

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM



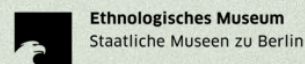
futuring thing- relations

AFFECT AND MATERIALITY
ACROSS THE HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

7 – 9 october
2026

program &
abstracts

WED 7 - FRI 9 OCT
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conference theme

How are futures affectively sensed, mediated, and negotiated through material worlds?

This conference convenes scholars from the humanities and social sciences, including anthropology, archaeology, heritage studies, political science, and sociology, to examine the intersection of affect studies and material culture. We are concerned with how individuals engage with objects, environments, and infrastructures and how these engagements are implicated in debates surrounding cultural heritage, restitution, ecological crisis, medical infrastructures and digital worlds. Such engagements are always shaped by broader relations of power, inequality, and historical violence, at local, transnational, and global levels.

Rather than treating things as passive bearers of meaning, we approach materiality as generative: atmospheres arise, values are contested, and futures are envisaged in the encounter between humans and the material world. The question of futuring is central in this context. How might we envision and articulate alternative futures amid environmental breakdown, contested heritage, and global health crises and disparity through engaging material environments? How are futures

affectively sensed, mediated, and negotiated through material worlds? How are affective engagements with material worlds shaped by political, economic, and (post-)colonial formations that structure access, visibility, and belonging? All these questions constitute an academic and methodological challenge – one that demands new forms of inquiry and representation.

The contributions reflect upon the “how” of research and representation. How might multisensory and multimodal approaches enrich academic inquiry beyond modalities of writing? What occurs when disciplinary boundaries become porous? How might academic writing itself become a site of experimentation – alongside film, installation, performance, or other formats? What forms of knowledge emerge when we attend to atmosphere, affect, and material encounter? The presentations combine empirical research with methodological reflection, situated within academic scholarship, artistic practice, or at their intersection.

organizing team

FREIE UNIVERSITÄT
BERLIN, CRC AFFECTIVE
SOCIETIES

*Project D 01 "Affective Engagements: Decolonial Debates on
Cultural Goods and Social Transformation between Tanzania and
Germany"*

Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Freie Universität Berlin

Kristina Mashimi & Hansjörg Dilger

*Project D 06 "Contested Property II: Affective Dissonance and
Relational Ethics in Museum Collaborations"*

Ethnological Museum, National Museums in Berlin

Paola Ivanov

UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES
SALAAM

Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Dar es Salaam

**Richard Sambaiga, Anitha Tingira, Simon Mutebi &
Kisiya Saruni**

Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies, University of Dar es
Salaam

Valence Silayo

UNIVERSITY OF
HAMBURG

Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology

Laibor Kalanga Moko & Jonas Bens

program overview

7 - 9 OCTOBER 2026 · UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM

wed 7 oct

OPENING

16:30 – 17:30

Registration

17:30 – 18:00

Welcome

Richard Sambaiga, Hansjörg Dilger, Paola Ivanov, Valence Silayo

18:00 – 19:30

Keynote by Ciraj Rassool (University of the Western Cape)

Museums, Deobjectification and Rehumanization

Introduction and Moderation: Valence Silayo

Response: Lucius Mugisha

from 19:30

Keynote Dinner & Networking

thu 8 oct

MAIN CONFERENCE DAY & EVENING EVENT

09:30 – 11:15

Panel 1 — Colonial Collections, Archives and Provenance

Moderation: Laibor Kalanga Moko

Kristina Mashimi: Performing the Past: The Body as Archive in Tanzanian Artistic Engagements with German Colonial Memory

Amani Abeid: Objects Torn from Their Worlds: Affect, Materiality, and Unfinished Futures

Maike Schimanowski: Appropriation in the Name of Mission: An Initial Examination of the African Holdings of the Berlin Mission Society

Jimson S. Sanga: Reconnecting Medical Objects Through Images: Photographic Reconnection, Indigenous Healing Knowledge, and Colonial Collections among the Hehe, Kinga and Bena of Southern Tanzania

Kokeli Peter Ryano: The 'Wambambali' Material Culture in Dodoma: Community and Scholarly Opinions about the Archaeological Materials

