



INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

Contemporary Journal of African Studies 2020; 7 (1): 47-66  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/contjas.v7i1.4>

ISSN 2343-6530  
© 2020 The Author(s)

Open Access article distributed under the terms of the  
Creative Commons License [CC BY-NC-ND 4.0]  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>

## Looted Nigerian heritage – an interrogatory discourse around repatriation

**Zacharys Gundu**

*Professor, Department of Archaeology, Ahmadu Bello University*

*Author email: [takuruku@yahoo.com](mailto:takuruku@yahoo.com)*

### **Abstract**

The colonial assault on African culture and heritage culminated in the indiscriminate looting of African cultural resources, many of which are icons in public and private museums and institutions in Europe and North America. Many more are in auction houses and art galleries outside the continent. While there is no comprehensive audit of these materials, they are estimated to run into hundreds of thousands. In this paper, attempts are made to identify the different genres of looted Nigerian materials in Europe and North America. Factors that have continued to exacerbate the looting of the country's cultural resources are identified and attempts are made to suggest possible strategies for the repatriation of these looted treasures.

**Keywords:** Culture and heritage, Germany, cultural resources, repatriation, museums, auction houses, art galleries, looting

**Looted Nigerian heritage:  
an interrogatory discourse around repatriation**

Zacharys Gundu

**Abstract**

The colonial assault on African culture and heritage culminated in the indiscriminate looting of African cultural resources, many of which are icons in public and private museums and institutions in Europe and North America. Many more are in auction houses and art galleries outside the continent. While there is no comprehensive audit of these materials, they are estimated to run into hundreds of thousands. In this paper, attempts are made to identify the different genres of looted Nigerian materials in Europe and North America. Factors that have continued to exacerbate the looting of the country's cultural resources are identified and attempts are made to suggest possible strategies for the repatriation of these looted treasures.

**Key Words:** Culture and Heritage, Cultural Resources, Repatriation, Museums, Auction Houses, Art Galleries and Looting

**Résumé**

L'assaut colonial contre la culture et le patrimoine africains a abouti au pillage aveugle des ressources culturelles africaines, dont beaucoup sont des icônes dans les musées et institutions publics et privés en Europe et en Amérique du Nord. Beaucoup d'autres se trouvent dans des maisons de vente aux enchères et des galeries d'art en dehors du continent. Bien qu'il n'y ait pas d'audit complet de ces matériaux, on estime qu'ils

<https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/contjas.v7i1.4>

**Prof. Zacharys Anger Gundu** ([takuruku@yahoo.com](mailto:takuruku@yahoo.com)) holds a Ph.D in Archaeology from the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria. He teaches archaeology at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is a distinguished Senior Fulbright Scholar. He also sat on the Council of the World Archaeological Congress (WAC) between 2013 and 2016 and was Vice President of the Pan African Association of Prehistory and Related Studies from 2014–2018. He also served as the Secretary of the Archaeological Association of Nigeria (AAN) between 198 and 1992 and President of the Association between 2010 and 2018. He is Editor of the Journal of Nigerian Field Archaeology. He is also a Fellow of the Archaeological Association of Nigeria and a Fellow of the Institute of Management Consultants (Nigeria). Prof. Gundu is currently Pro-Chancellor and Chairman Governing Council of the Benue State University, Makurdi. Nigeria.

se comptent par centaines de milliers. Cet article tente d'identifier les différents genres de matériel nigérian pillé en Europe et en Amérique du Nord. Les facteurs qui ont continué à exacerber le pillage des ressources culturelles dudit pays sont identifiés et des tentatives sont faites pour suggérer des stratégies possibles pour le rapatriement de ces trésors pillés.

**Mots clés:** Culture et patrimoine, ressources culturelles, rapatriement, musées, maisons de vente aux enchères, galeries d'art et pillage

## Introduction

Nigerian heritage resources of immense value are scattered all over the developed world in public museums and institutions. Others are in private museums, galleries, auction houses and even private residences. Most of these resources were stolen, pillaged, plundered or collected through violence and stealth. For these reasons, we can argue that their separation from their owners/users and presence outside Nigerian borders is illegal and unjust. At the moment, there exists no comprehensive audit of the exact number of these resources outside the country and the places where they are held captive, but estimates run into hundreds of thousands. In this paper, we attempt to identify the different genres of Nigerian cultural property in captivity in Europe, North America and other parts of the world. We identify known places where these materials are housed and interrogate the arguments used to keep them in captivity. Factors that continue to drive looting and the theft of cultural heritage objects in Nigeria are identified. Repatriation initiatives in Nigeria are reviewed in the light of the recent stance of the French President, Emmanuel Macron, on the return of African cultural materials held illegally and unjustly in France. Strategies for strengthening these initiatives are suggested as a way forward.

The best known of all Nigerian looted heritage resources in captivity are the Benin objects. Also known as the Benin corpus, these are royal works of art made in bronze, brass, ivory, bone and wood. Four thousand (4,000) of these (see Layiwola, 2010) were plundered from the Benin Kingdom following the British punitive expedition of 1897. These were taken into captivity to Britain where some of them were auctioned to defray the cost of the expedition. Today, about 3,227 of these heritage treasures are scattered in captivity between 16 museums in the United Kingdom, USA, Germany, Austria and the Netherlands. (see table below). Others in Belgium, France, Italy and Switzerland are unaccounted for.

**Table 1: Looted Benin Art in European and American Museums.**

S/n	Country	Name of Museum	City	No of Benin Objects held	Comments
1	Britain	British Museum	London	700	The British Museum continues to refuse to return the Benin objects and other Nigerian treasures. About 90% of the collections of this museum are taken from other lands.
2	Britain	Pitt Rivers Museum	Oxford	327	The Pitt Rivers Museum also holds other stolen Nigerian treasures acquired during the colonial era through violence and stealth.
3	Britain	Museum of Religious Life	Glasgow	22	Also known as St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art after Glasgow's Patron Saint. The Museum has other Nigerian objects collected without consent.
4	Germany	Museum of Ethnology	Berlin	580	Holding other stolen Nigerian treasures.
5	Germany	Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum	Cologne	73	Core objects here were from the private collections of Wilhelm Joest who died in 1897. Holding other Nigerian stolen treasures.
6	Germany	Museum fur Volkerkunde	Hamburg	196	Holding other stolen Nigerian treasures.
7	Germany	Museum fur Volkerkunde	Leipzig	87	Holding other stolen Nigerian treasures.
8	Germany	Staatliches Museum fur Volkerkunde	Dresden	182	Holding other stolen Nigerian treasures.
9	Germany	Linden Museum Staatliches fur Volkerkunde	Stuttgart	80	Holding other stolen Nigerian treasures.

