

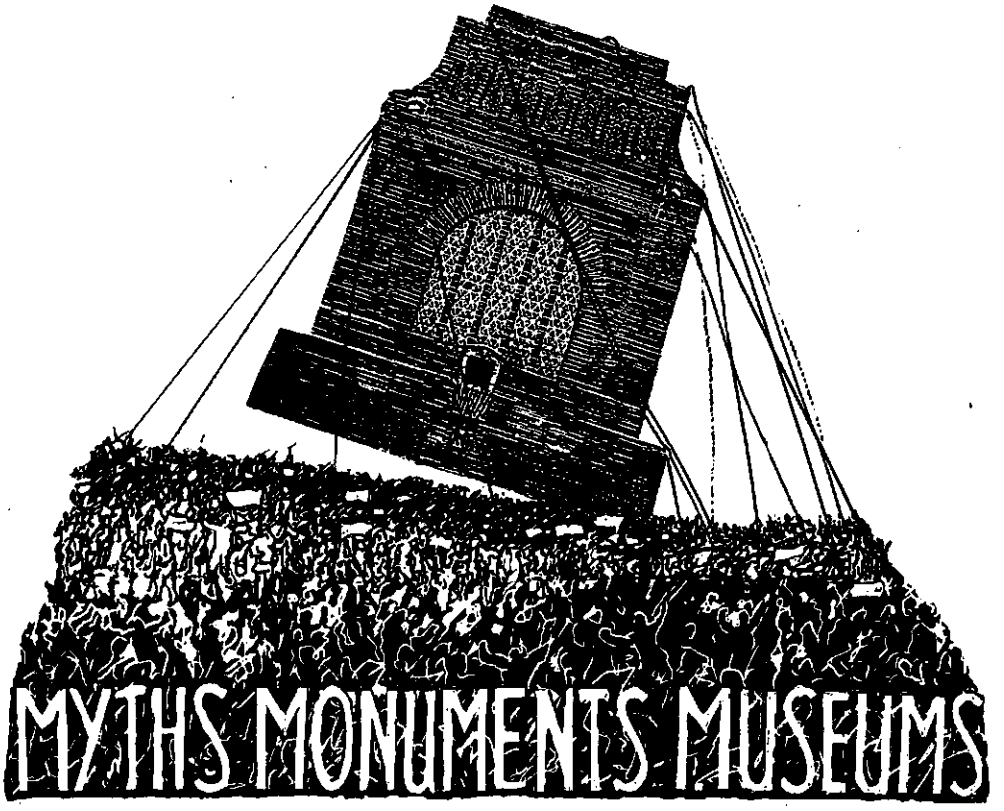
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Arts and Africana: hierarchies of material culture

Nettleton, Anitra

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ARTS AND AFRICANA:
HIERARCHIES OF MATERIAL CULTURE

Anitra Nettleton

University of the Witwatersrand



AFRICANA

ARTS AND AFRICANA: HIERARCHIES OF MATERIAL CULTURE

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Anitra Nettleton

History of Art Department

University of the Witwatersrand

The city of Johannesburg has a small number of museums which range from those dealing with military history and the history of transport, from the history of mining and banking, geology and medicine, to photography and rock painting. Some of these museums are privately owned[1] while others are linked to institutions such as the universities [2]. A few are run by the city council[3], but there is only one state-funded museum in the city[4]. Most of the museums are concerned with the histories of material culture in one form or another, most of them being specialist museums in which a specific area of human activity is cordoned off from the unruly incursions of possible interrelation- ships with other areas of production and signification. Thus the history of mining is separated from the history of banking, although the two are patently interlinked.

In this paper I wish to look at two specific institutions which, being funded by the city taxpayers and run by the city council of Johannesburg, are essentially public museums. Both of these museums: and here I must be excused for calling the Johannesburg Art Gallery a "museum", but an explanation will follow: the Johannesburg Art Gallery and the Africana Museum, have as their preserve what might be defined as the "Cultural" aspects as opposed to the economic or technical aspects of material culture [5], and their preserves overlap one another. By looking at these two examples I would like to demonstrate the way in which certain kinds of museums privilege some objects over others, both in terms of the values attached to them, and in terms of their potential significance to our understanding of culture. In doing this I will suggest that the museums have followed a political

agenda which is linked to colonial structures and ways of thinking, something which ought to be amended in the new current of enlightenment in South Africa.