11:15 – 11:45

Coffee Break & Networking

11:45 – 13:15	Panel 2 — Toxic Materialities, Waste and Care Moderation: Kisiaya Saruni Anitha Tingira: Things That Make Reproductive Futures: Affect, Materiality and IVF in a Tanzanian WhatsApp Group Tausi Feruzi: When Waste Becomes Useful: Pesticide Containers, Everyday Life and Future Relations in Rural Tanzania Photius Rwezaula Gabriel: Historical Toxic Flows and Agrarian Ruination: A Political Ecology of Toxic Circulation among Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Miners in Tanzania Latifa Mohamed: The Antenatal Card and Politics of Care in Tanzania
13:15 – 14:45	Lunch Break
14:45 – 16:15	Panel 3 — Places, Memory and the Making of Futures Moderation: Kristina Mashimi Albert Samwel Mjandwa: From Monument to Heritage: Megaliths, Memory and the Making of Futures in the Lake Eyasi Basin, Northern Tanzania Diana Kamara: “Tumefuma Sana Vitambaa”: How Women Remember Themselves in the 1990s Bernard Ntahondi: Walking the City and Its Futures: Architectural Heritage, Memory, and Moving Images in Dar es Salaam Nicholas Calvin: Patching Together Fragmented Realities: A Highlight of New Opportunities for Collaborative Conversation between the Academia, Art, and Technology
16:15 – 16:45	Coffee Break & Networking
16:45 – 17:00	Extended Daily Wrap-up Laibor Kalanga Moko & Kisiaya Saruni
17:00 – 18:00	Transfer to the Art Center AJABU AJABU
18:00	Film Screening at the Art Center AJABU AJABU

fri 9 oct

SECOND MAIN CONFERENCE DAY

09:30 – 11:00

Keynote by Salvatory S. Nyanto (University of Dar es Salaam)

Memory Sites, Affective Communities and Changing Landscapes of Slavery in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Tabora, c. 1860–1970

Introduction and Moderation: Hansjörg Dilger

Response: Kristina Mashimi

11:00 – 11:30

Coffee Break & Networking

11:30 – 13:15

Panel 4 — Objects, Knowledge and Community Heritage

Moderation: Paola Ivanov

Elgidius E. B. Ichumbaki: Reimagining the Swahili Civilization in the Context of Affect and Materiality: Past, Present, and Future

Halima Geuya: Umekutaje huko?

Laibor Kalanga Moko: Affect and Materiality in Encounters with Ethnographic Collections in Museums in Berlin

Kisiaya Saruni: Indigenous Women's Instruments of Power: Affect, Dissonance and Everyday Materiality in Maasai Life

Philip C. Maligisu: Decontextualized Cultural Objects, Decomposed Community's Sociocultural Identity

13:15 – 14:30

Lunch Break

14:30 – 16:00

Panel 5 — Development, Technology and Futures in Everyday Life

Moderation: Hansjörg Dilger

Dunstan Matungwa: Whose Future is Dira 2050? Thing-relations, Inequality, and the Material Politics of Tanzania's Development

Deogratias Silayo: Betting, Affect and Youth Futures: Social and Material Environments of Sports Betting in Dar es Salaam

Musa Mantawera: Ascending or Descending Marxism? Rethinking Digital Interfaces and Social Wellbeing in Tanzania

Nassoro Kitunda: Rethinking Materiality: Digital Technologies, Affect, and the Futures of Mental Well-Being in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

16:00 – 16:30

Coffee Break & Networking

16:30 – 16:45

Closing Remarks & Official Farewell

Richard Sambaiga, Hansjörg Dilger, Paola Ivanov, Valence Silayo

16:45

End of Conference & Individual Departure

abstracts

wed 7 oct

DAY 1 · OPENING

KEYNOTE · 18:00 - 19:30

Ciraj Rassool

University of the Western Cape

Museums, Deobjectification and Rehumanization

Processes of social restoration through restitutionary work need more than an enquiry into the relations between people and things. This requires epistemic work into how museums turned ancestors and belongings into human remains and objects, firmly within the divisions and systems of museum classification and governmentality. While repatriation and *Rückgabe* serve to reproduce those systems, the work of restitution as decolonisation involves epistemic work of deobjectification, resocialisation and rehumanisation as a radical critique of colonialism's governmentality.

INTRODUCTION & MODERATION

Valence Silayo

RESPONSE

Lucius Mugisha

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Ciraj Rassool is Senior Professor of History at the University of the Western Cape. His research and teaching focus on public history, museum and heritage, curational practices, and memory. He has been centrally involved in international research on restitution and the making of public histories. His recent publications include *Restitution versus repatriation: Terminology and concepts matter* (2024), co-authored with Victoria E. Gibbon.

