

Berlin Anthropology Seminars summer term 2024

- **Laibor Kalanga Moko (Freie Universität Berlin): The House of *Iloikop*: A Maasai Critique of the Humboldt Forum in Berlin**
- **May 8th, 4.15 pm Seminarzentrum Otto-von-Simson-Str. 26, room L115**

In this paper, I offer a critique of the Humboldt Forum from the viewpoint of the Maasai community in northern Tanzania. I highlight how the Forum's open exhibition of the Maasai collection is grounded on and relies on hegemonic Western epistemologies, despite its attempts to confront Germany's colonial legacy. I argue that the fact that the Humboldt Forum still relies on dominant Eurocentric ways of thinking and being puts it at risk of perpetuating colonial logics that marginalize and misrepresent indigenous cultures, specifically that of the Maasai. Through a decolonial lens, I suggest a critical approach to the Maasai collection at the Humboldt Forum. This requires more than surface-level changes, namely a fundamental reshaping of the museum's underlying assumptions about the pieces. I propose an approach that places indigenous knowledge and ontologies at the center in the process of addressing German colonialism.