The histories of the two museums in question are essential in unravelling the ways in which they have functioned to shape our understanding of culture in the South African context. The history of the Johannesburg Art Gallery has been more widely disseminated than that of the Africana museum, but both have been fairly fully documented [6] . The Johannesburg Art Gallery was founded at the instigation of Lady Florence Phillips, the wife of mining magnate Sir Lionel Phillips (McTeague 1984). The Phillipses first settled in Johannesburg in 1889, but they were essentially peripatetic, spending part of the year in Europe, and part in South Africa. Lady Phillips developed an interest in art and other forms of what we might call European "High" culture, and felt the contrast between the rough mining camp that was Johannesburg, and the sophisticated milieu in which she moved in Europe [7] . Apparently, in her value-system, the latter milieu was far preferable to the raw social circumstances prevailing in Johannesburg, which might have appeared to her to be uncultured. Lady Phillips over the years put together a large collection of art objects, including carpets and lace as well as paintings, apparently in an attempt to introduce a note of "High Culture" into these rough surroundings. As McTeague puts it:

> She was aware of the uplifting influence of art upon her own life and longed to share it with the people of Johannesburg. She hoped that her own home with its treasures would set an example (McTeague 1984:146).

After the Jameson raid in 1896, in which Sir Lionel Phillips

was enthusiastically involved, he and his family spent eight years in exile in England, only returning to Johannesburg in 1905. The Johannesburg of the years after the Anglo-Boer War must have beeneven more deprived of "high" culture than it had been in the years that led up to the war. Yet the Phillips family built a large house with Sir Herbert Baker as the architect, and Lady Phillips began to think seriously about establishing a city Art Gallery. From 1909 she consulted with a number of "experts" and teamed up with Sir Hugh Lane who was busy establishing a collection of Art works for the Dublin Art Gallery. Between them Lady Phillips and Sir Hugh Lane put together a collection of contemporary art works, mostly of the British school, money being raised by subscription from the wealthy magnates of Johannesburg. The site for the Art Gallery in Joubert Park was granted by the Johannesburg Town Council in 1910, and Jan Smuts, then the provincial administrator of the Transvaal granted provincial funding for the building. In the same year the paintings arrived in Johannesburg, but the building, designed by a British architect, Sir Edwin Lutyens, was only opened with its display of this collection in 1915. The building was never completed according to Lutyens's design and the town council was reluctant to continue funding the Art Gallery, partly because of its partisan purchases and displays of British art, rather than Dutch or South African art. Nevertheless Johannesburg now had its temple to "High Culture"[8], an art-museum in which Johannesburg would find, to quote Lady Phillips:

> ...one oasis in its midst, one building, beautiful without, surrounded by a garden in harmony with the building designs and promise of English landscape gardens, and containing treasures of art.....something truly to rest the mind and eye of the jaded wayfarer, something to remind him of

higher things! (McTeague 1984:144) (my emphases)

The tenor of this letter to the Star newspaper should alert us to the way in which certain elements of the public of Johannesburg regarded art. Art had, in Europe and America, become separated from the rest of material culture[9]. It was regarded as extraordinary and edifying, a resource for the cultivation of "civilized" values among ordinary people. Art Galleries were viewed as media through which these values could be transmitted via the display and valorisation of the objects, and the Johannesburg Art Gallery was not to be an exception. The building was designed with a full complement of classical columns forming imposing porticos, intended to recall the glories of past European civilization and thus to legitimise the claim to civilisation made through the establishment of the art gallery. Lutyens was firmly against any indigenous flavours in his architectural recipe [10] and Johannesburg, situated in the depths of Africa was blessed with a temple to art, one of many official buildings in the classical mode.[11]

The Africana Museum was also to be housed in a building with a classical portico as it was to be placed above the Johannesburg Public Library. Again, the genesis of the Africana Museum can be traced to the vision of a particular individual with a passion for collecting. J.G. Gubbins was born in 1877 and spent his life as a farmer at Ottoshoop in the Transvaal. He developed a passion for collecting books and other objects connected with the history of white colonialism in South Africa, especially Christian missions and church history. Although his collecting activities appeared

to have been motivated initially out of purely presonal interest, in the early 1930s J.G. Gubbins conceived the idea of an Africana Museum for Johannesburg[12] and discussed it with a number of interested parties including the City Council and the University of the Witwatersrand. The idea was supported by no less a person than the Earl of Athlone, then governor of the Union of South Africa, and the Gubbins collection was to form the nucleus of the new museum collection (Kennedy nd Ch1:11).