PANEL 1

Colonial Collections, Archives and Provenance

Moderation: Laibor Kalanga Moko

Kristina Mashimi

CRC Affective Societies, Freie Universität Berlin

Performing the Past: The Body as Archive in Tanzanian Artistic Engagements with German Colonial Memory

This paper examines how performing artists in Dar es Salaam use the body as a site through which German colonial memory is archived, felt, and transmitted. While restitution debates have largely centered on museal and provenance-related practices, I turn to artistic practice itself as a material and sensory archive of colonial pasts. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork and audio-visual documentation of performances, I explore how gesture, movement, and voice become modes through which artists narrate and rework colonial entanglements between Tanzania and Germany. Building on the concept of the “body as archive” (Battaglia et al. 2020) and affective engagement (Dilger et al. 2025), I ask what forms of knowledge emerge through embodied practice that exceed textual accounts, and how these bodily archives affect audiences — from discomfort to demands for repair.

Amani Abeid

Multi-disciplinary Visual Artist

Objects Torn from Their Worlds: Affect, Materiality, and Unfinished Futures

As an artist working at the intersection of affect, materiality, and contested heritage, I want to ask: How do objects move us — especially objects torn from their worlds? This year, we are working on the Bukerebe collection, taken by force by the German colonial government. These things are not passive bearers of meaning. They carry atmosphere. They carry grief. They carry unfinished futures. Our task is methodological as much as artistic: How do we represent such material encounters without flattening them into text alone? How might exhibitions, installations, digital mediation, and multisensory design open up what writing cannot? For me, futuring means refusing the colonial archive’s finality. The collection’s return — narrative, affective, perhaps physical — is a future sensed through matter itself. This demands porous disciplines. It demands that artistic practice and scholarship meet. And it demands that we ask: whose futures, and felt by whom?

Maike Schimanowski

African Art History, Provenance Researcher and Curator

Appropriation in the Name of Mission: An Initial Examination of the African Holdings of the Berlin Mission Society

This paper presents the first results of an initial examination of the African holdings of the Berlin Mission Society's "ethnological collection": ca. 650 catalogue entries, accumulated from 1834 in South Africa and 1891 in East Africa. Initially, documentation was largely fragmentary: location entries were often limited to the unspecific label "Africa," provenance information was largely missing, and several Cultural Belongings had been misclassified. The project combined close analysis of the Cultural Belongings with archival research into mission stations, exhibitions, and the "mission suitcases" through which many entered the collection. Example Cultural Belongings are presented to illustrate key arguments about colonial categorization, instrumentalization, and loss. The paper closes by reflecting on first contacts with researchers and communities in Tanzania and South Africa as a basis for future collaboration.

Jimson S. Sanga

University of Iringa

Reconnecting Medical Objects Through Images: Photographic Reconnection, Indigenous Healing Knowledge, and Colonial Collections among the Hehe, Kinga and Bena of Southern Tanzania

German colonial rule in southern Tanzania disrupted relationships between material objects, knowledge, memory, and communities. Ethnographic and medical objects were collected from the Hehe, Kinga, and Bena and stored in museum collections in Germany. While current debates emphasize physical restitution, less attention has been given to reconnecting the knowledge, meanings, memories, and emotions associated with displaced objects. This paper explores "photographic reconnection" as an approach for reconnecting dispersed medical collections with communities of origin. Drawing on applied research where photographs of medical objects held in German museums were presented to healers, clan elders, and community leaders, it examines how photographic encounters stimulate recognition, memory, emotional responses, historical narratives, spiritual meanings, and community identity. I argue that photographs can function as relational objects and create spaces for communities to become interpreters and co-curators of colonial collections. Photographic reconnection therefore enables knowledge and relationships to return even when objects remain geographically distant.

Kokeli Peter Ryano

Department of History and Archaeology, University of Dodoma

The 'Wambambali' Material Culture in Dodoma: Community and Scholarly Opinions about the Archaeological Materials

Across Dodoma region, and perhaps beyond, there are settlements scattered in the landscape, which represent ancient communities. These settlements include materials such as potsherds, grindstones, and a few bones, and largely daub fragments from former houses. These materials have created different impressions from local communities of the Wagogo in Dodoma and researchers from higher learning institutions, including the University of Dodoma. The local communities have interpreted the presence of these settlements as being remnants of the unknown or mythical Wambambali people while we researchers have viewed the same materials as representing Late Iron Age communities in the region. This paper, therefore, focuses on examining how these archaeological or cultural heritage materials play the role of shaping or forming different opinions from modern communities of local people and scholars. The engagement of these communities with the materials shapes opinions and future of these materials.