10	Netherlands	Rijks Museum voor Volkenkunde	Leiden	98	Holding other stolen Nigerian treasures.
11	Austria	Museum of Ethnology	Vienna	167	The African section housing the Benin bronzes was closed to the public since from 2000 and reopened in 2016.
12	USA	Art Institute	Chicago	20	The museum has other Nigerian treasures acquired under dubious circumstances.
13	USA	Field Museum	Chicago	400	Holds other Nigerian objects including Oba's panels.
14	USA	Metropolitan Museum of Fine Art	New York	163	Holding other stolen Nigerian treasures.
15	USA	Museum of Fine Arts	Boston	32	Robert Owen Lehman donated these objects to the museum. On 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2013 the museum opened a permanent gallery for its Benin collections.
16	USA	University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology	Philadelphia	100	Holds one of the largest African collections in the United States of America. Most of the holdings were acquired between 1891-1937 from Art dealers and Missionaries.

Source:<http://www.elginism.com/similar-cases/the-reason-given-for-non-return-of-cultural-property/20090821/2348/> accessed 12/11/2018.

Next to the Benin corpus in terms of notoriety and importance are the Nok and other Nigerian baked clay sculptures from Ife, Zaria, Sokoto, Funtua, Katsina and Kwatarkwashi. The Nok terracotta figurines were discovered accidentally following open cast tin mining in the Nok valley from 1928 to 1943 (Jemkur, 1992). A number of the accidental finds were turned over to the Nigerian Department of Antiquities to form the nucleus of the Jos Museum established in 1952. Others, especially those plundered from burial sites, were trafficked to Europe. It is known, for example, that Nok figurines plundered from burial sites at Old Zankan some 14 kilometers South West of Godo Godo in Kaduna State are in a private collection in Belgium (Jemkur, 1992). Other terracotta figurines in this genre were looted by dealer cartels operating in Nigeria. In 1993, a consortium of European art dealers in the country had employed hundreds of diggers in the Nok valley and other parts of Northern Nigeria where about 3000 terracotta pieces were indiscriminately dug

annually and smuggled to Europe and North America through Lome and Cotonou (Darling, 2000).

The construction and development of Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT) also heightened the plunder of the Nok figurines as the FCT is literally sitting on Nok sites. The construction and development work have regularly unearthed Nok figurines, most of which end up being trafficked out of the country. Though it is difficult to track where these Nok and other Nigerian terracotta figurines end up in Europe and North America, at least 50 pieces were, until recently, housed in the private collections of Gert Chesi in Schwaz, Austria. Chesi, an ethnologist who researches voodoo, has been active on the Nigerian scene as an illicit antiquities collector. His 'House of the People', a private museum built in 1995, boasted at the time that it housed the "most splendid collection of Nok terracotta anywhere in the world" (Schulz, 2009) in addition to other collections from other parts of Africa and Asia. In 2013, Chesi's 'House of the People' was renovated in preparation for 'donating' its collections to the city of Schwaz. Today, Chesi's impressive Nok collections are the 'property' of the city of Schwaz alongside the Schell and the Lindner collections all housed in the Museum der Voelker, Schwaz. Even though Chesi claims that he had export papers for his Nok statues and that he took them outside Nigeria legally, it is widely known that at the time of acquisition and export these statues were on the ICOM Red List (ICOM, 2000) which means they were protected by Nigerian law and could not have been sold nor exported legally.

Moreover, all of them were uncovered through subsistence digging and bought through illicit contact with unscrupulous dealers and middlemen in the Nok valley in defiance of the ICOM plea to museums, auction houses, art dealers and collectors to stop buying Nok statues. Chesi's 'donation' of these Nok figurines to the city of Schwaz, his claim that their export was approved by the NCMM and his publication of *The Nok Culture: Art in Nigeria 25,000 years ago* are obvious attempts to launder these statues, 'cleanse' them and possibly complicate the demand for their return to Nigeria where they rightly belong.

Curiously, and perhaps further thwarting the success of any such request, Dr. Omotoso Eluyemi, the then Director-General of Nigeria's National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM), wrote the preface to the publication, which was co-edited with Gerhard Merzeder, stating, 'Publications and exhibitions such as this one help provide the interested public with new information and therefore make an essential contribution to the understanding and appreciation of foreign cultures. For this reason, I welcome the commendable initiative of the Haus der Volker... important step towards a scientific research of the Nok culture.'

Professor Joseph Jemkur, of the University of Jos and a leading Nigerian archaeologist on the Nok culture also contributed alongside Dr. Eluyemi to the book. Though Professor Jemkur acknowledges the damage done by looters and illicit collectors in Nok studies, he is completely silent on the illicit Chesi collections which his contribution endorses. The book illustrates 89 pieces of looted or stolen objects distributed in 'private collections' in Europe and North America. Five others are in the Joey and Toby collection Tanenbaum (Toronto) while three others are in the Kathrin and Andreas Linder collection (see Chesi and Merzeder, 2006).

Aside from looted Nok figurines in the ‘House of the Peoples’, there are other Nok and Nigerian clay figurines in public and private hands in France, Belgium, Britain, the US, Switzerland, Germany, Spain, Australia and Italy. American and European museums with looted Nok and Nigerian terracotta statues in their collections include the British Museum (London), Musée Dapper (Paris) Barbier–Mueller Museum (Geneva), Minneapolis Institute of Art, Cleveland Museum of Art, North Carolina Museum of Art, the Goethe University, Frankfurt, the University of Florida and the Musée du Quai Branly Museum, Paris (see Opoku, 2011 and Gundu, 2014).

The Qui Branly Nok statues are particularly notorious because the French Government bought them from a Belgian art dealer in 1998 even though it was common knowledge that they were on the ICOM Red List (ICOM, 2000) and could not have left Nigeria legally (see Opoku, 2011). Earlier, the Qui Branly had acquired 276 Nigerian antiquities of doubtful provenance from Jean Paul Barbier Mueller and today holds majority of France’s collections from sub Saharan Africa (see the Sarr and Savoy Report, 2018).