In 1933 the Johannesburg City Council agreed to buy part of the Gubbins collection (most of his library was to go to the University of the Witwatersrand) and establish a Museum of South African History. A third floor, originally intended as a children's museum to be erected above the Johannesburg Public Library and Geological Museum was to be used to house the Africana collection. The Gubbins collection was evaluated in 1933 by W.R. Morrison, a professional evaluator of antiques and books and the following kinds of objects appear to have been included at that stage: paper currency, coins, graphic prints by various makers, paintings by Bowler, Baines and other early colonial artists, maps, a carving by Anton Anreith, but no "ethnographic" items from indigenous black cultures are mentioned in relation to this evaluation. Thus the core collection of a museum which was envisaged by the Earl of Athlone to:

> focus and illustrate through the centuries all the tradition, culture and historical achievements of the South African peoples in the course of their expansion and civilization throughout the sub-continent. (Kennedy nd Ch.1:11)

in fact only represented the culture of the European settlers in the area, and it was with this composition of artefacts that the

Museum was opened to public viewing. The official date of opening of the museum is not known, but it is generally accepted that it opened in September 1935 (Kennedy Ch2:35).

Thus the two museums in Johannesburg devoted to the preservation and display of the material and other culture of Southern Africa - and this is why I class the Art Gallery as a museum - both opened with displays of objects which were entirely partisan in relation to the cultures represented. The Johannesburg Art Gallery favoured art produced by British painters and sculptors, not even working in South Africa, who represented, presumably, the cultural heritage of the English-speakers who had settled in South Africa. The Africana Museum likewise at the point of its inception favoured the products of a similar, if slightly more widely spread cultural heritage. As Carman has pointed out in relation to the Johannesburg Art Gallery, such a partisan selectivity in its collections may have meant that the Art Gallery was not accepted as representative by the majority of Johannesburgers and may have resulted in the Town Council's reluctance to grant funds to the Gallery (Carman 1988 205-206). But the Africana Museum's selectiveness was less radical than that of the Art Gallery in its initial stages.

The Africana Museum followed the Art Gallery after twenty years when British domination of the cultural, economic and political life of South Africa was already largely eradicated. Its core collection had sections representing both the major players on the scene, the English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking communities, although in 1952 Kennedy as director of the Museum had commented

that there was no Voortrekker, "Hottentot", Cape Malay or Coloured people's material present in the collection. He outlined briefly how he saw acquisitions within the Africana Museum context:

> No effort has ever been made to build up special sections devoted to different races and nations... In collecting, however, this racial aspect should always be considered and exhibits primarily intended for the chronological or other existing sequence should receive special consideration if, incidentally they also refer to a nation or a member of a nation not represented in the museum. (Kennedy nd Ch6:16-17)

But, while the Africana Museum did not entirely exclude objects made by members of cultural groups who formed the majority of the peoples of Southern Africa, the black communities, as did the Johannesburg Art Gallery, its collections were not representative. It was only in the late 1930s that the Africana Museum acquired products from indigenous black societies, and these came in the form of a bequest and a loan. The collection of Major Clement Webb, consisting of 750 items of "Zulu" culture was donated to the museum in this period and material collected by the Rvd. Noel Roberts among the people of Malaboch (Hananwa) in the Northern Transvaal was given on loan to the museum in 1936 [13] (Kennedy nd Ch4:2). It was only in the 1970s that the Africana Museum started purchasing items of material culture from indigenous black populations in any consistent fashion. All prior acquisitions of this kind of material appear to have been isolated purchases or donations.

The lack of interest in the products of indigenous black societies may be explained by a number of factors, but the most probable explanation may lie in the fact that the Africana Museum was linked to the Johannesburg Public Library and that many of its

directors and staff have over the years been drawn directly from Library staff. A report by Miss Oliver, assistant director of the Museum under R.F. Kennedy the city librarian, tabled in 1939 makes the bias of the museum's directorship quite clear:

> Generally speaking, books are the most important type of Africana, followed by pictures. However, it often happens that an object, such as a powder horn, a candle-mould, a swimming log, or a coach, can be more revealing than a written description or a picture. Wherever possible the Museum tries to obtain objects to supplement books and pictures, but objects are not always suitable for preservation and display and, when they exist, are more difficult to obtain than pictures. (Kennedy nd Ch5:28) (my emphases)

Thus the Africana Museum collection has always been dominated by paintings, photographs and other two-dimensional representations of life and life-styles in South Africa, and the indigenous African populations were for a long time represented largely through the eyes and products of the colonial masters of the country. It was only in the 1960s that an ethnologist's post was established at the museum, and its first long-standing incumbent only took up her post in 1970 [14]. It was only at this point that a coherent acquisitions policy with regard to the material culture of indigenous black peoples was established (Kennedy nd Ch7:4, Ch9:18).

