

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND LEGAL STUDIES
FACULTY OF ARTS**

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Tel: 0244925140 (Head)
Email: history@ucc.edu.gh
Website: <https://history.ucc.edu.gh>
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CALL FOR PAPERS

The Department of History, the University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana wishes to organize a virtual International Interdisciplinary Conference on the theme:

Repatriation in Africa, the African Diaspora and other Global Contexts: Histories, Practices, Understandings and Constructions

DATE: November 11 – 12, 2021

CONVENERS: Department of History, Faculty of Arts, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana

VENUE: VIRTUAL

ON THE THEME OF REPATRIATION

Within the contexts of African history and contemporary discourse, repatriation has gained enormous currency. The year 2019 was declared by the Ghanaian government as the *Year of Return* for the descendants of enslaved Africans in the Americas and, by extension, other parts of the African diaspora. As is widely acknowledged, the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade played an instrumental role in the creation of the African diaspora. Since the abolition of the Trade in the nineteenth century, a vast literature on the subject has acknowledged the unprecedented movement of Africans from the continent who presumably lost all linkages to the homeland. Colonial rule was also responsible for the movement of some Africans into the diaspora as well as geographically dislocating many ethnic groups even on the continent. However, there is a vast body of literature that avers that the slave trades and slavery did not totally sever social, cultural, economic, and political linkages of the African continent with the diaspora. More recently, scholars have shown interest in the increased longing for return

of the African diasporas to their place of origin. While this discourse is certainly not new, the centrality it has taken in current policy debates suggests a certain impetus in the growing importance of the African diaspora in the development of the continent.

Shifting the focus from the usual discourse of slavery and the slave trade, this conference seeks to stimulate academic discourse on the growing interest in the history, politics, economies and policies around the concept *repatriation*. In order to expand the discussion to facilitate further understanding of repatriation, the conference will be interested in expanding the notion of repatriation to include any group of people or individuals anywhere else who long for a return to an original home. In this sense, repatriation may connote the idea of returning people to their 'homeland' but it could also be firmly conceptualised as a political act, involving the remaking of citizenship and new nationals. Whilst it is definitely concerned with the movement of human bodies from one place to the other, repatriation can be imagined and understood as a movement of ideas and inanimate objects.

Noteworthy, an interesting burgeoning development in recent discourse on repatriation is the shift towards intercultural collaboration, dialogue and reconciliation between home and the diaspora. Nevertheless, there is still a strong tendency to see repatriation as involving the re-linking of the diaspora to forms of citizenship and identity through physical return to their country of origin. The link made between the exiles and a physical location encourages the idea of return as a means of recovering a 'home'. Therefore, repatriation is more than just returning to country of origin; it is a return to a home or a community. While the country of origin is simply a geopolitical concept – a physical place made up of land, buildings, institutions, and public spaces – the home to return to is more than a territorial space that is associated with a political entity. This leads immediately to questions about the concepts of home, identity, community and appropriation of space and territory. The modern discourse on home, exile and homecoming has proliferated among cultural anthropologists, geographers, architects as well as cultural historians and literary experts. Understanding repatriation as key a return to citizenship – rather than a return to physical territory – opens up the possibility of disassociating repatriation from physical movement to a social one.

The idea of return appears to idealise the nostalgia for home. But how far the concept of home overlaps with those of the diaspora themselves is seldom interrogated. In short, what is the relationship between the image of return and home for policy makers? What role(s) do(es) time and memory play within this idealisation in terms of how the diasporas themselves conceive of their country of origin? It will also be interesting to understand how return will affect the economies, politics, and social dynamics of homeland. Whilst highlighting areas of the conceptual and analytical entry points which may give some framework for analysing repatriation, we recognise that it is impossible to describe the full range of ideas and themes related with the concept of repatriation. However, by suggesting some theoretical spaces within which to locate our presentations, we wish to give a picture of the cross-disciplinary dialogue we hope to promote. It must be mentioned that it is the intention of the organisers of the conference to peer review the papers that will be presented and publish a volume with a reputable international academic publisher. We are, therefore, inviting paper proposals from a broad spectrum of humanities and social sciences, including African Studies, Jewish Studies, Chinese Studies, Global Studies, Anthropology, Diplomacy, Economics, Geography, International Relations, History, Literature, Political Science and Sociology.

PAPERS SHOULD PREFERABLY FOCUS ON, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS

- Repatriation: Reality or Fleeting Illusion?
- The African Union and Repatriation
- The Jewish Diaspora and Repatriation
- The Chinese Diaspora and Repatriation
- The Japanese Diaspora and Repatriation
- The Indian Diaspora and Repatriation
- The World Wars and Repatriation
- The Academy and Repatriation
- Revisiting the History and Idea of Black Zionism
- Revisiting the Pioneering Repatriation Efforts in the USA, e.g., Chief Alfred Sam's Efforts
- Black Lives Matter Movement and Repatriation
- Female Architects of Repatriation
- African Civilisation Society and Repatriation
- African Repatriation within Africa
- Repatriation of Looted Cultural Items
- The American Colonisation Society and Repatriation
- Diplomatic Missions and Repatriation
- Repatriates and their Stories and Experiences
- Rastafari and Repatriation
- Repatriation and the African Diaspora in Asia
- Repatriated Communities in Africa
- Popular Culture and Repatriation
- Repatriation Experiments in History
- Kwame Nkrumah and Repatriation
- Cosmopolitanism and Repatriation
- Political Exiles and Repatriation
- Marcus Garvey, the Universal Negro Improvement Association and Repatriation
- W.E.B. DuBois and Repatriation
- Music, e.g., Reggae and Hiphop, and Repatriation
- Repatriation: Brain Drain or Brain Gain?
- Repatriation as Movement of Ideas
- Repatriation vs Reparation
- Repatriation and Exilic Religious and Spirituality Movements
- Repatriation of Dislocated Ethnic Groups in Africa
- Apartheid, Ethnic Displacement in South Africa and Repatriation
- Slave Dungeons, "Castles" and Forts and Repatriation
- Repatriation vs Migration
- Slavery and the Slave Trade
- Philosophical and Theoretical Perspectives
- Ghana, Home-coming and the Year of Return Initiative

- Memory, Time and Remembrance
- Citizenship, Identity and Belonging
- Repatriation and Pan-Africanism
- Black Nationalism and Repatriation
- Appropriation of Space and Territory
- Repatriation and Reconstruction
- Repatriation and Remittances

REGISTRATION FEES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- This is free for students based in Africa
- Faculty/scholars based in Ghana and other African countries 20 dollars or equivalent cedis
- Non-Africa-based faculty/scholars – 50 dollars

We will be happy to respond to any questions you may have. You may call us at +233-244925140 or +233-542361252

SUBMISSION DEADLINES: Abstracts of approximately 400 words should be submitted by 30 August, 2021. For panel submissions, submit a 200-word panel abstract and a 400-word abstracts for each individual presentation. Acceptance of abstracts will be made known by 25 September, 2021.

CONTACTS: Please, send an abstract of your proposed topic, institutional affiliation, and contact information to the following:

- Prof. De-Valera N.Y.M. Botchway,
(Head, Department of History)
Email: de-valera.botchway@ucc.edu.gh and jahiital@yahoo.com

- Dr. Joseph Kachim,
(Member of Organising Committee, Department of History)
Email: joseph.kachim@ucc.edu.gh

- Dr Augustine Duah,
(Member of Organising Committee, Department of History)
Email. duah.osei@ucc.edu.gh