

# Decolonizing Heritage

from a Nordic Perspective

Spring Conference 2021  
February 17-18



## Spring Conference during the pandemic

**Apart from** the COVID 19 pandemic, one of the big impacts of 2020 was the Black Lives Matter movement which put questions of racial inequality at the centre of everyone's attention. Not least were colonial legacies scrutinized and brought to the surface and many heritage institutions were held accountable and felt obligated to address their own colonial roots.

In the light of this important development, we want to take the opportunity to address how Nordic heritage institutions are dealing with questions of decolonization. The Nordic colonial history has by many been described as forgotten about or downplayed. The theme has however started to gain attention in recent years in the academy as well as by heritage institutions and activists. Some institutions also try to radically change the

way they are approaching communities affected by colonial structures, the same structures which heritage institutions have been part of upholding and reproducing. With this conference, we want to bring you examples of such daring initiatives as well as spread knowledge about Nordic colonial heritage and its relation to colonial legacies in other parts of the world.

We want to address how colonial legacies are continuously persisting up until today, for example through heritage institutions, and discuss how we can institutionalize an ongoing process of decolonization within the sector. To put it simply: we should not need another Black Lives Matter movement in order to properly address our colonial legacy.

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The logo for NCK (Nordic Centre for Knowledge) is a pink tag-like shape with the letters 'NCK' in white. It is positioned in the bottom right corner of the conference banner image.

## Program

The schedule might be subject to change.

Please observe that the schedule is presented in Central European/Swedish Time.

### Wednesday February 17

09.00 – 09.15

Introduction and welcoming remarks

09.15 – 09.55

Gunlög Fur – *Nordic colonialism – self-perception and reality in the past and present*

09.55 – 10.35

Michael Barrett, Andrea Davis Kronlund and Jasmine Kelekay – *Days of remembrance as a tool for exploring colonial history*

10.35 – 10.50 **Break**

10.50 – 11.30

Jerker Bexelius – *The local museum – fighting Swedish colonialism and Sámi urbanisation*

11.30 – 12.30 **Lunch break**

12.30 – 12.40

Prize ceremony for NCK's Pedagogical Prize 2021

12.40 – 13.20

Temi Odumosu – *Poethics for Colonial Collections*

13.20 – 13.50

Group discussions/networking session

13.50 – 14.00 **Closing the day**

### Thursday February 18

09.00 – 09.10

Introduction

09.10 – 09.50

Liv Nilsson Stutz – *Repatriation as a strategy for decolonization – experiences from an international perspective*

09.50 – 10.05 **Break**

10.05 – 10.45

Tiina Männapsoo – *How to connect people with their national heritage – examples from the Estonian National Archives*

10.45 – 11.25

Inker-Anni Linkola-Aikio – *Decolonizing archival practices – experiences from the Arctic Indigenous Design Archives (AIDA II) project*

11.25 – 11.50

Group discussions/networking session

11.50 – 12.00

Concluding remarks

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## Speakers

### Gunlög Fur

Gunlög Fur is Professor, Deputy Vice-chancellor responsible for sustainability at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the Linneaus University in Sweden. She holds a PhD in history from the University of Oklahoma.

Her research interests concern borders, or margins, of different kinds and she has focused on colonialism, cultural encounters and gender to investigate what happens when people meet and draw lines that differentiate, create, and alter relations between collectives and individuals.

### Michael Barrett, Andrea Davis Kronlund and Jasmine Kelekay

Michael Barrett is curator for the Africa department at the Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm, Sweden. He holds a PhD in anthropology from Uppsala University. Andrea Davis Kronlund is photographer, visual artist and exhibition producer. They have worked on the museum's project "Ongoing Africa", an exploring- and method developing dialogue project aimed to enhance new perspectives on the African continent with and by Swedes of African origin. One part of the project has been to organise annual events around October 9 – a day of remembrance of the Swedish abolishment of slave trade.

Jasmine Kelekay is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, USA. She is currently a visiting researcher at the Center of

Multidisciplinary Studies on Racism (CEM-FOR) at Uppsala University and the Department of Criminology at Stockholm University. Her work explores the relationship between racialization and criminalization, with a particular focus on constructions of Blackness, the institutionalized social control of African diasporic communities in Sweden and the United States, and the ways in which these communities organise in response to racial oppression. She conducts her research in close collaboration with the civil society and emphasises community-centred knowledge production and policy making.

In this panel discussion, they will share their experiences of using October 9 as a tool for exploring colonial history. They will bring perspectives from both the museum sector as well as the civil society.

### Jerker Bexelius

Jerker Bexelius is head of affairs/åejvie at the South Sámi cultural centre Gaaltije in Östersund, Sweden. Gaaltije is a resource centre focusing on language, culture, business and society with the aim to strengthen the position of the South Sámi community in the wider society.

For a couple of years, Gaaltije has investigated the possibility of establishing a South Sámi museum. Jerker Bexelius will share his view on why there is a need for a new museum and what possibilities he sees with having a museum as a base for the South Sámi community as well as for interaction with the wider public.

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## Temi Odumosu

Temi Odumosu is Senior Lecturer in Cultural Studies at the University of Malmö in Sweden. She holds a PhD from the University of Oxford.

Her international research and cultural practice is concerned with the representation of African peoples, visual and affective politics of slavery and colonialism, colonial archives and archiving, Afro-Diaspora aesthetics, and more broadly exploring how art mediates social transformation and healing.

## Liv Nilsson Stutz

Liv Nilsson Stutz is Professor at the Linnaeus University in Sweden. She holds a PhD in archaeology.

She has focused on burial archeology which then has led her to explore the ethical dimensions of excavating, studying and exhibiting human remains.

Repatriation has reshaped archaeology and museum practices in many countries and can be viewed as a practice of decolonization, especially in places like the United States and Australia. When considered in this way, it is interesting to see in what ways the practice has become institutionalized through legal frameworks such as NAGPRA (the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) in the USA, how this has affected museums, archaeology and anthropology, and what challenges remain. This talk will explore and problematize repatriation as a strategy for decolonization and discuss what we can learn from these international experiences.

## Tiina Männapsoo

Tiina Männapsoo works as an archival pedagogue at the Estonian National Archives. The archive was awarded with NCK's Pedagogical Prize in 2020 for its ways of exploring the archive as an interdisciplinary educational tool and for how it has put the archive users and citizens as their leading star. In her laureate presentation, Tiina Männapsoo will share how the archive has worked with outreaching activities with the aim of getting more people interested in what the archive has to offer.

## Inker-Anni Linkola-Aikio

Inker-Anni Linkola-Aikio works in Inari as a Senior Research officer at the Sámi Archives/National Archives of Finland. She holds a PhD from the Faculty of Education at the University of Lapland. Her fields of interest include language in visual space, Sámi education, research ethics and archival pedagogy.

In her talk, she will share experiences from the Arctic Indigenous Design Archives (AIDA) project which is a Interreg funded collaboration between Sámi Archives of the National Archives of Finland, Ájtte – Swedish Mountain and Sami Museum in Sweden and Sámi University of Applied Sciences in Norway. The central question of the current project is how to indigenize archives and adapt Sámi worldview and practices into archival work. The focus is on Sámi designers' (duojár) archives and community collaboration.