

Colonial Loot and Its Restitution

Deadline: May 15, 2022

Andrzej Jakubowski

Colonial Loot and Its Restitution – Current Developments and New Prospects for Law

Fifty years after the UN General Assembly first urged the return of cultural objects to victims of expropriation in 1973, the discussion on colonial takings in Western museums seems to have entered a new phase. Several governments, heritage institutions, and individuals have committed themselves to reviewing the provenance of their colonial collections and to returning them to the communities from which they were taken or extracted. Widely publicized return ceremonies attest to the seriousness of these intentions. Yet such returns are usually presented as voluntary gestures, driven by moral concerns rather than legal obligations.

This call, launched by the Santander Art and Culture Law Review (SAACLR), seeks to explore the legal foundations and normative rationales for redressing colonial cultural wrongs in current international practice. It invites submissions exploring the variety of methodological perspectives and theoretical models that support making such redress a matter of legal obligation. Practical approaches, provenance research, and empirical studies are also encouraged.

Amongst other topics, we are interested in submissions exploring domestic and traditional customary laws on (collective) ownership of cultural objects – both of States and/or the communities from where such objects were taken, as well as the States in which the looted objects are held. We welcome individual and comparative analyses of public, private, and traditional concepts and frameworks.

We also welcome submissions addressing public international law perspectives. These may include, but are not limited to, humanitarian law, the law of state responsibility, international trade, and state succession. The call also encourages studies investigating arguments based on human rights law, including Indigenous rights, for redressing colonial cultural wrongs.

Last but not least, we welcome papers that cover the intersections of museum studies, cultural policy, governance, and cultural heritage law, including the issue of provenance research.

In short, our call invites in-depth analyses of theory and practice relating to and advancing just solutions for colonial cultural loot. We welcome submissions from, and about, all parts of the world; submissions in creative formats as well as traditional legal articles, short articles analysing particular legislation or developments, storytelling, etc.; and submissions from non-native speakers of English.

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Andrzej Jakubowski (SAACLR, University of Opole)

Details concerning submissions: content, length, and due date:

The deadline for submission of manuscripts is 15 May 2022. Decision letters will be provided to author(s) by 30 June 2022. We expect to publish the issue at the end of 2022.

Manuscripts should be submitted via e-mail at: saacreditors@gmail.com, in .doc format, and shall not exceed 9,500 words, including footnotes and references. A longer article may be accepted only by arrangement with the Editors. More information concerning guidelines for authors and editorial rules are available on the journal's website (<https://www.ejournals.eu/SAACLR>).

The Santander Art and Culture Law Review (SAACLR) is a peer-reviewed international journal affiliated with the UNESCO Chair on Cultural Property Law at the University of Opole, Faculty of Law and Administration. SAACLR was established in 2015 as a part of Santander Universidades academic, organized by the Santander Group, and is published on a bi-annual basis. The journal is indexed in Scopus, CEJSH, CEEOL, and ERIHPLUS, and is freely available in open access and in a number of academic databases, including HeinOnline.

Reference:

CFP: Colonial Loot and Its Restitution. In: ArtHist.net, Jan 16, 2022 (accessed Mar 14, 2026),

<<https://arthist.net/archive/35676>>.