coming to terms with their colonial past for many years. They demand the repatriation of human remains from museum and university collections all over the world. New Zealand's national museum, Te Papa Tongarewa, in Wellington has been managing the Karanga Aotearoa Repatriation Programme, which is based on international openness to engage in dialogue and cooperation, since 2003. The repatriation to their home in New Zealand aims at both restoring the individual wishes of the deceased and enabling a process of reconciliation with the shadows of the past.



© Amber Aranui: Pou Rangahau Rautaki Koiwi, Karanga Aotearoa. Forschung und Programm zur Rückgabe menschlicher Überreste. Power Point-Präsentation im Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa in Wellington, März 2013



## Showcase 2

### Feather cloak (kahu huruhuru)

The precious cloak is studded with thousands of kiwi feathers. Such feather cloaks were worn by dignitaries of social, religious, and political life on important occasions. Deceased, high-ranking Māori were dressed in valuable feather cloaks for the funeral. If possible, kiwi feather cloaks are also draped on caskets containing human remains at repatriation ceremonies.

Māori, New Zealand, 1887;

flax fibres, kiwi feathers, wool threads

Siegfried Pitner Coll.



"The body of a chief, dressed in ceremonial clothes, and seated in the porch of the whare [house], while mourners give way to grief."

Aus: Reed, A. W.: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Māori Life. A.H. & A.W. Reed, 1963.

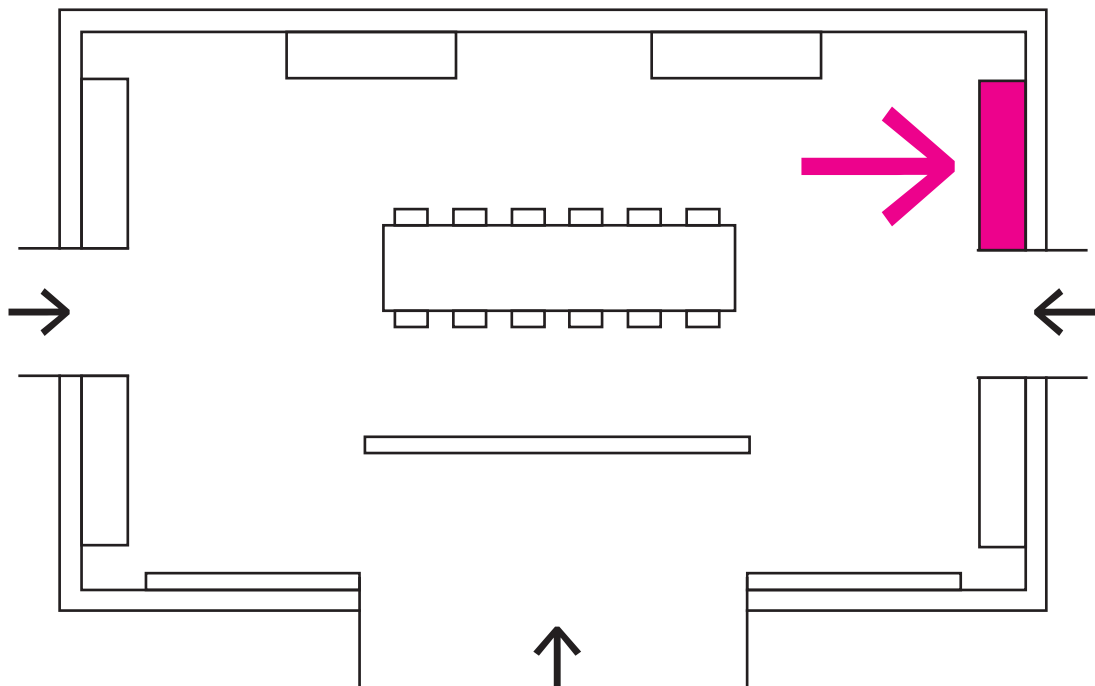
Zeichnung von Dennis Turner







# Room 21



# HOW ARE OUR COLLECTIONS ASSEMBLED TODAY?

The collecting efforts of a museum are still one of its most important tasks. Today's museums focus on carefully considered additions to existing collections as well as specially selected acquisitions for their exhibitions. This is the only way to record current change processes. After all, the stories we tell in our exhibitions are anything but finished.

In 2005, Claudia Augustat, curator of the South America Collection, undertook a collecting journey to the Saamaka in Suriname. The descendants of escaped slaves have been founding new societies with independent cultures in the country's interior since the late 17th century. Their relationship to the Dutch colonial power and subsequently the independent state of Suriname after 1975 was shaped by violence and exploitation. Today they are among the most disadvantaged groups in the country.

## Journey to the Saamaka in Suriname

“Travelling to Suriname was my first collecting journey as a young curator. Christine Samson who had worked with the Saamaka as a teacher helped me in my preparations, established contacts, and accompanied me. The people were unbelievably friendly in welcoming us. I had not allocated nearly enough time, though. We only stayed with the Saamaka for eight days and I hardly had the chance to get to know them. My only task was collecting objects. In retrospect, I am certainly rather critical of this journey. Today I rely on working with colleagues with well-established and long relationships to a group.”  
Claudia Augustat, 8 June 2016



The roofs of many houses in Saamaka villages are not thatched with palm leaves anymore but made of zinc.