Toxic Materialities, Waste and Care

Moderation: Kisiaya Saruni

Tausi Feruzi

Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Dar es Salaam

When Waste Becomes Useful: Pesticide Containers, Everyday Life and Future Relations in Rural Tanzania

This paper examines how small-scale farmers in Kilosa District, Tanzania, encounter and handle pesticide-associated waste through everyday social, material, and environmental relations. Drawing on anthropological research combining questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, and observation, it explores how pesticide containers, contaminated clothing, and other residues move between farms, households, and surrounding environments. Rather than treating these materials simply as hazardous waste, the study examines how material objects acquire meaning and function through everyday practices, local knowledge, and relations of power. While 87.5% of farmers recognized environmental risks, many continued to burn, bury, reuse, or discard empty containers on farms. Notably, some farmers repurposed empty containers by hanging them on trees as warning signs to prevent people and livestock from entering recently sprayed fields. These practices reveal how waste can acquire new social meanings and practical functions. The paper argues that pesticide waste is a matter entangled in livelihoods, social relations, and possible futures.

Photius Rwezaula Gabriel

Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Dar es Salaam

Historical Toxic Flows and Agrarian Ruination: A Political Ecology of Toxic Circulation among Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Miners in Tanzania

This article examines the intersections of artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) and agrarian life in Nyarugusu Ward, Geita Region, Tanzania, where mercury from gold extraction contaminates rice paddies. Drawing on field research with ASGM miners, it situates contemporary degradation within longer histories of agrarian transformation, market integration, rural capitalism, and expanding gold extraction that have reshaped land, labor, and livelihoods. It approaches Nyarugusu as an agrarian ruin: a cultivated landscape in which extractive economies progressively undermine the ecological and social conditions of agrarian life without displacing agrarian production altogether. Building on anthropological scholarship on ruination, the article develops historical toxic flows to trace how extractive transformations persist and become entangled with ecological processes, governance, bodies, and practices of cultivation, labor, and survival. It argues that toxicity is not a bounded environmental condition but a circulating process through human and non-human bodies, landscapes, infrastructures, and institutions.

Latifa Mohamed

Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Dar es Salaam

The Antenatal Card and Politics of Care in Tanzania

The antenatal card is a woman-held document that records pregnancy information to support continuity of maternal care. As it travels among women and health workers across clinical spaces and households, it acquires meanings and effects beyond its medical purpose. Drawing on eight months of ethnographic fieldwork in Sengerema District, Tanzania, this study follows the card to examine how it mediates care, judgement and accountability. Guided by scholarship on material culture, documentation, and the social life of things, I approach the ANC card as a socially active object that organizes relationships and makes responsibility visible. The card's power lies not only in the information it contains but also in the documentary authority it acquires through circulation. This authority facilitates continuity of care while also providing bureaucratic protection, regulating access, and materializing maternal responsibility. Its social life reveals a politics of care through which future care and retrospective accountability are negotiated.

Places, Memory and the Making of Futures

Moderation: Kristina Mashimi

Albert Samwel Mjandwa

Department of History and Archaeology, University of Dodoma

From Monument to Heritage: Megaliths, Memory and the Making of Futures in the Lake Eyasi Basin, Northern Tanzania

This article explores the megalithic structures of the Lake Eyasi Basin in northern Tanzania as long-lived material landscapes that mediate relationships among people, place, memory, and possible futures. Drawing on multidisciplinary archaeological evidence from megalithic sites in the Lake Eyasi Basin, the article considers how stones acquire significance through their relationships with human practices and changing landscapes. The evidence indicates a multi-period history involving Pastoral Neolithic and Late Iron Age occupations. At the same time, these monuments (i.e., dolmens, stone circles, enclosures, walls, and burial cairns) continued to shape how subsequent communities experienced the landscape long after their original builders had disappeared. Rather than treating these monuments as static remnants, the article argues that their material persistence creates continuing relationships between absence and presence, memory and forgetting, as well as past and future possibility. Megaliths therefore emerge as active elements in producing heritage meanings and future-oriented practices, particularly conservation, community engagement, and sustainable tourism.

