



THE EUROPEAN MASTER
IN MIGRATION AND
INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS

WORKSHOP

**THE COLONIAL GENOCIDE IN NAMIBIA:
MEMORIES AND REPARATIONS**

with Katharina Hoffmann, Laidlaw Peringanda,
Hildegard Titus

Monday, 5.12. 22

9:00 – 13:00 in Germany/
10:00 – 14:00 in Namibia

Thursday, 8.12.22

14.00 – 18:00 in Germany/
15:00 – 19:00 in Namibia

Link to the online session:
<https://meeting.uol.de/b/jus-uat-c1y-cw1>



INTRODUCTION

The Herero and Nama(qua) genocide committed by the German colonial army (1904-1908) in German Southwest Africa (now Namibia) has been categorized as the first genocide of the 20th century. Only recently, over a hundred years after the massacre, the German government officially acknowledged the atrocities as genocidal – although, this acknowledgement was also highly caveated. After five years of negotiations, a reconciliatory agreement between the German and Namibian governments was finalized, albeit not yet ratified by Namibia's parliament. Subsequent discussions in parliament were characterized by strong opposition from factions within and outside of parliament, due to the perceived exclusion of affected communities from the negotiating process.

Herero and Nama activists from Namibia and the diaspora have developed a strong transnational movement for remembering the genocide and realizing reparations since Namibia's independence in 1990. They have also enjoyed support from activist spaces in Germany. It should also be stressed, that one of the crucial issues, the restitution of land, which was expropriated at large scales throughout Namibia's colonial history, has not yet been adequately resolved. Moreover, most Namibians lack access to basic services (Afrobarometer 2022), while the socio-economic power lies disproportionately with white Namibians -descendants of German and other European settlers. In fact, a recent assessment by the World Bank identified Namibia as one of the most unequal societies in the world, which is largely attributable to land access (Sulla et al. 2022).

The workshop will inform about the history of German colonialism in Namibia, in particular the colonial genocide and its repercussions. This will be linked to theoretical deliberations concerning genocides, the problems of memory politics, which take the Holocaust as "cosmopolitan code that is synonymous with an imperative to address past injustices" (Levy 2013). In other words, we will discuss in which ways European and Western memory cultures have to be decolonized in order to allow multidirectional memories, acknowledge the pain and still powerless positions of the wide majority of colonized people and the aftermath of colonialism in the societies of the colonial masters. Laidlaw Peringanda, activist and founder of the Swakopmund Genocide Museum, and Hildegard Titus, artist and curator from Namibia, will talk about their perspectives and work on the past atrocities and their aftermath.

References:

Victor Sulla, Precious Zikhali, and Pablo Facundo Cuevas 2022. *Inequality in Southern Africa: An Assessment of the Southern African Customs Union* (English). Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.

Daniel Levy 2013. *Cosmopolitization of Victimhood. Holocaust Memories and the Human Rights Regime*. In: Norbert Frei and Anette Weinke, eds. *Toward a New Moral World Order? Menschenrechtspolitik und Völkerrecht seit 1945*. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, p. 210-218.



CONVENER OF THE WORKSHOP

Katharina Hoffmann holds a PhD in history. Her main areas of research and teaching are memory cultures, critical perspectives on gender and transitional justice, migration, and diversity. She worked at Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg and as a visiting lecturer in Armenia, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sudan, and Uganda. Her political activism includes interventions against racist migration politics and policies. She is a member of the civil society movement SEEBRÜCKE and a founder of the working group COLONIALISM and its AFTERMATH in Oldenburg (contact: katharina.hoffmann@uni-oldenburg.de; +49 (0) 171 9374741, Mobile & WhatsApp & Signal, Namibia until 25.11.22: +264 814685861).

INVITED SPEAKERS

Laidlaw Peringanda, activist and chairman of the Namibian Genocide Association, Namibia, was born on November 3, 1974. He is the nephew of Ovaherero Paramount Chief Hosea Kutako (aka Hosea Mungunda). His traditional Herero name is Mbandee, which means "brave person". He is an activist, chairman of the Namibian Genocide Association and founder of the Swakopmund Genocide Museum. He comes from a settlement called Otjimbingwe; In 1884 Otjimbingwe became the headquarters of Commissioner Dr. Heinrich Ernst Göring (lawyer and diplomat), who was the father of Hermann Göring (Nazi leader and commander of the Luftwaffe). Otjimbingwe became an administrative center for the new German colony and the de facto capital of German Southwest Africa. Many of his ancestors were killed in the 1904-1908 genocide. Laidlaw is part of a royal family; his great-great-grandfather was the Herero chief Katjikusere of Kaeza based at Ombumbonde near Okahandja in 1834 and his other great-great-grandfather was the Herero chief Mungunda wo Otjombundja son of Kujambera in 1840. Both were mentioned in the diaries of the missionary, Carl Hugo Hahn. <https://dekoloniale.de/en/network/people/laidlaw-peringanda>

Hildegard Titus is a photojournalist, filmmaker, visual artist, and curator based in Windhoek. Her work primarily revolves around gender, identity, culture, and race. She works as a freelance photo and video journalist for Agence France Presse (AFP) and The Namibian. Hildegard is also a decolonial activist who started a petition titled "A Curt Farewell" in June 2020 for the removal and relocation of the Curt von Francois statue to a colonial museum. Von Francois served as governor of German Southwest Africa from 1891-1894, and his statue prominently resides in front of Windhoek's municipal head offices in the city center. She conducts research and interviews around the German colonial period and investigates its connection to contemporary colonial legacies and consequences. <https://cargocollective.com/hildegardtibus/About-Hildegard-Titus>



PROGRAMME

Monday, 5.12. 22,

9:00 – 13:00 in Germany / 10:00 – 14:00 in Namibia

9:00 -9:30 / 10:00 – 10:30 (s. t., we will begin punctually at the indicated time) - Introduction by Katharina Hoffmann

9:30 – 10:30 / 10:30 – 11:30 -Discussion of readings (Joeden-Forgey 2021 & Schaller 2016) and the film (Skulls of my People).

11:00 – 12:30 / 12:00 – 13:30 -Laidlaw Peringanda: My Quest for the Truth -Lecture (**online**) with Q&A

Thursday, 8.12.22,

14.00 – 18:00 / 15:00 – 19:00

14:00 – 15:30 / 15:00 – 16:30

Hildegard Titus: Decolonizing Namibia's Monuments: Memory Culture
- Lecture (**online**) with Q & A

16:00 – 17:30 /17:00 – 18:30 - Conclusions. Suggestions and ideas for further work: research and activism (**online**).

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