Illicit Nok statues are also found in other galleries including the Canberra National Gallery (Australia), Barakat Gallery (Beverly hills), Surajo Africa Art and Design Gallery (San Francisco), The Galerie L’Atelier, Toulouse (France) and Arts Gallery, Spain. Many other Nok statues are in auction houses and private collections such as New York City resident Corice Arman who, in 2012, approached the Manhattan Supreme Court with a request against Art+Auction whose staff had broken one of her Nok statues that was been prepared for a photo shoot in her apartment (Ross and Hutchinton, 2012).

The other genre of illicit antiquities of Nigerian origin is in the category of stolen museum pieces. In this category are masks, ancestral drums, traditional doorposts, Ife sculptures and Igbo Ukwu materials (see Agbedeh, 2011). Nigerian museums are insecure repositories that have sadly continued to suffer losses. The monetary value of these museum losses has been estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars (Appiah, 2009). Though museum thefts are underreported in the Nigerian museum establishment, the numbers can be staggering and in 1987, nine objects were stolen from the Jos Museum. Estimates indicate that in the 1990s alone, about 429 antiquities were stolen from about 33 museums and institutions across the country (Gundu, 2012). In 1993, the main door of the Esie Museum was forced open and 13 statues were stolen, with a further 21 statues stolen from the museum in 1995 bringing the number of stolen statues to 34. Similarly, the Ife Museum lost 40 objects between 1993–1994 (see ICOM Red List 2000 and Brodie 2000). Museum staff were implicated in most of these thefts (Jegede, 1996; Willet, 2000; Adesari, 1999). In 2013, the French Government returned an Esie statue that had been stolen from Nigeria in 2011. Custom officials had intercepted the statue at the Charles de Gaulle Airport (see Oyodele 2013)

The Akwanshi stone monoliths of the upper cross–river region in the open–air museum sites of Alok, Emangabe and Edamkono also form part of museum objects stolen and trafficked abroad in contravention of national and international legislation. Several of these figures are known to have been stolen and trafficked outside the country. Some of these have been tracked to Britain and the State of Israel (Abu

Edet, Personal Communication, 2018). A fragment of one of these statues is at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York where it was bequeathed by Nina and Gordon Bunshaft who claimed they had acquired it from the Fatou Touba M' Backe Gallery in New York. There is no information on this gallery but it has been argued that the fragment must have left Nigeria during the Biafran war. (<http://www.factumfoundation.org/pag/1173/cross-River-Monoliths-Metropolitan-Fragment-Conference-and-Sites-Visits>.)

Another group of stolen heritage comprise cultural property acquired during the colonial period and exported to Europe. Among these are the collections of Leo Frobenius who severally fronted for major ethnology museums in Germany. Between 1904–1933, he is known to have led 12 expeditions to the 'Congo and Kasai, to West Africa, Morocco, Algeria, Libya, to the deserts of the central Sahara, Egypt, the Sudan, and to the shores of the Red Sea and to South Africa' (Kohl, 2010: 11). These expeditions, in addition to whatever they could have been, were business expeditions funded by German museums that guaranteed Frobenius money for each object imported into Germany (see Kuba, 2010). The Berlin museum had 'priority purchase option' on all objects coming from the colonies leaving the balance to be 'bought' by the other museums.

While in Africa, Leo Frobenius 'bought' his objects using pounds sterling, guineas and shillings; his major acquisition strategy however, was through barter using salt, red cloth, Arabian style stirrups, silver daggers and cowrie shells. From this 'unfair purchase' and stealth (using badgering, threats, bribes and twisted translation) alone, he carted off 5,670 Nigerian heritage treasures in his first expedition to the country (Kuba, 2010). These treasures are scattered today between the Frobenius Institute in Frankfurt and the Museums of Ethnology in Berlin, Hamburg and Leipzig. Leo Frobenius is not only implicated in the theft of the Olokun head in Ife and its replacement with a copy, but he had been forced to return 15 boxes of cultural objects following a 'trial' by the British at Ife (see Eyo and Willet, 1980) underscoring the illicit status of his collections from Nigeria and other parts of Africa.

Other illicit collections during the colonial period involving violence and stealth include the Tiv Naakaa movement of 1929 and 1930. The movement was orchestrated by the British colonial infrastructure, with the support of missionaries, as a pretext to appropriate Tiv sacred heritage under violent and humiliating circumstances (see Akiga, 1933 and Makar, 1975). All confiscated objects were shipped to Britain and are housed in private and other museums including the British Museum and the Pitt Rivers Museum at the University of Oxford.

As argued by Ogbechie (2016), collections of African cultural materials by the West during the colonial period are evidence of violence against African cultures with the object of decontextualizing cultures and making them weak and more amenable to European indoctrination. Recently, 400 Tiv objects, including different categories of masks, marionettes and other props locked up in a private collection, came to limelight in Silicon Valley. These are objects 'belonging' to Jerome Bunch, a private American collector who willed his African collections to his son, Richard (Rider, 2017). His Tiv Kwagh-Hir masks are the world's largest and most

comprehensive private collection of their type (see Fogel and Rider, 2017). Jerome Bunch's Tiv collections are said to have been 'bought' and 'acquired' in the 'bush where they were abandoned and left to decay' (Rider, 2017: 14).

### **The Postcolonial Situation and Current Challenges**

It is important to underscore the fact that even after Nigeria's independence in 1960, the plunder of the country's cultural heritage has continued unabated. This is also true of other African countries where thefts, looting and subsistence digging have continued to be commonplace. Factors that have continued to drive looting and the theft of antiquities in Nigeria include, among others, poverty, ignorance and lack of awareness of the significance of antiquities and cultural heritage resources, religious extremism where both Muslims and Christians consider some antiquities and heritage resources as idols, lack of direct historical affinity with heritage resources, ineffectual antiquities laws or lack of the implementation of the laws that do exist, market demand, insecure museum environment and illegal mining (see Gundu, 2014). At the head of the looting enterprise and subsistence digging in Nigeria are middlemen and members of the Artifacts Rescuers Association of Nigeria (ARAN). This is an association of art dealers committed to the 'collection' and 'sale' of Nigerian antiquities, many times as agents of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM).