Similarly discriminatory acquisitions were made by the Johannesburg Art Gallery until very recently. From its core collection of paintings from the British School, the Gallery's collection was expanded only during the curatorship of P. Anton Hendriks from 1937 to 1964. Hendriks added significant numbers of works by South African artists, although the Gallery continued to acquire works by European artists and, as Carman points out, the

Afrikaans-speaking community was not convinced that they were sufficiently represented in the collection (Carman 1988:207). Although Hendriks purchased a work by Gerard Sekoto in 1940, no other works by black artists were purchased by the Johannesburg Art Gallery before 1972. Carman suggests that the reasons for this were complex and "lay in the socio-political climate of the time." She goes on:

> The black artist, even if he painted in the western tradition, appears to have been considered separate from the so-called European artist of the day. (Carman 1988:207)

But it is possible to suggest that separateness was not the main issue here. As I have pointed out elsewhere the notion of a black population in South Africa incapable of the accoutrements of civilization, including "Art" has a long history in the polemics of our cultural life (Nettleton 1988a, 1988b and 1989) and involves a conception of African peoples as not only different but also as inferior to Europeans. If the Art Institutions were to have admitted the productions of Black artists, regardless of which tradition they were working in, they would have given the lie to this myth of racial superiority. Ozynski (1989:279) has pointed out that this essenital differentiation extended even to the admission of blacks to view the art works in the gallery, to which idea there was strong resistance among city councillors, ironically in the same year as the painting by Gerard Sekoto was purchased by the gallery. The civilizing mission of art, apparently, was not seen to extend to black people, especially where they might see paintings of nude white females!.

Although the Johannesburg Art Gallery did acquire some works by black artists after 1972, it was only with the exhibition of The

Neglected Tradition, held in 1988 to 1989, that the tradition of art by black artists in South Africa was acknowledged as a major stream in the history of South African culture (Sack 1988, Harmsen 1988, Nettleton 1988c). But this recognition extended only to those artists who worked within the paradigms of the Western art tradition, i.e. those who produced sculpture, painting and graphics, the products of a "High Art" tradition. Most of the artists whose works were represented in the new acquisitions were those who had some form of training in the canons of Modern Western art, a training which was largely urban based (See Lissoos 1986, Sack 1988, Rankin 1989, 1991, Koloane 1989.) Other traditions of aesthetic production, particularly those from rurally-based populations were still not collected or represented in the Johannesburg Art Gallery or in any other art galleries, except the commercial galleries. That this should have happened is, of course, contingent on the way Western art history and criticism had come to constitute the objects of "art" and is not peculiar to the situation in South Africa (see Vogel 1989 and Danto 1989), although its perpetuation has polemical implications for the future of museums and Art Galleries in South Africa.

Since the mid-nineteenth century most public collections of art in Europe and North America have, until recently, constituted their collections from objects which belong to the category outlined above as "High art", as opposed to popular forms of art or "craft" [15] . In this definition, "art" works are seen as unique "creations", able to stand by themselves, to "speak" to the viewer independently of any historical or philosophical context. Art stands, in this definition, for itself, having a function of

spiritual enlightenment, emotional enrichment or catharsis, or eliciting responses of awe or admiration. It was this kind of expectation of art that led Lady Florence Philips to found the Johannesburg Art Gallery. Like the European prototypes on which it was based, this gallery did not, until very recently include many objects which fell outside this definition.

It is important to note that the aims of the Africana Museum were framed essentially differently from those of the Johannesburg Art Gallery. While, as we have seen, the Art Gallery was intended as an oasis of high culture and spiritual upliftment, the Africana Museum was essentially educationally oriented. This is put by Kennedy as follows:

> In the formative years of the Africana Museum, it was accepted that it was for popular education and not for research: all exhibits were for display. It was therefore essential that the layout, description and display of exhibits should be both popular and informative. (Kennedy nd Ch4 12-13).