Photo: Claudia Augustat, Oberer Suriname-Fluss, 2005



The houses were once elaborately ornamented.  
Today many of them only have a door lintel  
for decoration.

Photo: Claudia Augustat, Pikiseei, 2005



Everyday life takes place outside but the people  
do not like to be photographed.

Photo: Claudia Augustat, Pikiseei, 2005



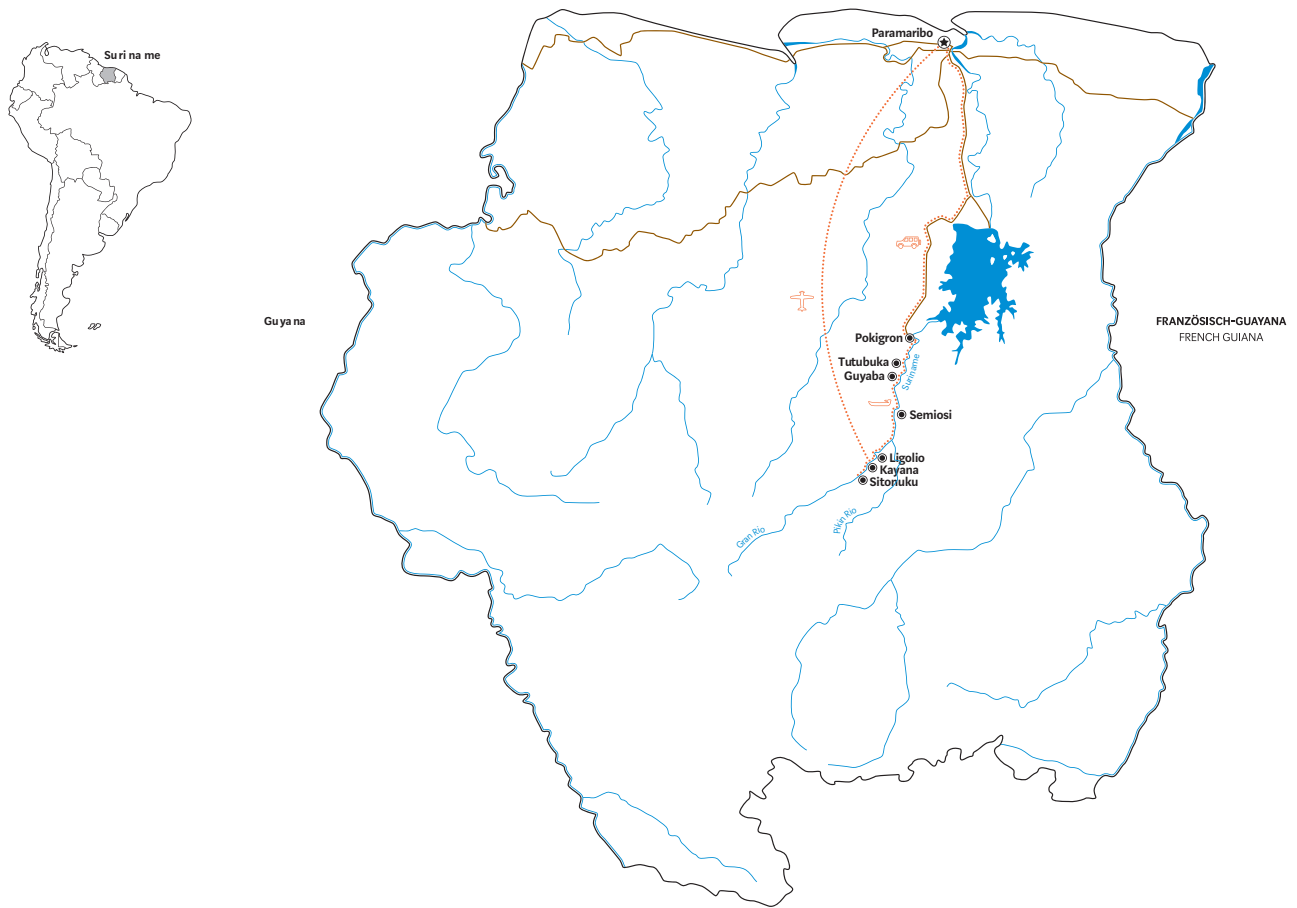
The decorated components of demolished houses are kept, reused or offered for sale.

Photo: Claudia Augustat, Semoisi, 2005



All adult Saamaka, including those married, live in their own house.

Photo: Claudia Augustat, Sitonuku, 2005



★ Capital

● Saamaka settlements

✈ Small aircraft

🚤 Motorised canoe

🚙 Jeep



## About Collecting

"I wanted to collect typical rather than particularly beautiful objects from all areas of everyday life. The local radio had informed the villages of my collecting journey. For many of them, it was a unique opportunity to get their hands on some much needed cash. So I only bought what they offered and paid what they demanded, trying to buy something from everyone. Still, I keep asking myself how much of all that was actually voluntary, considering the difficult economic situation of the Saamaka? What would we offer for sale, if we found ourselves in dire straits?"