Diana Kamara

Makerere Institute of Social Research

“Tumefuma Sana Vitambaa”: How Women Remember Themselves in the 1990s

Many times, when I crochet in public, women start telling me about their crochet memories from the 1990s. They tell me how they learned the craft and how it related to their personal lives. The stories range from keeping busy to surviving forms of domestic violence. From this experience I have learned that the point-blank questions we ask for academic purposes deprive us of developing a fuller understanding of women's lives. For this conference, in place of a PowerPoint presentation I would like to present vitambaa sewn on kanga as entry points inviting attendees to experiment with household objects as tools for writing women's history. I propose that we engage self-care and DIY articles from the household as ready-made methods that women respond to.

Bernard Ntahondi

Artist and Curator

Walking the City and Its Futures: Architectural Heritage, Memory, and Moving Images in Dar es Salaam

How can walking through a city open new relationships with its past and possible futures? Drawing on my curatorial practice in Dar es Salaam, this paper brings architectural heritage and city history walking tours into dialogue with audiovisual archives and community cinema. I explore how buildings, streets, and public spaces become sites where memory, emotion, and belonging are negotiated. Walking, looking, and listening offer ways to encounter histories embedded in urban environments, while archival images and film invite reinterpretations of those places. The paper asks whose stories become visible through heritage practices, whose remain marginal, and how colonial histories and urban transformation shape these encounters. Methodologically, I consider the walking tour and the screening as complementary forms of public inquiry beyond academic writing. I propose that connecting embodied encounters with architecture and moving images can cultivate collective care for urban heritage and create space to imagine more inclusive futures for the city.

Nicholas Calvin

Filmmaker, Photographer and Curator

Patching Together Fragmented Realities: A Highlight of New Opportunities for Collaborative Conversation between the Academia, Art, and Technology

There is no direct access to the things and events of the past. The past always comes in fragments: Whether in words or text, a story or archaeological find, or in a hum of a half-remembered song, the past arrives in pebbles chiseled from a larger mountain of reality, it comes distorted by time, and unreliable narration. A construct. We all have a stake in what the future remembers. With pen and brush and paint and stories from our grandmothers, and cameras and screens, artifacts and bones we inscribe what future's past will be. This presentation explores the process of patching together the fragmented realities: text, images, stories, sounds and place into an interactive experience using the intersection of art and technology. I will briefly speak and show an example of visual and interactive digital presentation that brings together academic research, art, oral histories, and place in a multimodal experience that highlights a new opportunity for collaborative conversation between the academia, art space, and technology in multifaceted ways of telling and retelling stories and histories.

EVENING EVENT

Bugging the Archive — Film Screening at AJABU AJABU



“Bugging the Archive” explores the frictions between history as lived, written and remembered across two Ajabu Ajabu productions: *Apostles of Cinema*, which contemplates manifested belonging, and *Rusted Walls*, which reflects on collective amnesia.

In *Apostles of Cinema* (dir. Darragh Amelia, Gertrude Malizeni, Jesse Gerard Mpango, Cece Mlay), informal distributors, translators and cinema owners bring Tanzania’s globally acclaimed *Maangamizi: The Ancient One* to local audiences through neighbourhood film libraries and live-dubbing DJs, asserting cultural belonging from the ground up.

Meanwhile, Habibu Ramadhani Diliwa’s *Rusted Walls* offers a poetic look at collective amnesia under neocolonialism and the struggle for identity against historical extraction.

The screenings are followed by a discussion with Ajabu Ajabu collective artists: Jesse Gerard Mpango, Gertrude Malizeni, Habibu Ramadhani Diliwa (online) and Bernard Ntahondi.

KEYNOTE · 09:30 - 11:00

Salvatory S. Nyanto

University of Dar es Salaam

Memory Sites, Affective Communities and Changing Landscapes of Slavery in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Tabora, c. 1860–1970

Narratives about memory sites, materiality and changing landscapes of slavery remain to be told in East African historiography, particularly in archaeology, heritage, and anthropology. In this work, I attempt to fill that void. I use primary and secondary source material and oral interviews to show ways in which environment shaped location and memory sites of slavery and portage in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century western Tanzania. For slaves who joined mission stations, the culture they were brought into contact with shaped everyday life in missions and their weekly dances created “affective communities” based on slavery and post-slavery experience.