As a result the Africana Museum collected objects, mainly pictures, coins, stamps and other items of material culture, not for their intrinsic artistic or aesthetic worth, however that might be measured, but rather for what they could tell the viewer about the societies which produced them, or which they illustrated. This latter point is very important and the distinction must be emphasised. On one hand one might have displays devoted to coins from different societies and these might be used to say something about the systems of economic exchange within those societies. Of course the displays are constructed by people other than those who used the coins, as are displays of beadwork or woodcarving from Southern African black peoples, but, in all these cases the objects themselves were made by the people who are being represented.

However, with pictures, no original artefacts are present: the pictures by Angas of "Zulu" warriors or maidens, by l'Ons of Cape "Malays" or "Xhosa" chiefs, by Samuel Daniels of South African animals, are already representations, but they are also products of a particular way of seeing [16]. The way in which they are used within the museum is therefore very different from both displays of other kinds of objects within museums and displays of paintings or other representational arts within art galleries.

It is with the issue of modes of display and the kinds of objects used within these displays that some confusion is beginning to set in, particularly where museums are looking for a new direction. A display of beaded items made by women who speak Ndebele was erected in the new premises of the Africana Museum in the Market precinct in the mid-1980s, along with a re-constructed Ndebele-style homestead. The displays were intended to illustrate the beadwork worn by Ndebele-speaking women at particular periods in their history,and the paintings, made by some of these women on the polystyrene walls of the homestead were intended to evoke the appearance of a "true" or "timeless" Ndebele culture. One of the main concerns here, whatever other agendas there might be, was to allow the products to "speak" of and/or for their makers. Photographs were used to flesh out the representation of this Ndebele culture and to contextualise the objects further. However, the use of pictorial representation in culture-history museums, whether they be classed as ethnography or history museums, implies that these representations are "objective" and that the maker/s had no particular bias when he or she produced such images. Even photographic records, as has been shown with regard to Duggan

Cronin's [17] and other colonial or missionary photographers' products [18], cannot be taken at face value as simple or accurate representations of particular subject matters. Yet, it appears that the collections of the Africana museum were built upon the premise that such images said more about the people represented than they said about the people who produced them:

> Pictures were, and still are, purchased for their subject rather than as art. (Kennedy Ch5:18)

But, while pictures are treated as historical documents in the ethnographic museum, only certain pictures are admitted as evidence. Very few, if any, pictures of so-called "native life" produced by black South Africans are ever included in the Africana Museum displays. Bhengu's paintings of different peoples, his landscapes, Mohl's landscapes, Sihlali's township scenes, Sekoto's paintings of Sophiatown and District Six, Dumile's images from the townships, none of these is used to illustrate an alternative vision of the history of Johannesburg.

In the same way as this use of pictorial images by culture history museums decontextualizes those images, so the art museum decontextualises all its objects far more radically. In the ethnographic or history museum all kinds of objects may be used in displays, but an attempt is made to provide a context within certain parameters. So dioramas might be constructed, boards displaying relevant textually-presented information, labels and other means would be provided to construct contexts into which objects and technologies might be fitted [19]. Such displays claimed some degree of objectivity as is evidenced in this judgement of the Africana museum's first display (1941) using a

three dimensional model of a "Shongana-Tsonga exorcist ceremony":

> It was admirably suited to its purpose: the figure did not detract from the interest in the real paraphernalia displayed, and yet it was a real Bantu, not an individualised representation such as is found in pictures by Angas and others. (Kennedy nd Ch5:49)

But while this "context" was as much a construct as was any painting by Angas, or any description by Burchell, it was presented to the public of Johannesburg and to the hordes of school children passing through the hallowed halls of the museum, as "fact". In the light of the educational function which the Africana Museum always appears to have stressed, this apparent objectivity cannot be too strongly challenged.

In the Johannesburg Art Gallery works are only contextualised in terms of their period, say 19th century, and their geographical locus of origin, say the English, Dutch or, recently, the South African school. Possibly as the result of a lack of educative intention in the art gallery style of display, objects are hung together without any written information other than brief labels giving the artist's names, dates, the title of the work and the date of the work where that is known. For the rest, the object stands on its own, the viewer is free to make of it what she or he likes. In the present arrangements of the Johannesburg Art Gallery, in the rooms in which paintings from historical European schools are hung, furniture from the same period and region, or related porcelain items, are placed on display, to flesh out the total picture and give a sense of the period in which the objects were made and originally displayed. But once again no information is given, and most visitors would not consider these pieces of furniture as necessary parts of the display. They may even appear

to encroach somewhat on one's pure and untrammelled enjoyment of the artwork for its own sake, and thus the Gallery might fall between two stools, that of not providing any information, and that of providing sufficient information in order to construct a significant context.