European and American museums (which have continued to indiscriminately acquire African cultural objects), art collectors and art galleries pursue the acquisition of African objects for a variety of reasons. In 2002, eighteen of the biggest museums and galleries in the world signed the unilateral Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums (DIVUM) to the effect that their holdings are the heritage of mankind. They urged the world to view objects acquired in 'earlier times' differently since, as they argued, these were acquired under different conditions and had become part of the museums and countries. Arguing that they housed these items for global enjoyment, these museums' declaration was a bold and arrogant notice against repatriations and return, pushing the principle of inalienability to the fore (Abungu, 2008; Opoku, 2013). These museums take the position that their collections, no matter how acquired, are 'universal' and anything done to deplete them through returns would be a great loss to global cultural heritage (van Beurden, 2017). The apparent insecurity in the African museum environment has also been used as a reason for the refusal by Western museums to support the return of African objects in their holdings (Appiah 2009). Another argument that has been advanced holds that treaties prior to 1970, especially the Congress of Vienna (1815); the Treaty of Versailles (1919); the Treaty of Saint-Germain (1919) and the Treaty of Riger (1921) that compelled European countries to return cultural properties acquired under dubious circumstances to their countries of origin, cannot be used to support returns to Africa because the African nation states interested in returns today were not recognized under European international law at the time these treaties came into effect (Shyllon, 2017a). Apparently combining this argument and that of "universal" heritage, the Humboldt Forum holds that the looted antiquities of Africa, Asia and Latin America were made by human beings and belong to the whole world instead of particular ethnic groups and cultures or nation states that existed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Opoku, 2015a, 2017 and 2018a).

American and European museums have also resisted national and international legal instruments especially as they relate to objects whose provenance is in doubt. They have continued trafficking in cultural objects with no known provenance. In the words of James Cuno, ‘unprovenanced antiquities like all works of art in the collections of US art museums, ‘belong’ in fact or principle to the public[;] US art museums are obliged to keep the unprovenanced antiquity until a preponderance of evidence convinces both parties that it should be turned over to the claimant party’ (Cuno, 2008:2).

Barbier–Mueller, a leading European museum founder and arts collector and dealer until his death in 2016, strongly opposed the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention on the International Return of Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects covering different art works including antiquities and contemporary art. He held the arrogant and misplaced opinion that collectors, art dealers and European museums were rescuing the different cultures of the world ‘from oblivion and destruction’ by making them a part of ‘universal art’. (Noce 2017). The museum establishment in Europe has also pleaded ‘good faith’ in the purchase of African objects from the ‘free market’ as a reason for resisting the return of objects to Africa. Ownership is also at the heart of their refusal to return African objects in their holdings. They argue that objects acquired under the imperial regime of colonialism were either bought or appropriated as spoils of war and if any were to be returned, detailed provenance research would be needed to support restitution demands.

In order to properly engage the arguments used to oppose return and restitution of African objects, it is important to underscore two dominant related issues. The first of these issues is the fact that virtually all the African masterpieces in the holdings of European museums are ‘blood antiquities’ acquired through violent means. This is alarming when it is cited that 90% of sub Saharan African cultural heritage legacy is outside Africa (Sarr and Savoy, 2018). In so far as European stakeholders continue to use their own legal systems to justify their hold on African cultural resources in their museums and institutions, it would be difficult for them to see return, restitution and repatriation as fair templates to redress crimes of cultural despoliation.

Another dominant related issue is the political economy of the Western museum establishment. The western museum though functioning in some countries on public subsidies is still essentially a multibillion–dollar enterprise feeding into the illicit antiquities market whose turnover is next to illicit arms and drugs. Though Western museums downplay the size of material benefits accruing to them because of their African holdings, their resistance to return, to restitution and to repatriation is because once ‘emptied’ of these holdings, they will no longer survive as profit centres. It must also be realized that African cultural patrimony in custody in the Western museum ‘are fungible economic commodities’ whose release to Africa is seen by European institutions as ‘transfer of wealth and financial equity’ (Ogbechie, 2016).

The 2002 declaration on universal museums has been heavily criticized (Abungu, 2004, 2008; Opoku, 2010, 2013 and 2015b; Singh 2008). The principle of inalienability which the declaration promotes is foregrounded on an “imperial-cultural legal system” which makes justice “illegal” through laws that protect looted cultural objects (Azoulay 2018). The case of universal museums is “totally undercut” by the fact that their entire essence held up to support a global cultural heritage, as Sandy (2018) points out, is based on stolen materials representing illicit transfer of cultural wealth from the African continent to the West.

Though security and corruption are very sore points in the African museum establishment, it is undoubtedly clear that both these factors in the African museum environment are directly linked to the Western museum and art establishment that is a major patron of the African illicit antiquities market. Pleas of good faith in the collection of antiquities are also not acceptable because they are excuses that undermine museum ethics and allow for the acquisition of illicit antiquities. On the issue of colonial acquisitions, we need to be reminded that there was no ‘fair trade’ here and the idea of ‘spoils of war’ persists only because the so called “universal museums” as imperial institutions want to constantly remind the rest of the world of the fact that they had been defeated, oppressed and stripped of their rights. The enlightenment philosophy that foregrounds the “universal museum” concept is a twisted logic that had been used to support slavery and colonialism; it is more about deception than the benevolence it seeks to project (Opoku, 2015b).

### **Nigeria’ s Attitude Towards and Obstacles to Returns**

Though the Nigerian museum establishment acknowledges that the issue of returns, restitution and repatriations are about diplomacy and bilateral negotiations, the country has not achieved much using this route. The 1979 National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) Decree No. 77 and the 1970 UNESCO Convention and the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention, have also not effectively checked the illicit trade in Nigerian antiquities nor led to appreciable returns. Dealers have continued to ‘export’ Nigerian antiquities (as art and crafts) to the illicit international antiquities market with only a few intercepted and returned. In 2010, acting on a tip off from the French, the US Homeland Security Investigation (HIS) and the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) intercepted ten terracotta statues at the John F Kennedy Airport. These together with a carved tusk were returned to Nigeria in 2012 (ICE, 2012). The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston has returned eight artifacts including two terracotta heads to Nigeria (Dokolo, 2018) and the French have returned five terracotta statues that were smuggled out of Nigeria by a French national in 2010 (Daniel, 2013).

