Presentation – Achille Mbembe on "The Capacity for Truth: Of 'Restitution' in African Systems of Thought"

A.W. Amo Lecture

14th November 2018, 18h15, Melanchthonianum XX, MLU, Universitaẗsplatz 8/9, Halle

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The Capacity for Truth: Of 'Restitution' in African Systems of Thought

The lecture will explore some of the meanings attached to the concept and practice of restitution in precolonial African systems of thought. It will dwell in particular on those traditions that considered the most damaging wrongs as those causing harm to one's 'vital force'. We will elicit the juridical underpinnings of the right to restitution and revisit the relation between 'persons' and 'objects' it presupposed.

Achille Mbembe is currently Research Professor at WiSER, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. He obtained his Ph.D. in history at the University of Sorbonne in Paris, France, in 1989. He subsequently obtained a D.E.A. in political science at the Instituts d'etudes politiques also in Paris. He has held appointments at Columbia University in New York, Brookings Institute in Washington, D.C., University of Pennsylvania, University of California, Berkeley, Yale University, Duke University and at the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) in Dakar, Senegal. Today, Achille Mbembe figures as the most renown philosopher, political theorist, and public intellectual of the African continent and won several outstanding prizes, also in Germany. His most important works are: *Les jeunes et l'ordre politique en Afrique noire* (1985) ; *La naissance du*

maquis dans le Sud-Cameroun (1920-1960); *Histoire des usages de la raison en colonie* (1996); *De la postcolonie. Essai sur l'imagination politique dans l'Afrique contemporaine* (2000); *Sortir de la grande nuit : Essai sur l'Afrique decoloniseé* (2003); *Critique de la raison neègre* (2013); *Politique de l'inimitie´* (2016). Most of his books have been translated into English and German.

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