



The Return of Cultural and Historical Treasures: The Case of the Netherlands

Jos van Beurden

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The return of cultural and historical treasures touches on a number of political and cultural issues, and often inspires controversy. As the world is changing, the concept of return is changing as well. The shrinking divisions between a poor South and a rich North, colonizer and colonized, and source countries and art and antique market countries all impact our thinking about return. How do Dutch heritage institutions deal with this new reality, when the return of their objects or collections comes under discussion? That is the central question in this critical book.

In *The Return of Cultural and Historical Treasures: The Case of the Netherlands*, Jos van Beurden researches cases in which the Dutch state and Dutch heritage institutions have been handing over cultural and historical treasures that were acquired in colonial times and more recently. He investigates the dynamics of their return practice and gives his analysis extra depth by including cases in which the return has not materialized. The most remarkable of these is that of a keris--the traditional sword of Indonesia's national hero Diponegoro. Where is it? In addition to research the written records, many heritage directors and experts were interviewed for the book, making *The Return of Cultural and Historical Treasures* an indispensable addition to the literature about return by the Netherlands of art and human remains.

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