Lack of capacity, focus and patriotism on the Nigerian side has continued to distort Nigeria’ s commitment to safeguard the country’ s antiquities. In 1973, the Nigerian head of state, General Yakubu Gowon removed a Benin bronze head from the Lagos museum and presented it as a special gift to the Queen of England who was on a thank you state visit (see Adebisi 2009). In 1998, France illegally bought two Nok terracotta statues from Samir Borro in breach of Nigerian laws and the 1970 UNESCO Convention. Instead of Nigeria insisting on the return of

these illegally acquired Nok objects, the then Nigerian Head of State, President Olusegun Obasanjo acquiesced at the intervention of the French President and agreed in an “unrighteous conclusion” to ‘loan’ the Nok pieces to France for a renewable period of 25 years (see Shyllon, 2003). The loan was in return for deceptive promises of French support to the Nigerian museum establishment. The French deal with Nigeria has been condemned as a wrong message to looters (Opoku 2011). At one point, Nigeria attempted to ‘buy back’ her antiquities put up for sale by European museums and art galleries; unfortunately not much is happening at this level today because the commitment to deploy funds for such buy back is lacking in the country.

Nigeria has been unable to receive favourable responses for the return of the country’s antiquities from European countries and museums with the British museum being contemptuous of all requests from Nigeria for the return of looted Nigerian art in their collections including the Queen Idi mask, which Nigeria requested as far back as during FESTAC 77. The request and pleas of the Oba of Benin for the return of looted Benin corpus has largely been ignored. In the meantime, Nigeria has continued to show weakness in engaging European countries and museums on the question of returns. Nigeria is yet to appreciate the fact that antiquities seized, looted or stolen by violence cannot return except through pressure.

In the meantime, Nigeria continues to approve and participate in the exhibition of looted materials by museums in Europe. In 1998, the Permanent Secretary (PS) Federal Ministry of Information and Culture wrote the Introduction to the catalogue of the exhibition; ‘Birth of Art in Africa–Nok statutory in Nigeria’ mounted in Brussels by the Banque Générale du Luxemburg even though some of the Nok pieces here were looted (Opoku, 2011). Nigerian government officials have also been criticized (Gundu, 2014) for their participation in, and endorsement of, a Nok exhibition in Frankfurt on 20 October, 2013. Government officials did not only write the Preface and the Forward of the catalogue to the exhibition, they were also present at the opening of the exhibition to legitimize it.

### **The “Benin Dialogue Group”**

Official duplicity is the unfortunate route that has today led to what we know as the Benin Dialogue Group. In 2007 Nigerian officials and the Benin court participated in an exhibition ‘Benin Kings and Rituals: Court Arts from Nigeria’ in Vienna at the Museum fur Volkerkunde. The exhibition later moved to Berlin, Paris and Chicago. The bulk of the objects on display were objects looted by Britain in 1897 following the punitive expedition against the Benin Kingdom. After the exhibition, the Museum of Ethnology Vienna lured the NCMM into starting an open dialogue on the ‘accessibility of the art treasure to the Benin Kingdom and other Nigerians’ (Shyllon, 2017b). The Benin Dialogue Group officially debuted in 2010 during the workshop on ‘New cultures of collaboration, sharing collections and quests for restitution: The Benin case’ at the Vienna Museum of Ethnology. The second meeting of the group was held in Berlin (2012) while the third meeting was held in Benin City Nigeria (2013). Folarin Shyllon (Shyllon, 2017b), a Nigerian jurist who has attended all the meetings of the group, has argued that nothing of substance came out of the first three meetings.

The failure of the British Museum to host a fourth meeting in 2014 as scheduled nearly aborted the group until students of Jesus College, Cambridge protested over the continued display of the *okukor* in their dining hall. The *okukor* – a bronze cockerel that had been looted from Benin during the 1897 expedition and bequeathed to the college in 1930. The students demanded that it should be returned to Nigeria. Following the protest and request from the students, the University of Cambridge attempted to control the damage by agreeing to step into the gap created by the refusal of the British Museum to host the fourth meeting of the group.

In 2017, the University hosted the Group at its Trinity College where the issue of ‘rotating loans’ of looted Benin objects by European museums to Nigeria was explored. Officials of the NCMM and the Benin court represented the Nigerian side. 15 European museums were in attendance. The meeting agreed to establish a permanent display in Benin City of looted rotating materials from European museums in collaboration with the NCMM and the Benin court. The meeting also agreed to establish a legal framework to guarantee the immunity of loaned objects from seizure in Nigeria. The fifth meeting was held at the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden in 2018.

The Benin Dialogue Group seems to be a misplaced talk shop focusing more on ‘loans’ and ‘sharing’, both of which reinforce the colonial attitude denying Africa of its cultural heritage and agency. Furthermore, the so called “Universal museums” in France and the United States holding looted Benin materials have avoided joining the group, thus undermining its basic aims.

### **The French Position and the Sarr–Savoy Report**

In 2017, while on a state visit to Burkina Faso, the French President Emmanuel Macron committed to ensure a “temporary or definitive” return of African cultural property held captive in French museums within a time frame of five years. He commissioned Felwine Sarr and Benedicte Savoy to assist with determining the best course of action to discharge his commitment to Africa. The Sarr and Savoy report was submitted to the French President on 23 November 2018. President Macron’s commitment and the report are not only a major milestone but also a shift in French public policy on cultural collections (Opoku, 2018b).

Hitherto, the French Government, supported by museum administrators, had argued that all objects in public museums irrespective of how they were acquired were the property of France and therefore inalienable. French public museums and the public in general in the past had been hostile and sometimes unethical on the issue of acquisitions and returns. For example, attempts by Nicolas Sarkozy to return the Uigwe manuscripts to South Korea from where the French had stolen them in 1866 were resisted by the French public museum establishment. Today, the manuscripts are on ‘loan’ to South Korea in virtual perpetuity though the ‘loan’ agreement recognizes French ownership of the manuscripts. France has also serially refused to return objects loaned to their public museums by Senegal.

The Sarr and Savoy report is a turning point because it frames the European acquisition of African cultural property as a transgression. The report has, by its “rigorous scientific approach and wide coverage of issues, set new standards that

will be applied to future work in the area” (Opoku, 2018b). The report recommends the return of African cultural heritage objects to their countries of origin. Understandably, the report has been received in western museum circles with mixed feelings. Hartmut Dögerloh, the Director General, of the Humboldt Forum, Berlin; Nicholas Thomas, the Director, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge and Tristram Hunt, the Director, Victoria and Albert Museum, London have all expressed some reservations about the report. The Director General of the Humboldt Forum welcomes the Sarr and Savoy report and argues for the need to recognize that restitution is “a pressing and complex political issue” (Noce, 2018a) but commits to discussing the report with an international team of experts to arrive at its implications for the Berlin collections and those of the Humboldt Forum. This is red tape and a route to inaction because of the fixation of the Humboldt Forum on tough conditions which have to be met before returns become an acceptable option.