Claudia Augustat, 8 June 2015



After the journey, the collection was inventoried at the Stichting Surinaams Museum. Photo: Claudia Augustat, Paramaribo, 2005



The collection waits to be shipped to Vienna. Photo: Claudia Augustat, Paramaribo, 2005

## **Irretrievable Cultural Heritage**

“I needed official permission to export the collections, especially because some of the objects were rather old. Everything was presented to a commission with Laddy van Putten, director of the Stichting Surinaams Museum in Paramaribo, as one of the members. The export licence was denied for three objects: one was from the 19th century and as such already considered an antique; the other two did not even have a comparable counterpart in the collection of the museum itself. As exporting these objects would have resulted in an irretrievable loss of cultural heritage both for the Saamaka and Suriname, all three of them remained in the museum.”

Claudia Augustat, 8 June 2015



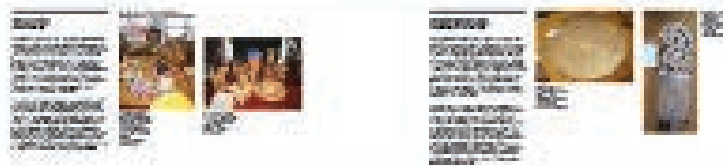
Serving tray with rare wood inlay at the centre  
Photo: Claudia Augustat, 2005



Crocheting support for calf straps from the late  
19th century  
Photo: Claudia Augustat, 2005



**Showcase 1**



**Showcase 2**



## Showcase 1

### 1 Printed fabric

The Saamaka already signed treaties with the Dutch colonial power acknowledging their freedom in 1762. Nevertheless, slavery was not abolished in the entire colony before 1 July 1863. Printed fabrics designed in memory of this event are among the few objects of the collection directly related to the traumatic past of the Saamaka.

Paramaribo, Suriname, 2005

Claudia Augustat Coll.

## **Collecting change**

A crucial aspect of today's collecting efforts is to display changes such as, for example, the material preferences of supports for crocheted calf bands. While such crocheting supports were once made of wood, bottles were used as of the 1960s. Today drain pipe elements are the material of choice.

### **2 Crocheting support for calf bands (sepu pau)**

Semoisi, Suriname,  
ca. mid-20th century; wood, cotton

### **3 Crocheting support for calf bands (sepu)**

Kayana, Suriname,  
late 20th century; glass, cotton, wool

### **4 Crocheting support for calf bands (sepu)**

Semoisi, Suriname, 2005;  
plastic, wood, cotton, wool

## Showcase 2

### Modern women

The groom presents the wedding gifts to the bride in wedding baskets. This wedding basket was sold by a young man. Although the young man still intended to get married, the baskets would not be enough to satisfy the demands of modern women anymore. Instead, large, well-equipped tool boxes would be expected but these may only be bought in the shops of Paramaribo.

#### 1 Wedding basket (pakaas)

Semoisi, Suriname, 2005;  
wood strands, plastic cord

## **Men, wood, and art**

Woodcarving is a male art form that is highly appreciated even beyond Saamaka society.

Stools rank among the most important pieces of furniture. They are brought along for gatherings, rituals, or when visiting other villages. Their design is subject to fashion trends, such as the use of large rivets until the 1950s or smaller, decorative nails enjoying great popularity later on.

### **2 Stool for men (bangi)**

Semoisi, Suriname, after 1960; wood, nails

### **3 Stool for men (bangi)**

Kayana, Suriname, n. d.; wood, nails, rivets

### **4 Stool for women (lontu bangi)**

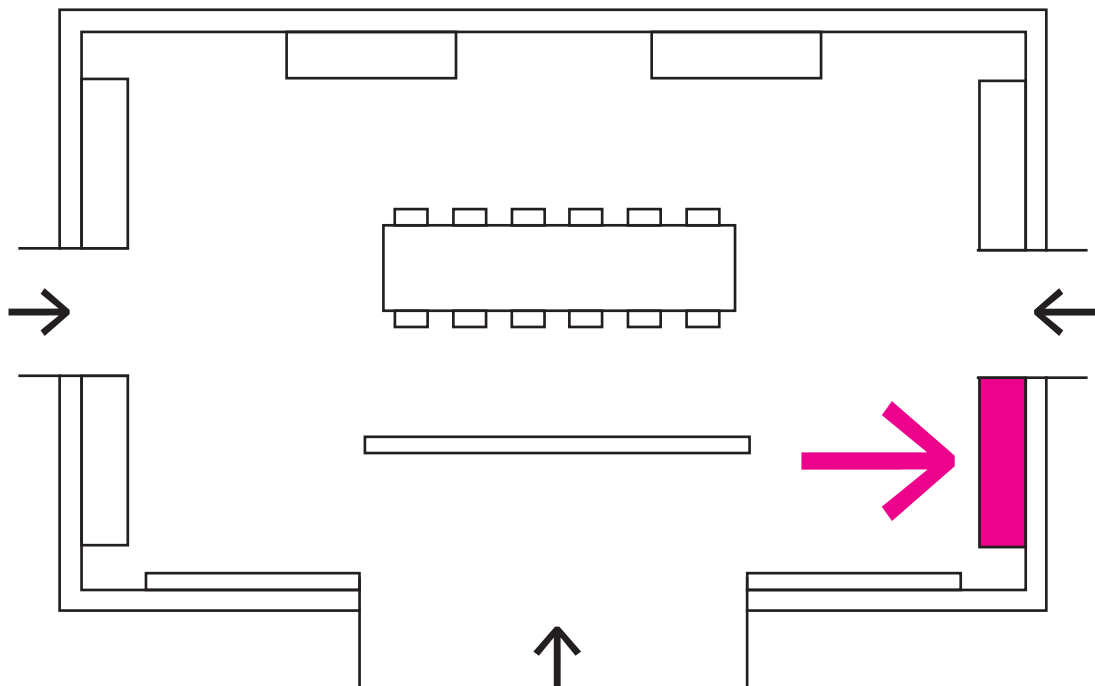
Semoisi, Suriname, 1950s; wood, nails, rivets