INTRODUCTION & MODERATION

Hansjörg Dilger

RESPONSE

Kristina Mashimi

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Salvatory S. Nyanto is Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Dar es Salaam, and former Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Ghent University. He completed his PhD in history at the University of Iowa in the United States of America with a study about slave emancipation, Christian communities, and dissent. His monograph *Slave Emancipation and Christian Communities in Post-Abolition Tanzania, 1878–1978* was published in 2024 by James Currey, an imprint of Boydell & Brewer. In addition to his monograph, Nyanto is co-editing a book project, *A History of Postcolonial Tanzania: Essays in Honor of Prof. Isaria N. Kimambo*. He is also working on a monograph about slavery in twentieth-century Tanzania.

Objects, Knowledge and Community Heritage

Moderation: Paola Ivanov

Halima Geuya

Writer, Educator and Researcher

Umekutaje huko?

What if an object does not contain its knowledge? Drawing on my participation in *Ethnographic and Anthropological Spoils of War from Military Expeditions in German East Africa*, led by Leibniz University Hannover, this paper explores d'aghwa and murimu, two forms of Nyaturu women's material and embodied knowledge shaped by colonial, religious, and social transformations. D'aghwa, a decorated calabash, depends on movement to facilitate exchange, dialogue, and care among women, while murimu comprises items whose knowledge is sustained through restriction, selective transmission, and refusal. What happens when an object known through living relationships appears in a museum catalogue as an "everyday object"? And what happens when the knowledge we seek was never meant to circulate freely? Drawing on oral histories, provenance research, and family memories, I argue that Indigenous materiality requires multimodal and ethically restrained approaches: Some knowledge resides in the relationships through which things move, while some resides in the boundaries that determine who may encounter them.

Laibor Kalanga Moko

Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Hamburg

Affect and Materiality in Encounters with Ethnographic Collections in Museums in Berlin

Ethnographic museums across Europe – and particularly those in Berlin – hold extensive collections of so-called objects acquired by colonial collectors in the shadow of empire. For more than a century, European anthropologists and other scholars have drawn on these collections to develop theories about the material worlds of non-European "Others." More recently, however, museums have begun collaborating with the communities from which these collections originated. These encounters have brought into the museum different understandings of what – or who – these entities are. Drawing on ethnographic research with communities in northern Tanzania, this paper examines what happens when what I call an "Indigenous order of things" encounters and contests the "colonial order of things" embedded in European museum collections. I argue that this encounter reveals contrasting conceptions of materiality, ownership, and personhood. Similarly, the deeply affective character of contemporary debates over colonial collections emerges from the dissonance between these competing orders of things.

Kisiaya Saruni

Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Dar es Salaam

Indigenous Women's Instruments of Power: Affect, Dissonance and Everyday Materiality in Maasai Life

This paper examines nine material instruments of power through which Maasai women embody, negotiate, and exercise authority in everyday and ritual life. Rather than treating these as passive objects or cultural symbols, it explores how their efficacy emerges through embodied practice, materiality, and affect. These instruments evoke respect, affection, fear, obligation, protection, and restraint, revealing forms of women's authority that often escape conventional accounts of Maasai gender. Drawing on theories of embodiment and power, the paper argues that authority is carried through bodies, mediated by material things, and experienced affectively. It develops dissonance as an analytical lens to examine the coexistence of women's structural marginalisation with forms of authority that men recognise, negotiate, and sometimes fear. Without romanticising women's experiences or denying gendered inequalities, the paper challenges universalised readings of patriarchy by showing how Maasai women's material worlds expand anthropological understandings of power, affect, embodiment, and gender.

Philip C. Maligisu

Ethnography Department, National Museum of Tanzania

Decontextualized Cultural Objects, Decomposed Community's Sociocultural Identity

The only reliable testimonies to the human capacity to master the environment are material objects resulting from collective historical cultural practices. They stand both as articulators and memoirs for individuals to validate sociocultural identity and membership in that community. This proposition is grounded in the understanding that societies have continuously engaged in the production process and consumption of their cultural heritage within environmental contexts. However, when it comes to African cultural objects, this reality is uncertain. It is an unreliable proposition due to the current North–South relationship and mismatches in approaches to cultural objects. It is contested in some aspects, such as sociocultural power imbalances, historical injustices and cultural prejudice, sustained by the cultural heritage management framework with a Western orientation anchored in the colonial legacy. All combined, these factors have significantly shaped the inescapable disputed misconception of cultural objects from the Global South. Consequently, this marginalizes communities and excludes them from practical engagement and association with their objects. This paper presents and analyses the context of dealing with decontextualized objects that are denied community interaction.