Nicholas Thomas on the other hand, faults the report for coming across as a swift manifesto of wide ranging and open ended restitution instead of “a considered assessment of options”. He canvasses the view that European museum collections are not all about unjust appropriations since a number of them are expressions of “engagement and creativity” for which restitution should not be an option. Tristram Hunt of Victoria and Albert Museum, while commending Sarr and Savoy for making honest and clear recommendations in their report to the French President, prefers “free and open museums” that will range widely and “share the global story of humanity, ingenuity and creativity” through partnerships and a relational ethic with educational institutions and museums in societies of origin (Noce, 2018a).

There have been mixed reactions recorded in France itself on the report with the Head of the Musee du quai Branly –Jacques Chirac, Stephane Martin being “disappointed by the report” because it “makes museums hostage to the suffering created by colonialism” (Noce, 2018b). Jean Jacques Aillagon, former Culture Minister of France has expressed fears that the ‘radical propositions’ of the report if implemented would empty museums in France of their rich collections. Jean Francois Charnier, the former Scientific Director of the Louvre, Abu Dhabi on the other hand, has faulted the report for not accommodating what he calls ‘the other side’ which according to him could have held up ‘the importance of plurality and culture sharing’ (see Noce 2018a). Elsewhere in Europe, arguments have surfaced around the legal difficulties in the way of returning the 90,000 African objects in French museums to their countries of origin (see Herman, 2018).

No matter how hostile the European museum establishment sees the Sarr and Savoy report and how uncooperative or difficult European and American museums are in the matter of returns, Africa must see the report as a window for pressing home demands for the return of the continent’s heritage property from not only France but the rest of Europe and North America. No stolen or looted object in a European or American museum should no longer be considered unalienable. The Sarr and Savoy report is clear on this and Africa must bind together to request restitution on conditions that are truly respectful of the people and cultures of the continent. Already, two African countries, Senegal and Benin Republic, have given notice that they will ask for the return of their objects from French museums (Noce, 2018b). While Senegal has given notice to ask for *all* objects from France taken

before 1960 through colonial violence, Benin's Museum Director, Silvie Memel Kassi has said Benin "cannot ask for the return of items which were purchased or saved by Europeans even under colonial rule and Africa has to update its museums if it wants some of its heritage back". It is imperative that more voices come from Africa in support of the report. Perhaps with the benefit of hindsight, Africa ought to have negotiated the fate of its cultural heritage at independence. If this had been done, many of the arguments and the position of the so-called 'universal' museums today would have long been settled.

### **Which Strategy for Nigeria and Other African Countries?**

Much of the international legal regime for including the different UN conventions and initiatives like the UN Intergovernmental Committee for facilitating bilateral negotiations for the return and restitution of cultural property to countries of origin are significantly skewed against countries seeking returns. These are based on western notions of property ownership and are protective of the principle of inalienability making it difficult for Nigeria and other African countries to make appreciable progress through this route. To complicate matters, countries and museums from Europe and North America have continued to exploit gaps to resist demands for restitution including extra-judicial approaches.

Nigeria is yet to bring up demands for restitution of cultural heritage before the UN Intergovernmental Committee. Though much of the dispossessed world is embracing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as a possible route for the return of their stolen heritage, Nigeria has yet to begin the complex process of demanding the return of its cultural heritage treasures using the ADR as an alternative to litigation. Several years of the Benin Dialogue initiative is still at the level of promise with the major stakeholders (French and US "Universal museums") avoiding the Dialogue. The Nigerian side of the Dialogue represented by the NCMM and the Benin court is patently weak and unable to exert effective pressure on the European museums in the Dialogue.

Part of the Nigerian challenge is related to weak capacity in the NCMM and lack of awareness among the different publics in the country about the restitution debate. There is little or no appreciation of the fact that collaboration with European and North American museums undermines the Nigerian resolve on the issue of restitution and emboldens the alleged 'Universal' museums. Nigeria and other African countries must step up both moral and power pressure against countries and museums holding onto looted and stolen cultural heritage resources. The moral pressure would entail acts of shaming and the rejection of collaborative activities including sharing of artifacts on loans and presence at exhibitions where looted materials are displayed, as well as acts capable of legitimizing the exhibitions. Nigeria's moral pressure must also include a national mobilization strategy aimed at getting the public to buy into the restitution efforts to the extent of applying pressure by way of public demonstrations, lectures and discussions. In this regard, Peru is a success story of how moral pressure has yielded positive results in the return of the Machu Picchu looted artifacts. Greek moral pressure and relentless demand on Britain for the return of the Parthenon marbles is what has kept the marbles on the front burner of the restitution debate.

Power pressure would include the denial of excavation permits to scholars affiliated with institutions and museums in countries with looted or stolen Nigerian antiquities. Western institutions and scholars have continued to use Africa as a giant research laboratory especially in the historical and anthropological sciences, all in the attempt to breed specialists and produce knowledge on Africa (Andah, 1995). German archeologists from Frankfurt have been active on the Nigerian field for several years. Power pressure would entail withdrawing the permits allowing them to study in the Nok valley. Thus, partner institutions collaborating with them, like the NCMM, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and University of Jos would in the context of this pressure be required to withdraw from partnering with them. The objective would be to challenge scholars from outside the continent who want to research on the African field to pressure their governments and museums on the issue of restitutions. Power pressure will also entail Nigeria pulling out of the Benin Dialogue Group, refusing collaborations in joint exhibitions and refusing to contemplate receiving objects that had been stolen from the country on loan. As argued by Opoku (2018c), accepting objects that had been stolen from Nigeria on loan amounts to turning “looters into owners and owners into borrowers”, a complicated reverse situation where owners would borrow their stolen cultural property from the thief.

Sindika Dokolo, founder of the Fundacao Sindika Dokolo Foundation “declined a loan request from the Musee du Quai Branly– Jacques Chirac in Paris” which wanted to borrow classical pieces of his collection for an exhibition. The museum had refused to discuss looted Benin antiquities in their possession with Patrice Talon, the President of Benin Republic (Dokolo, 2018). Turkey and Egypt have successfully applied such power pressure tactics of refusal and related threats.

