

Museumsverband

**Niedersachsen und
Bremen e.V.**

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In cooperation with:



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International Conference

Pasang Surut

Provenance Research as a Contribution to Decolonisation and
Trajectories of Restitution

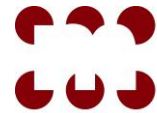
State Museum Hanover, Willy-Brandt-Allee 5, 30169 Hannover

9 – 11 June 2026

The Indonesian phrase *pasang surut* — “the tide in and out” — evokes the continuous movement of people, objects, and ideas across the seas that once linked Europe and the Indonesian archipelago. These currents shaped the emergence of colonial collections but also suggest the possibility of renewed circulation: of knowledge, accountability, and dialogue.

Against this conceptual background, the conference is organised within the framework of the research project *Colonial-Era Collections from Indonesia in Lower Saxony: A German–Dutch–Indonesian Entangled History*, funded by the German Lost Art Foundation and coordinated by the Museum Association for Lower Saxony and Bremen e. V., in collaboration with the Network for Provenance Research in Lower Saxony. The project investigates colonial-era collections held in eight museums in Lower Saxony, comprising approximately 1,450 ethnographic objects, 300 natural history specimens, and human remains.

The international conference *Pasang Surut* shall bring together academic and collection experts, as well as key figures from the fields of art, culture, and politics from Indonesia, Germany, and the Netherlands, to discuss the transformative potential of post-colonial provenance research as a contribution to processes of reconnection and decolonisation. By fostering exchange between institutions and researchers from Indonesia, the Netherlands, and Germany, *Pasang Surut* seeks to contribute to the development of a shared framework for post-colonial provenance research grounded in dialogue, transparency, and long-term partnership.



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At a moment when provenance research has become central to confronting colonial legacies, the conference will also ask how research methods themselves can be critically reflected upon and reoriented — shifting from a purely prospective exercise towards a more collaborative and reflexive practice, capable of informing institutional futures.

The key questions will be:

- How were Indonesian ethnographic and natural collections formed within colonial networks of power, knowledge, and economic and scientific interest?
- How can provenance research challenge these inherited structures and produce shared, plural understandings of history?

The final programme will be announced in spring 2026.

Participation is free of charge. Please register by **15 May 2026** at annekathrin.krieger@landesmuseum-hannover.de.