# Room 21



# ARE MUSEUMS ALLOWED TO KEEP A SECRET?

Our collections also include sacred objects to which, based on their original purpose, only a limited group of people had access. Their special status often required secrecy, which in some cases ruled out any public display of such objects. How was it possible for such important objects to end up in a museum? Colonial violence, the impact of missions, and crises of both traditional belief and value systems may be answers to that question. Some were stolen and some were intentionally given.

Regardless of how these objects once became part of our collections, we need to ask ourselves how we want to deal with them today. In what way are they of significance today? What are we allowed to reveal? What do we want or have to respect as forbidden? What are the stories we can tell with them?

## **„We Show Our Children“**

### **(Wakapéetaka lénpitipe)**

Male initiation rituals among the  
Arawak-speaking Wakuénai of the Upper  
Rio Negro, Venezuela

For the first 3 days and nights of male initiation rituals, adult men and the initiates must fast on beverages made from wild palm fruits. On the fourth day, the mother of each male initiate prepares a bowl of hot-peppered meat and covers it with an overturned basket. The food is called karidzámai and is considered to be dangerous to the initiates until it has been blessed with several hours of chants and songs. These ritually powerful chanted and sung speeches, called malikái, form the central focus of ritual activities and evoke mythical times of creation when the sound of the primordial human being's voice and body (in the form of the sacred flutes and trumpets) opened up the world and filled it with living species and material objects.



Boiling wild palm fruits  
Galito, Guainía River,  
Venezuela, 1981  
© Jonathan D. Hill



Straining wild palm fruit  
pulp to make drinks for  
male initiates  
Galito, Guainía River,  
Venezuela, 1981  
© Jonathan D. Hill



Placing overturned  
basket over a bowl of  
hot-peppered, boiled  
meat (karidzámai)  
Galito, Guainía River,  
Venezuela, 1981  
© Jonathan D. Hill



Chanting and singing the ritually powerful speeches for a male initiation ritual.

