

Thomas Thiemeyer, Tübingen (Germany)

### **Cosmopolitanizing Colonial Memories in Berlin.**

#### **The *Humboldt Forum* and the Current Shift in Germany's Culture of Remembrance**

In 2019, the Berlin *Humboldt Forum* will open its doors. As one of the most important cultural projects in Europe in the coming years, it is meant to show – among others – objects from the *Ethnologisches Museum* of the *Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz/Staatliche Museen zu Berlin* within the rebuilt Berlin *City Palace*. The collections of this museum are highly contested due to its provenance from colonial times. Currently, a debate rises about the question how to deal with these holdings. For Germany, this is a new phenomenon. For a long time, Germany's colonial heritage was of interest only a few specialists. Now it becomes part of national debates.

Why now? That's the leading question of my talk. Four reasons seem to me to be important: Germany's transformation into a country of immigration; the highly publicized debates surrounding the Berlin *Humboldt Forum*; the changing place of the Holocaust within the German culture of remembrance; and discussions about rights of ownership over cultural heritage within contexts of injustice, namely art looted by the Nazis and collections from the colonial period. I will argue that the current shift is representative for a new German culture of remembrance that I index as *cosmopolitan* according to the concept of Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider.

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