Africa must appreciate the fact that restitution is a complex and tedious struggle and that European countries and museums will continue to insist on their own terms and conditions. For this reason, an effective strategy would be for the countries of the continent to bind together as a collective, taking inspiration from the Zahi Huwass initiative. While heading the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA), Mr. Huwass organized a conference bringing together countries demanding the return of their antiquities from countries that had stolen them. Twenty-five countries attended the conference and started exploring ways to collectively fight for the return of their antiquities. Unfortunately, not much has happened since the 2010 conference. This is unfortunate because Europe and North America are regrouping as seen in the 2002 Declaration of the Universal Museums and the Humboldt Forum both of which are European and North American responses to the issue of restitution.

The African Union, regional bodies (Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Community of Sahel–Saharan States (CEN–SAD), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) and professional bodies like the International Council of African Museums (AFRICOM) and the Pan African Archaeological Association (PAA) must begin engagement with each other to stand with one voice and create synergy on the issue of reparations.

Currently there are multiple and contradictory voices coming out of Africa on the issue of returns showing a lack of focused collaboration. While ultimately working for a global cultural heritage tribunal (GCHT) that will ensure unconditional return and restitution of cultural heritage resources to source countries, African countries can collectively take short-term steps to reexamine all cultural ties with European countries and institutions. Some of these steps would include the ratification of major conventions on culture (for countries that are yet to ratify them), commissioning of audits of looted and stolen artifacts as well as formal demands and legal actions where necessary. ADR initiatives, review of extant cultural laws, heightened public awareness and coordination and engagement with the different publics in the West on return and restitution can also be considered in the short term. These steps will also ensure that policy statements coming out of Africa on the issue of returns are not contradictory (Opoku, 2009) but united on the issue of returns. African countries, museums, institutions and publics must challenge other European countries to follow the route France has taken. If museums must project global heritage, they must not all be in Europe and North America and they certainly must not be allowed to do this with “blood” antiquities.

## References

- Adesari, A. (1999). Minister moves to check theft of antiquities. *Guardian on Sunday (Nigeria)* 28<sup>th</sup> November.
- Abungu, G. (2004). The Declaration: A Contested Issue. *ICOM News*. No 1.5
- Abungu, G. (2008). Universal Museums: New Contestations, new controversies. In M. Gabriel and J. Dahl (Eds), *UTIMUT. Past Heritage – Future Partnerships*, IWGIA/NKA, Copenhagen.
- Adebiyi, B. E. (2009). *Legal and other Issues in Repatriating Nigeria's Looted Artefacts*. Abuja. Nigeria.
- Agbedeh, T. (2011). How Nigeria loses her priceless cultural objects. *National Mirror Newspapers*. May 12. P12.
- Akiga, S. (1933) *Akiga's Story*. Xerox Copy. University of Ibadan, Library.
- Akinade, A. O. (1999).. Illicit traffic in cultural property in Nigeria: Aftermaths and antidotes. *African Study Monographs*. 20 (2) 99–107.
- Andah, B. W. (1995). *Studying African Societies in Cultural Context*. In Schmidt, P. R and Patterson, T. C. (Eds.) *Making Alternative Histories: The Practice of Archaeology and History in non-Western Settings*. Santa Fe, N.M.: School of American Research Press.
- Appiah, K. A. (2009). *Whose Culture is it?* In Cuno J. (Ed.) *Whose Culture: The Promise of Museums and the Debate over Antiquities*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Azoulay A. (2018) Understanding the Migrant Caravan in the Context of Imperial Plunder and Dispossession. <http://hyperallergic.com/473575/understanding-the-migra...van-in-the-context-of-imperial-plunder-and-dispossession/>.
- Chambelin, R. (1983). *Loot! The Heritage of Plunder*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Chesi, G. & Merzeder, G. (2006). *The Nok Culture, Art in Nigeria 2,500 Years Ago*. Berlin: Prestel Verlag.
- Cuno, J. (2008.) *Who Owns Antiquities? Museums and the Battle over our Ancient Heritage*.. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press
- Darling, P. (2000). The Rape of Nok and Kwatarkwashi: The crisis in Nigerian Antiquities. *Culture without Context*. 6, 15–21.
- Dokolo, S (2018). Returning looted African art is as urgent as giving back works stolen by the Nazis. <http://www.theartnewspaper.com/comment/returning-loote..art-is-as-urgent-as-giving-back-works-stolen-by-the-nazis>

- Eyo, E. and Willet, F. (1980). *Treasures of Ancient Nigeria*. Alfred A Knopf. New York.
- Fogel, J. and Rider, E. (2017). *Something Magical: The Kwagh– Hir of the Tiv*. Edited. BFP. Asia, Pacific Offset. China.
- Gundu, Z. A. (2012). Archaeological Resources: Reflections on the Significance, Threats and the Stewardship Challenge in Nigeria. *Or– Che UMA. African Journal of Existential Philosophy* 3(2) 50–68.
- Gundu, Z. A. (2014). The Nok Frankfurt Exhibition: An Interrogatory Comment. *Africa Update Newsletter*. 21 (2)
- Herman, A. (2018). Legal challenges remain for Restituting African artefacts from French Museums. <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/comment/french-report..tefacts-while-macron-promises-return-of-26-items-to-benin>
- Hochschild, A. (1998). *King Leopold’s Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- ICE (2012). <https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/his-returns-stolen-and-looted-antiquities-nigeria> accessed, 6/12/2018.
- ICOM (2000). Red List including Nok terracotta, terracotta and bronzes from Ife and Esie stone statues.
- Information Nigeria. (2013) France Returns Smuggled Nok Terracotta to Nigeria. <http://www.informationng.com/2013/01/france-returns-smuggled-nok-terracotta-to-nigeria.html>
- Jegede, D. (1996). Nigerian Art as Endangered Species. In Schmidt P. R and McIntosh R. J (Eds) *Plundering Africa’s Past*. (pp 125–142) London: James Currey.
- Jemkur, J. F. (1992). *Aspects of the Nok Culture*. Zaria, Nigeria: Ahmadu Bello University Press.
- Kohl, K. H. (2010). The Legacy of Leo Frobenius in Germany. In Kuba R. and Hambolu M. (Eds.) *Nigeria 100 Years Ago: Through the Eyes of Leo Frobenius and his Expedition Team*. Frankfurt/Main : Frobenius Institute at the Goethe University
- Kuba, R. (2010). Travelling Frobenius. The Legacy of Leo Frobenius in Germany. In Kuba R. and Hambolu M. (Eds.) *Nigeria 100 Years Ago: Through the Eyes of Leo Frobenius and his Expedition Team*. Frankfurt/Main : Frobenius Institute at the Goethe University
- Layiwola, P. (2010). *Introduction at the opening of the Colloquium and Exhibition: Benin1897.com*: Art and the Restitution Question. Lagos.
- Makar, T. (1975). The History of Political Change Amongst the Tiv in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. PhD. Thesis. Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
- Noce, V. (2017). Jean–Paul Barbier–Mueller, Museum founder and collector who opposed the return of artifacts to their countries of origin. <https://www.>