The issues of both the constitution of collections and the contextualizations of displays is problematic. This is so for the Art Gallery, not only in relation to the objects traditionally exhibited within the confines of its halls, but, possibly more extremely in relation to artefacts and objects which are not part of its traditional population. It is equally problematic for the Africana Museum as it is being reconstituted in the Market precinct. In many areas the two institutions appear to be creating areas of large overlap, but at the same time maintaining distinctions based on colonial prototypes which are essentially inappropriate to our new and emerging society.

In 1988 the Johannesburg Art Gallery acquired the first of two major collections of "traditional" artefacts from indigenous African cultures, this in the form of the Jaques collection of headrests. This was followed closely by the acquisition of the Lowen Collection, on permanent loan from Mr. Harry Oppenheimer and renamed the Brenthurst collection, which includes a wider variety of artefacts from a large number of cultural complexes in Southern and east Africa [20] . These were placed on display in two exhibitions, Images of Wood (1989) and Art and Ambiguity (1991). In both these exhibitions the objects were displayed as "art" works, in glass cases, lit with spotlighting and with minimal

labels and contextual information. The objects were displayed for the quality of their craftsmanship and their aesthetic value, they stood alone, and were intended to be seen as "art". The whole problem of this cross-over between the "ethnographic" and the "art" museum has been widely debated over the past few years, and I do not want to enter this debate here. But it is important to understand that we i.e. both the curators and the viewers of such exhibitions, are making these objects into works of "art". In the process we are privileging certain objects from particular cultures over others. For examples, we do not find the Johannesburg Art Gallery collecting embroidered tablecloths made by women of European origin, living in South African rural communities in the early twentieth century, but the Art Gallery is collecting beaded clothing made by black women from rural communities in the same period.

What appears to be happening here is that the inclusion of artefacts such as items of dress, headrests, axes, snuffboxes and staffs, among other things, is aimed at locating an aesthetic nexus in societies which did not produce art for art's sake in the past, and at admitting these to the family of "High" art. This form of appropriation is intended to redress imbalances that have manifested themselves historically in the constitution of the collections, but it has the effect of valorizing historical productions of popular aesthetic forms in one sector of South African society and denying aesthetic worth to parallel popular productions from other sectors. Thus beaded items made by South Africans of European origin might end up in the Africana Museum, as all beaded items from black South African women used to, but they

are never included in the Art Gallery. Thus the Art Gallery runs the risk of appearing patronizing when traditional items of black South African cultural complexes are displayed to the exclusion of other popular culture.

This problem is compounded when one realises that the core of the collection of headrests which now rest among the art works in the basements of the Johannesburg Art Gallery were in the Africana Museum for some 30 years before they were elevated to their new position. It is somewhat ironic that these two museums whose interests lie in material and visual culture are not able to break down the barriers which so artificially divide their collections. The new Africana Museum is being physically split from its original bedfellow, the Library: this physical separation may well see a continued weaning of the museum from an essentially bibliophile attitude towards one which acknowledges more fully the wider parameters of material culture. This process may have started some time ago, particularly with the appointment of Hilary Bruce as ethnographer in 1970, but it should have received a greater impetus with the creation of a directorship of Libraries and Museums in Johannesburg in 1989[21]. On the other hand, the grand new spaces and facilities that have been provided at the Market precinct will ensure the preservation of an Africana Museum that is essentially modelled on western history museums, as an entirely separate entity from the Johannesburg Art Gallery, which is a late colonial model of a modern art institution.

The main problem here is that neither institution appears to have movedfrom the fundamental premises made by the founders of the two

museums, that art and material culture are separable. However, if we acknowledge that the grounds on which we are distinguishing art from the rest of material culture are extremely shaky, we should be prepared to allow these distinctions to lapse. We should be prepared to allow products to circulate more freely between museums and to allow them to be displayed within varying contexts in order to demonstrate that objects are essentially meaningless unless they are construed and constructed in particular contextual and conceptual frameworks. We must not perpetuate traditional systems of hierarchical separation and thus valorisation and control of material culture - representations of selves and others must be open to as many participants as possible and museum professionals need to consult local communities to a far greater extent than has been happening at present.