Galito, Guainía River, Venezuela, 1981

© Jonathan D. Hill



Blowing tobacco smoke over karidzámai near the end of the male initiation ritual

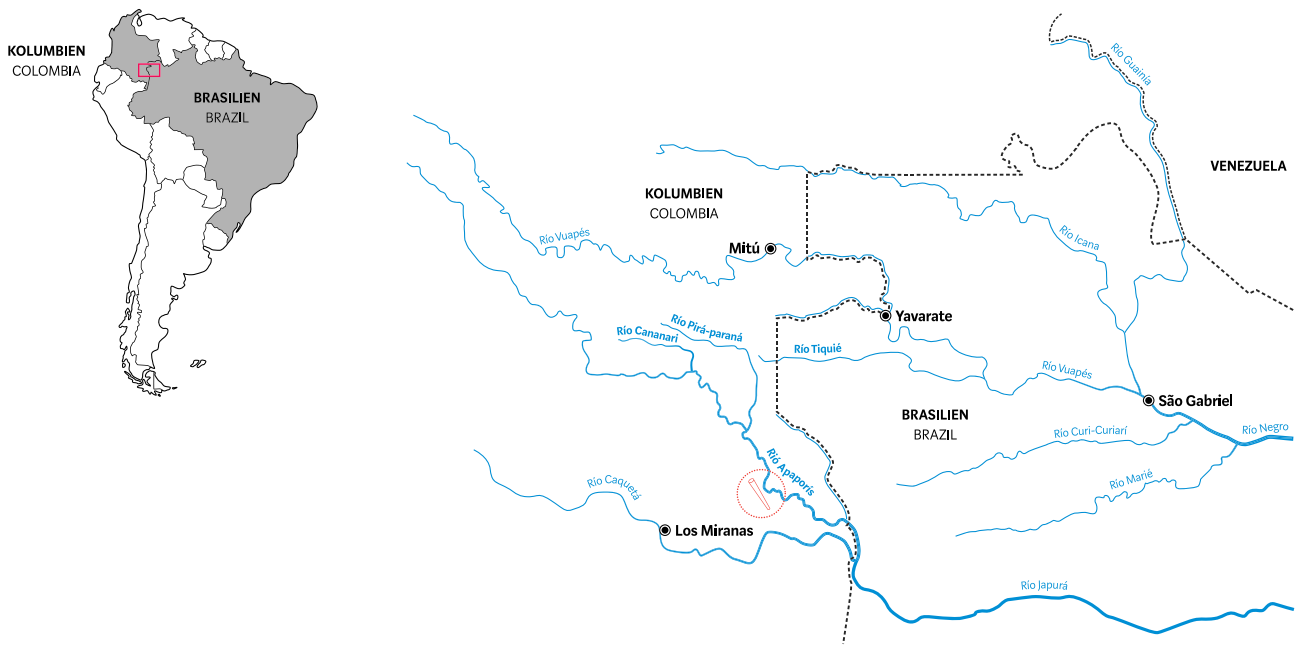
Galito, Guainía River, Venezuela, 1981

© Jonathan D. Hill

## **Yurupari: Musical Body of the Universe**

The myth and ritual complex of Yurupari is characteristic of the indigenous groups of northwestern Amazonia. Each group has a set of sacred musical instruments: the flutes and trumpets of Yurupari, which may only be seen and played by adult men in the group. They represent the group's culture and identity created in the mythical cycles of the primordial world. Their ritual use enables reproduction and, therefore, the preservation of society and the universe. The instruments may not be controlled by outsiders including women marrying into the group, as this would result in a loss of identity, basically corresponding to an act of ethnocide, which in turn explains the extreme secrecy around the Yurupari.





## Distribution of the Ritual Complex Yurupari

The indigenous groups, of which the Yurupari is characteristic, are connected to each other through a network of reciprocal visits, trade, marriage ties, and ritual celebrations.

In unseren Sammlungen befinden sich auch sakrale Gegenstände, die ihrem eigentlichen Gebrauch nach nur einem eingeschränkten Personenkreis zugänglich waren. Ihr besonderer Status erfordert oftmals auch Geheimhaltung, und in einigen Fällen schloss dies eine öffentliche Präsentation aus. Wie konnten solche bedeutsamen Gegenstände in ein Museum gelangen? Koloniale Gewalt, Einfluss von Missionen und kolonialer Studiensysteme und Wertzuschreibungen sind mögliche Gründe. Manches wurde geraubt, anderes bewusst gegeben. Unabhängig davon, wie diese Gegenstände in die Sammlungen gelangten, müssen wir uns heute die Frage stellen, wie wir mit ihnen umgehen wollen. Welche Bedeutung kommt ihnen heute zu? Was dürfen wir erzählen? Welche Verbote wollen oder müssen wir respektieren? Welche Geschichten können wir mit ihnen erzählen?

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Aussparung Grafik  
für Monitor  
B 292 x H 216 mm



**Die Yurupari-Instrumente**  
Die Yurupari-Instrumente sind aus Holz gefertigt und haben eine Länge von bis zu 2 Metern. Sie werden durch Blasen in Schwingung versetzt und erzeugen eine tiefere, dröhnende Klangfarbe. Die Yurupari-Instrumente sind ein zentraler Bestandteil der Yurupari-Rituale und werden von den Yurupari-Männern gespielt.



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## Showcase 1

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## Showcase 1

### Yurupari trumpets (umang hé masa juhuri)

The flutes and trumpets of the Yurupari represent the bones of the primordial human being, the creator that brought the first ancestors of all human peoples into being. In the course of his initiation, the creator's father pushed him into the fire. Out of the ashes rose a palm tree, which the father used to fashion the Yurupari instruments. When he was still alive, the primordial human being already had numerous orifices emitting music. This music can still be heard – also by those uninitiated – when the Yurupari instruments are played during rituals.

Makuna Ide hino masá, Rio Apaporis,  
Colombia, before 1972; chonta palm wood, bark  
strips, wood, bast  
Wolfgang Ptak and Fritz Trupp Coll.

## Vitrine 2

### Teile einer Yurupari-Trompete

Während eines längeren Forschungsaufenthalts  
1971 und 1972 nahmen die österreichischen  
Ethnologen Wolfgang Ptak und Fritz Trupp an  
einem Yurupari-Ritual teil. Auf ihre Bitte hin  
entschloss sich die Dorfgemeinschaft, ihnen die  
Trompeten und Flöten im Tausch gegen ein  
Gewehr zu überlassen. Für den Transport vom  
Dorf zum Bootsanleger am Fluss wurden diese  
sorgsam mit Palmblättern umwickelt: eine  
Sicherheitsmaßnahme, damit Nichteingeweihte  
sie nicht zufällig sehen konnten.

Makuna Ide hino masá, Rio Apaporis,  
Kolumbien, vor 1972; Chonta-Palmholz,  
Palmblätter, Lianen

Slg. Wolfgang Ptak und Fritz Trupp

In meiner Datei gab es keinen  
englische Text zur zweite Vitrine

# Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Association of Captains and Traditional Indigenous Authorities of the Pirá Paraná (ACAIPÍ) in Colombia nominated the traditional knowledge of the “jaguar shamans” of Yurupari as intangible cultural heritage of humanity in 2010; it was inscribed in the respective UNESCO list in 2011. This success is the result of a revitalisation process, as many groups had already dismissed the Yurupari due to missionary influence in the 1950s and 1960s. The initiative is also intended to encourage other indigenous groups to revive forgotten knowledge and, therefore, determine their future themselves.