Development, Technology and Futures in Everyday Life

Moderation: Hansjörg Dilger

Dunstan Matungwa

National Institute for Medical Research, Mwanza

Whose Future is Dira 2050? Thing-relations, Inequality, and the Material Politics of Tanzania's Development

Tanzania Development Vision 2050 (Dira 2050) imagines and proposes a prosperous, inclusive, industrialized, and environmentally resilient society. This paper approaches the Vision as both a policy framework and sociotechnical imaginary whose promises must become materially embodied and affectively perceptible in everyday life. It argues that Dira 2050 will be assembled through thing-relations: historically and politically structured relations among people, infrastructure, technologies, institutions, and ecological systems. Railways, roads, water points, mobile phones, hospitals, drainage systems, and wetlands reorganize distance, time, labor, recognition, belonging, and the capacity to anticipate a better future. Drawing on thing theory, relational materialism, infrastructure studies, affect theory, and the anthropology of futures, the paper advances two claims. First, material systems participate in producing "development" by generating possibilities, expectations, and embodied affects of progress, security, frustration, or abandonment. Second, these possibilities and affects are distributed unequally because access to things is shaped by various axes of difference. Dira 2050 should be implemented and assessed with attention both to what Tanzania builds and to the relationships those things sustain, the affects they generate, the inequalities they reproduce or unsettle, and the ecological futures they make possible for Tanzanians across social locations.

Deogratias Silayo

The Open University of Tanzania

Betting, Affect and Youth Futures: Social and Material Environments of Sports Betting in Dar es Salaam

This paper explores youth sports betting in Dar es Salaam through the relationship between social environments, material infrastructures, and affect and imagined futures. Drawing on a mixed-methods study of 204 youth bettors and interviews with 23 betting operators and managers, it interprets findings to examine how betting becomes embedded in everyday social and material environments. Betting shops, technologies and digital platforms provide spaces and means through which youth encounter peers, watch sports, exchange information and participate in shared experiences. Operators' accounts further reveal the significance of hope, excitement and the pursuit of quick wealth in sustaining participation. The expectation of income was the strongest reported financial motivation, while increased betting frequency was associated with financial stress and borrowing or selling properties to sustain betting. The paper argues that sports betting is a form of future making shaped by affective relations and material environments that simultaneously sustain hope, belonging, and vulnerability.

Musa Mantawera

Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Dar es Salaam

Ascending or Descending Marxism? Rethinking Digital Interfaces and Social Wellbeing in Tanzania

The apparent global debate echoes how digitalization deepens invisible powers, inequality and algorithmic control that are thought to reconfigure the social conditions within which health and wellbeing are produced and experienced. In Tanzania, understanding the status quo remains constrained by linear determinism and inherited perspectives rooted in the classical industrial social contract. This paper rethinks digital interfaces as material and affective sites through which people encounter power, dependence, autonomy, belonging and expectations of the future. It interrogates conceptually whether digitalization represents ascending expectations of capitalist social relations or a descending trajectory in which technologically advanced systems reproduce older forms of domination. It also pinpoints suitable research methodologies on how human–digital encounters may generate contradictory forms of social progression or regression in pursuit of open possibilities for more collective and equitable futures.

Nassoro Kitunda

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Rethinking Materiality: Digital Technologies, Affect, and the Futures of Mental Well-Being in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Dominant academic and public discourses often treat digital technologies as immaterial and neutral infrastructures of care. This paper challenges this assumption by examining digital technologies as material and social systems that shape experiences of mental well-being. It develops a theoretically driven analysis informed by ethnographic encounters with digital technologies during my fieldwork at Amana Regional Referral Hospital, alongside my observations and experiences as a university teacher and community member in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. I explore how digital technologies become embedded in everyday practices, relationships, and experiences of care, anxiety, and emotional distress. I argue that digital infrastructures can reproduce logics of measurement, personal responsibility, and self-optimization, potentially transforming structural experiences of suffering into individualized problems requiring technological monitoring and management. By rethinking materiality through infrastructures, devices, practices, affective relations, and social conditions, the paper examines how digital technologies shape contemporary experiences of well-being and imagined futures of care. Ultimately, digital technologies emerge as contested spaces where power, inequality, responsibility, and care are negotiated.

