

Call for Papers

Conjunctions of Archives and Public Spheres: Embodied Histories, Memory and Multi-Media Archives in and from Africa

Basler Afrika Bibliographien (BAB) & Centre for African Studies (CAS), University of Basel (Switzerland)

19 - 20 October 2023

In cooperation with the *Swiss Society for African Studies (SSAS/SSEA/SGAS)*



Recorded performance, Omaruru (Namibia), 1954. BAB PA.39 D01 1281.

Embodied histories have found their way into western (colonial) archives as fragments, usually by means of audio-visual media of all sorts (acoustic, image and film documents). The proposed conference takes Africa-related multi-media archives (and not only audio-visual collections) as focus in order to explore two main trajectories:

- the con- and disjunctions within multi-media archives and collections, with reference to 'documenting' (performative) histories and memory, in particular; and
- the con- and disjunctions of such archives and collections in relation to historical as well current public spheres, and not only in their countries of origin(s).

Both trajectories raise principal questions with regard to, on the one hand, epistemologies of multi-media archives and curatorial interventions, and, on the other hand, with reference to audiences, visibility and dissemination.

Multi-media archives have of late generated innovative curatorial and scholarly work. Principally transdisciplinary in outlook, such work commonly reflects collective initiatives by curators/archivists, scholars and artists. Amongst other, these initiatives (re-) situate and (re-)create (new) approaches, aesthetics and understanding. They generate interventions of all sorts and not only in their countries of origin(s) and emphasise, implicitly or explicitly, relational knowledge productions. Importantly, they raise questions relating to audiences (broader or specific) as engaged in, affected by or (dis-) connected from archives and collections, histories and narratives, with questions pertaining to restitution and repatriation tied in.

The conference in Basel, organised as a hybrid event, aims at bringing archivists, curators, scholars, artists and a broader academic audience into conversation. It will be followed by the Annual General Assembly of the Swiss Society for African Studies and, on 21 October, the annual, 10th Namibia Research Day.

We encourage emerging scholars and curators, scholars and artists from African countries, in particular, to respond to the Call for Papers. Multi-media presentations with possibilities of shared listening, viewing and discussion of 'archival fragments' are encouraged. Kindly include a brief abstract and bio.

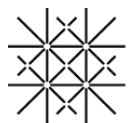
Dateline for abstract submissions: 15 August 2023

Limited travel funding is available. The conference will be held at the Basler Afrika Bibliographien, Klosterberg 23, Basel, Switzerland, with the option of virtual participation.

Contact:

Dag Henrichsen (BAB)
dh@baslerafrika.ch

Lorena Rizzo (CAS)
lorena.rizzo@unibas.ch



**University
of Basel**

Centre for
African Studies



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