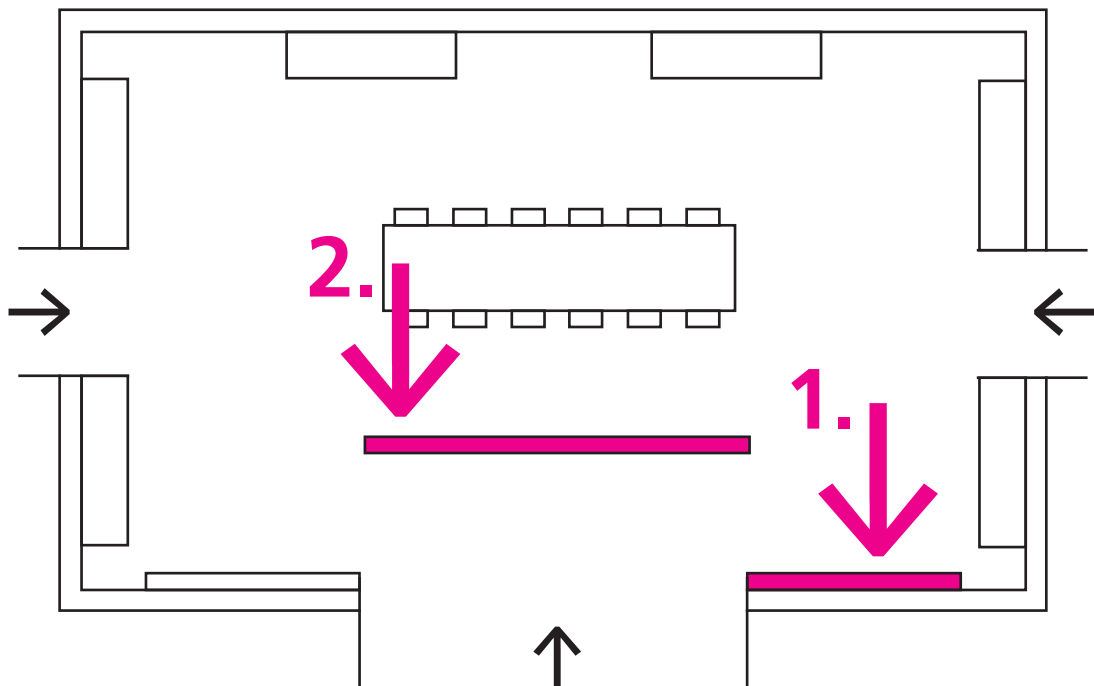
Official certificate declaring the traditional knowledge of the jaguar shamans of Yurupari intangible cultural heritage of humanity

© UNESCO





# Room 21



1.

## Comic Strips on Bamboo Tubes

The drawings on bamboo tubes from New Caledonia are reminiscent of comics. They not only portray details of how the islanders once lived but also of the rebellion against French colonial rule. France established the colony “Nouvelle-Calédonie” in the South Pacific in 1853. The island’s abundant deposits of nickel, manganese, and iron ore as well as its intense cattle, sheep and horse breeding, and its highly productive coffee, fruit, and coconut plantations contributed greatly to the booming economy of France. The inhabitants of New Caledonia, the Kanak people, put up resistance against the colonial appropriation, which resulted in numerous disputes, violence-prone uprisings, and armed conflicts.



## **Engraved Bamboo Tubes from New Caledonia**

Showing wit and ingenuity, the engraved drawings illustrate how the inhabitants of New Caledonia felt about French colonial rule. The visual language outlines town squares and houses with conical roofs, irrigated gardens, tubers, poultry keeping, and fish as well as turtle catching. It also depicts anchored sailing ships, horses, riders, soldiers with rifles, and islanders with clubs and axes.