- [theartnewspaper.com/news/jean-paul-barbier...opposed the return-of-artefacts-to-their-countries-of-origin](http://theartnewspaper.com/news/jean-paul-barbier...opposed-the-return-of-artefacts-to-their-countries-of-origin). Accessed 30/11/2018
- Noce, V. (2018a). Restitution Report: Museum Directors Respond. <http://theartnewspaper.com/comment/restitution-report-museums-directors-respond> Accessed 28/11/2018
- Noce, V. (2018b). Senegal and Ivory Coast will ask for return of objects in French museums. <http://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/senegal> Accessed 28/11/2018
- Ogbechie, S. O. (2016) The Post Colonial African Museum in the Age of Cultural Informatics. [biblioteca.pinacoteca.org.br](http://biblioteca.pinacoteca.org.br) 9090/publicacoes/index---/8--- 159-180.
- Opoku, K. (2008a). Does the Demand for the Restoration of Stolen African Objects Constitute an Obstacle for the Dissemination of Knowledge about African Arts? Comments on a Letter from Phillipe De Montebello, Director, The Metropolitan Museum of Arts. New York [www.elginism.com/20080422/1147/](http://www.elginism.com/20080422/1147/)
- Opoku, K. (2008b). Would Western Museums Return Looted Objects if Nigeria were ruled by Angels? Restitution or Corruption. Modern Ghana News:<http://www.modernghana.com/news/233465/1/>
- Opoku, K. (2009). Would Western return looted objects if Nigerian and other African states were ruled by Angels? Restitution and Corruption. <https://www.elginism.com/similar-cases/the-reasons-given-for-non-return-of-cultural-propert/20090821/2348/>
- Opoku, K. (2010). Is the declaration on the importance of Universal Museums still valid? <http://www.elginism.com/similar-cases/is-the-declaration-o-portance-of-universal-museums-still-void/20100226/2764>
- Opoku, K. (2011). Revisiting Looted Nigerian Nok Terracotta Sculptures in Louvre/Musee du Quai Branly, Paris. [http://www.museum-seurity.org/opoku\\_nok\\_july2011.htm](http://www.museum-seurity.org/opoku_nok_july2011.htm)
- Opoku, K. (2013). Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums: Singular Failure of An Arrogant Imperialist Project. <http://www.modernghana.com/news/441891/declaration-on-the-importance-and-value-of-universal-museum.html>
- Opoku, K. (2015a). Stolen from Africa and the Humboldt Forum. <http://www.ligali.org/article.php?id=2456>
- Opoku, K. (2015b). Defense of ‘Universal Museums’ through Omissions and Irrelevancies. <http://www.toncremers.nl/kwame-opoku-defence-ofuniversal-museums-through-omissions-and-irrelevancies/>
- Opoku, K. (2017). Humboldt Forum and Selective Amnesia: Research Instead of Restitution of African Artefacts. <http://www.modernghana.com/news/824314/humboldt-forum-and-the-selective-amnesia--research-instead-of-re.html>

- Opoku, K. (2018a). Macgregor's Defense of Humboldt Forum Post Ouagadougou Shadow Boxing. <http://www.toncremers.nl>
- Opoku, K. (2018b). France marches to restitution of looted African Artefact: What about Austria, Belgium, Britain, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, And the United states of America. <https://www.modernghana.com/news/903450/france-marches-to-restitution-of-looted-african-artefacts-w.html>
- Opoku, K. (2018c). Miracles, Reverses, And Hope in Restitution of Looted African Artefacts. <https://www.modernghana.com/news/906639/miracles-reverses-and-hope-in-restitution-of-looted-africa-html>
- Oyodele, D. (2013). France Returns Esie Statue to Nigeria. *ThisDayLive*. 16<sup>th</sup> July.
- Rider, E. (2017). Introduction to the Jerome Bunch Collection. *Something Magical: The Kwagh-Hir of the Tiv*. Edited. (pp 12–14).[China]: BFP Publishing.
- Ross and Hutchinton (2012). A \$300 G oopsie! Suit: Pay for broken artwork. *New York Daily News* 26<sup>th</sup> April.
- Sandy N. S (2018). Taking back our History: Understanding African Art Repatriation. Interview. <http://www.okayafrica.com/the-history-politics-of-african-art-repatriation/>.
- Sarr, F. and Savoy, B. (2018). The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage: Towards a new relational Ethics.
- Schulz, M. (2009). German Archaeologists Labour to Solve Mystery of Nok. [http://katrinschulze.blogspot.com/2009/08/german-archaeologists-labour-solve\\_21.html](http://katrinschulze.blogspot.com/2009/08/german-archaeologists-labour-solve_21.html)
- Shyllon, F. (2003). Negotiations for the return of Nok sculptures from France to Nigeria—an unrighteous conclusion. *Art Antiquity and Law*, 8, 133–148.
- Shyllon, F. (2017a). The Rise of Negotiation (ADR) in Restitution, Return and Repatriation of Cultural Property: Moral Pressure and Power Pressure. *Art Antiquity and Law*, 22 (2) 130–142.
- Shyllon, F. (2017b). Benin Dialogue Group: Perhaps no longer a Dialogue with the deaf! University of Cambridge students to the rescue. *Art Antiquity and Law*, 22 (4) 1–6.
- Singh, K. (2008) National Patrimony in a Global Environment. The Arts Newspaper. No 192.
- Van Beurden J. M. (2017). *Treasures in Trusted Hands: Negotiating the Future of Cultural Objects*. Sidestone Press. Leiden. The Netherlands.
- Willet, F. (2000). Restitution or Recirculation: Benin, Ife and Nok. *Journal of Museum Ethnography* 12, 125–132.