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[1] The Museum of Banking, for example, is owned by First National Bank.

[2] For example the University Art Galleries, The Ethnological Museum,to name but a few on the University of the Witwatersrand campuses.

[3] These include the Africana Museum, the Bensusan Museum of Photography, the Bernberg Museum of Costume, The Geological Museum, the James Hall Transport Museum, the Museum of Man, and the South African Rock Art Museum.

[4] This is the National Museum of Military History.

[5] The distinction which I am trying to draw here is between museums which have as their focus specific technical aspects of culture, such as mining, and museums which concentrate on the way in which more general aspects of cultures and their meaning and belief-systems or ideological bases are constructed through the display of material objects.

[6] The wider publicization of the history of the Johannesburg Art Gallery follows a trend of privileging this institution above the Africana Museum, and this will be

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investigated further later in this paper. See McTeague 1984, Lissoos 1986, Carman 1988, Johannesburg Art Gallery 1986 all dealing with the history of the Johannesburg Art Gallery. A typescript by Kennedy (nd) in the Africana Museum, is the major source of information on that museum's history, along with some information contained in the Johannesburg Public Library and Museums' journal Africana Notes and News.

[7] This view of Lady Phillips is largely formed by the biography written by Thelma Gutsche (1966). McTeague's (1984) and Lissoos's (1986) use of the Gutsche as a source is essentially uncritical of the colonialist disposition towards patronising that it displays.

[8] The Way in which Art Galleries have become rarefied into quasi- sacred spaces for the contemplation of art and spiritual upliftment was most persuasively put by John Berger in Ways of Seeing (Berger 1972).

[9] See, for example Clive Bell Art (1947) and Roger Fry Vision and Design (1961) for an early twentieth-century critical position on the nature of art. See also Presiozi (1989) for an historical critique of the ways in which "Art" has been defined, also Danto (1981).

[10] McTeague quotes a letter from Lutyens to Baker in which he puts his case thus: "Would Wren (had he gone to Australia) have burnt his knowledge and experience to produce a marsupial style thought to reflect the character of the aborigines? ...The perfection of the Order is far nearer nature than anything produced on impulse or accident-wise." (McTeague 1984:145)

[11] See Ozynski 1989 for a more thorough analysis and critique of the motivations underlying the establishment of such a temple to culture and its subsequent history.

[12] It is difficult to define exactly what was meant by "Africana" in relation to this museum, although the definition does appear to have been catholic in its inclusiveness. Major emphasis was placed on books and prints, however, and it is not known whether Gubbins was at all interested in ethnography.

[13] This loan was converted into a bequest in 1960, and these objects are now permanently housed in the museum.

[14] The first incumbent was M. Delange who held the post in 1964, but she was followed by H. Bruce only after a six year gap, during which time very little significant movement towards a coherent collections policy appears to have been made. (Kennedy nd Ch7:4)

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[15] Few European Galleries, whether they be concerned with modern or traditional art, which are funded by either State or City authorities, have significant holdings of arts which falls outside the boundaries of Western "art" classifications. Those institutions which do have a broader catchment for their collections are often named museums rather than galleries, and it seems that this terminology is itself used hierarchically.

[16] See Klopper 1989 for a discussion of Angas's representations of the Zulu and the problems inherent in their use as historical documents.

[17] See Levy 1990:45 ff for a discussion of the photographs by Duggan Cronin of Ndebele women and their value as historical documents.

[18] A number of articles on the failings of ethnographic photographs as historical records have been published in the past ten years. For the most recent ones see African Arts Special issue Historical Photographs of Africa 1991, Webb 1992, Becker 1992.

[19] See Davison 1991:158ff for a critique of the use of dioramas in museum displays.

[20] It is perhaps ironic, that the City Council, which would not grant funds for the purchase of the Lowen Collection when it was offered to the Johannesburg Art Gallery, is now basking directly in the glory of one of its institution's supposedly liberated attitude. Because the City Council did not buy the collection, it is now problematic as to whether the collection can be seen as a permanent part of the Art Gallery's holdings - the owners can withdraw the loan and sell the collection at their pleasure.

[21] The first Director was Mr Christopher Till, who had been Curator of the Johannesburg Art Gallery and who is now Director of Culture for the City of Johannesburg.

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