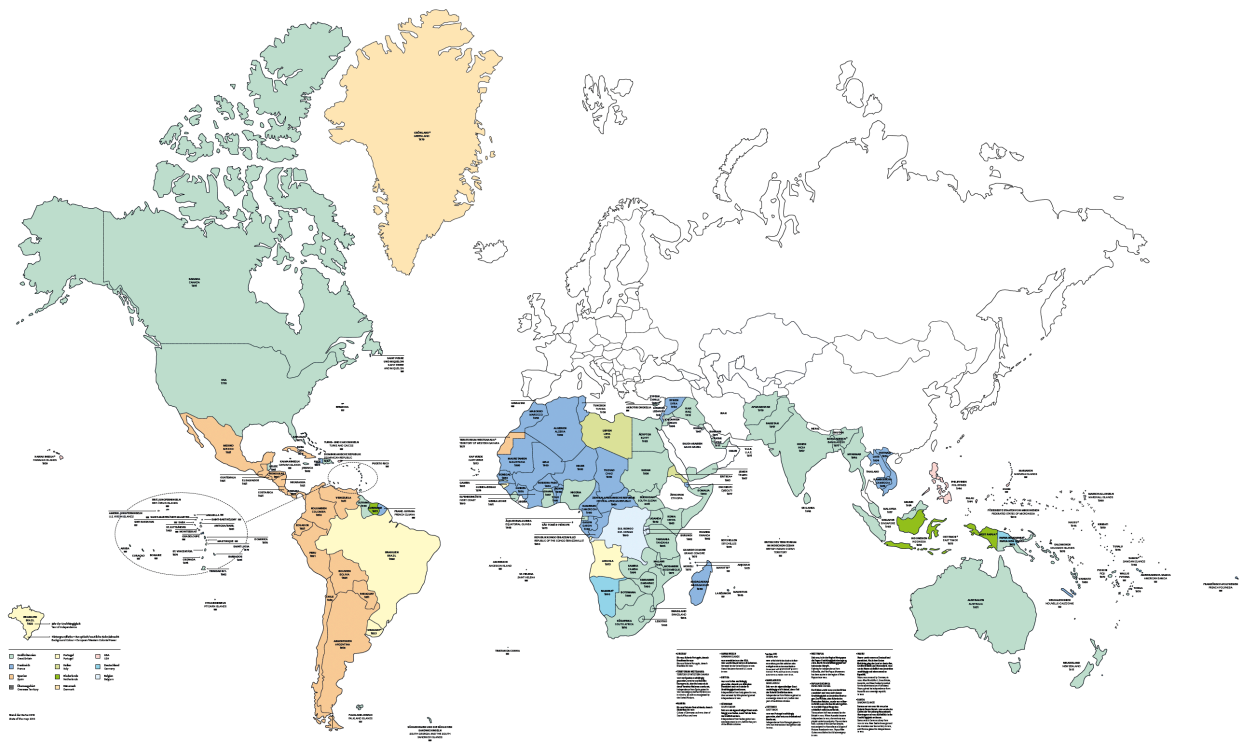
Kanak, New Caledonia, ca. 1878; bamboo  
Bernhard Goldbeck Coll.

## 2.

# Independence: The End of Colonialism?

Almost all countries celebrate their national day. The Austrian National Day is on 26 October to commemorate the enactment of the Declaration of Neutrality in 1955. In contrast, more than 120 states in the world celebrate their national day to commemorate their declaration of independence from a European/Western colonial power. This aspect is also the focus of the displayed map. Particularly in the period between 1945 and 1975, an increasing number of countries fought for or were granted their independence. This process also reflects a certain change of values. Founded in 1945, the United Nations not only proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but later on also adopted a resolution to end colonialism and imperialism in 1960. It states: "All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development." Nevertheless, the newly established map rather corresponded

to former colonial areas of influence and did not take into account any language or population groups. Conflicts erupted in consequence. As other dependencies developed, new independence movements formed as well, e.g. Namibia declared its independence from South Africa in 1990. Even today the map is subject to constant change.



## State of the map: 2016

Background Colour = European/Western

# Colonial Power

## Year of Independence



**Überseegebiet**



**Great Britain:**

AFGHANISTAN 1919  
EGYPT 1922  
ANTIGUA/BARB. 1981  
EQUATORIAL GUINEA 1968  
AUSTRALIA 1931  
BAHAMAS 1973  
BAHRAIN 1971  
BANGLADESH 1971  
BARBADOS 1931  
BELIZE 1981  
BOTSWANA 1966  
BRUNEI 1984  
DOMINICA 1978  
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 1987  
IVORX COAST 1960  
FIDJI 1970  
GAMBIA 1965  
GHANA 1957  
GRENADA 1974  
GUYANA 1966  
INDIA 1947  
IRAQ 1932

JAMAICA 1962  
YEMEN 1967  
JORDAN 1964  
CANADA 1931  
QATAR 1971  
KENYA 1963  
KIRIBATI 1979  
KUWAIT 1961  
LESOTHO 1966  
MALAWI 1964  
MALAYSIA 1957  
MAURITIUS 1968  
MOZAMBIQUE 1975  
MYANMAR 1948  
NAURU\* 1968  
NEW ZEALAND 1931  
NIGERIA 1960  
PAKISTAN 1947  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA\* 1975  
SAINT LUCIA 1979  
SOLOMON ISLANDS 1978  
ZAMBIA 1964  
SEYCHELLES 1976  
SIERRA LEONE 1961  
ZIMBABWE 1980  
SINGAPORE 1965

SOMALIA 1960  
SRI LANKA 1948  
ST. KITTS/NEVIS 1983  
ST. VINCENT/GR. 1979  
SOUTH AFRICA 1910  
SUDAN 1956  
SOUTH SUDAN\* 2011  
SWAZILAND 1968  
TANZANIA 1964  
TONGA 1970  
TRINIDAD & T. 1962  
TUVALU 1978  
UGANDA 1962  
USA 1776  
U.A.E. 1971  
VANUATU 1980  
CYPRUS 1960

**British Overseas Territory:**

AKROTIRI DHEKELIA  
ANGUILLA  
ASCENSION ISLAND  
BERMUDA  
BRIT. VIRGIN ISLANDS  
BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORY  
FALKLAND ISLANDS

GIBRALTAR  
CAYMAN ISLANDS  
MONTSERRA  
PITCAIRN ISLANDS  
SAINT HELENA  
SOUTH GEORGIA AND THE SOUTH SANDWICH IS-  
LANDS  
TRISTAN DA CUNHA  
TURKS AND CAICOS



**France:**

ALGERIA 1962  
ANJOUAN 1975  
BENIN 1960  
BURKINA FASO 1960  
DJIBOUTI 1977  
GABON 1960  
GRAND COMORE 1975  
GUINEA 1958  
HAITI 1804  
CAMBODIA 1954  
CAMEROON 1960  
LAOS 1954  
LEBANON 1943  
MADAGASCAR 1960  
MALI 1960

MAROCCO 1956  
MAURITANIA 1960  
MOHELI 1975  
NIGER 1960  
REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE) 1960  
SENEGAL 1960  
SYRIA 1946  
TOGO 1960  
CHAD 1960  
TUNISIA 1956  
VIETNAM 1954  
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC 1960

**French overseas territories:**

FRENCH GUIANA  
FRENCH POLYNESIA  
GUADELOUPE  
LA RÉUNION  
MARTINIQUE  
MAYOTTE\*  
NOUVELLE-CALÉDONIE  
SAINT PIERRE AND MIQUELON  
SAINT-BARTHÉLEMY  
SAINT-MARTIN  
WALLIS FUTUNA





## Spain:

ARGENTINA 1816

BOLIVIA 1825

CHILE 1810

COSTA RICA 1821

ECUADOR 1821

EL SALVADOR 1821

GUATEMALA 1821

HONDURAS 1821

KOLUMBIEN 1810

CUBA 1898

MEXICO 1821

NICARAGUA 1921

PANAMA 1821

PARAGUAY 1811

PERU 1821

TERRITORY OF WESTERN SAHARA\* 1957

VENEZUELA 1811



## **Portugal:**

ANGOLA 1975

BRAZIL 1822

GUINEA-BISSAU 1974

CAPE VERDE 1975

SÃO TOMÉ & PRÍNCIPE 1975



## **Italy:**

ERITREA\* 1993

LIBYA 1951



## **Netherlands:**

INDONESIA 1945

EAST TIMOR\* 1975

SURINAME 1975

## **Dutch overseas territories:**

ARUBA

BONAIRE

CURAÇAO

SABA

SINT EUSTATIUS

SINT MAARTEN

WEST PAPUA\*



## **Denmark:**

GREENLAND\* 1979



## **USA:**

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA 1990

HAWAIIAN ISLANDS\* 1959

MARSHALL ISLANDS 1990

PALUA 1994

PHILIPPINES 1946

## **US overseas territories:**

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

AMERICAN SAMOA

GUAM

MARIANA ISLANDS

PUERTO RICO



## **Germany:**

NAMIBIA\* 1990

SAMOAN ISLANDS\* 1962



## **Belgium:**

BURUNDI 1962

D.R. CONGO 1960

RWANDA 1962

### **\*BANGLADESH**

Independence from Pakistan gained as a sovereign state in 1971, before that part of the British colonies.

### **\*ERITREA**

Independence from Italy gained in 1941, then annexed by Ethiopia and granted independence in 1993.

### **\*GREENLAND**

Greenland was granted self-government in 1979, and has been a mostly autonomous nation ever since

### **\*HAWAIIAN ISLANDS**

Annexed by the United States in 1889. Hawaii became the 50th U.S. state in 1959.

### **\*NAMIBIA**

Colony of Germany until 1919, then of South Africa until 1990

### **\*NAURU**

Nauru was annexed by Germany in 1888. After World War I, Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand provided for the administration of the island. Nauru gained its independence from Australia as a sovereign republic in 1968.

### **\*EAST TIMOR**

Independence from Portugal gained in 1975, but international recognition only in 2002.

### **\*PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

The southern half was annexed by the British in 1884. When Australia became independent in 1902, the territory was placed under its authority. The northern half, a colony of the German Empire, was assigned to Australia as a League of Nations mandate in 1921. Papua New Guinea established its full sovereignty in 1975.

### **\*SAMOAN ISLANDS**

Samoa was a German colony from 1900 to 1914. New Zealand was granted the mandate over the territory in 1919, until Samoa gained its independence in 1962.

### **\*SOUTH SUDAN**

Independence from Sudan gained as a sovereign state in 2011, before that part of the British colonies.

### **\*TERRITORY OF WESTERN SAHARA**

Independence from Spain gained in 1957, sovereignty claimed by Morocco in 1975/76, yet still not recognised by the United Nations.

### **\*URUGUAY**

Bis 1822 Kolonie Portugals, danach Brasiliens bis 1825  
In meiner Datei gab es keinen englische  
Text zur zweite Vitrine

### **\*WEST PAPUA**

Fighting for independence from Indonesia, the Free Papua Movement has been active in the region of West Papua since 1964.



