Creative City of Pretoria: The Dark Side of Creativity

Die kreative Stadt Pretoria: Die dunkle Seite der Kreativität

PATRICK EBEWO*

United States International University-Africa

Abstract

Though fast becoming a very popular tourist attraction center, Pretoria is primarily the seat of power of the South African government and where the office of the State President is located. Amongst other edifices, the iconic historical monuments, the Union Buildings located in Pretoria, are cultural spaces capable of qualifying Pretoria as the creative city of 'peace.' Conceived in 1910, the buildings were erected to commemorate the "Union" of the South African people during the apartheid era. Many of the artefacts in the Union Buildings represent South African history and culture of the past and they awaken national consciousness of the present. This paper is a critical appraisal of Pretoria as a creative city with magnificent and metaphorical architectural designs of buildings; and more importantly, the paper interrogates the continued relevance of the Union Buildings and the numerous visual art works therein as a unification site in post-apartheid South Africa.

Obwohl Pretoria sich schnell zu einem bekannten touristischen Anzugspunkt entwickelt hat, ist die Stadt vor allem Machzentrum der südafrikanischen Regierung und Sitz des Staatspräsidenten. Neben anderen Gebäuden und emblematischen historischen Denkmälern fungieren die Union Buildings in Pretoria als kulturelle Orte, die Pretoria als kreative Friedensstadt auszeichnen. Die 1910 fertiggestellten Gebäude wurden zur Erinnerung an die "Einheit" südafrikanischer Völker während der Apartheid gebaut. Der Gebäudekomplex repräsentiert in zahlreichen seiner Artefakte südafrikanische Geschichte und Kultur der Vergangenheit und weckt das Nationalbewusstsein der Gegenwart. Dieser Beitrag ist eine kritische Würdigung von Pretoria als kreativer Stadt mit prächtiger, metaphorischer Architektur. Noch wichtiger jedoch befragt der Beitrag die Union Buildings und ihre zahlreichen Kunstwerke im Hinblick auf ihre anhaltende Relevanz als Ort der Vereinigung im Südafrika der Post-Apartheid.

Keywords

Creative City, Visual Arts, Apartheid, Social Cohesion kreative Stadt, bildende Kunst, Apartheid, sozialer Zusammenhalt

* Email: pebewo@usiu.ac.ke

1. Introduction

Though Pretoria, the capital city of South Africa, may not enjoy the luxury of being classified formally as one of the creative cities in the world (Mexico City, Sharjah in the UAE, Belgrade, Dakar, and Bangkok, amongst others), it is undoubtedly one of the most creative in the African continent if UNESCO's classification criteria for a creative city include cities that factor creativity into their urban development programs. Doubts, if any, about Pretoria's gualification as a creative city may not be unconnected with the creative city research groups' inability to come to terms with what constitutes creativity. According to Kaufman and Beghetto (2004), creativity has been associated with a wide range of subjects. These include the more obvious field of the arts, as well as less obvious fields such as agriculture, economics, and education. In the contemporary world, creativity has been deemed one of the most desirable traits for academics and university students, and it has been named "the most important economic resource of the 21st century" (KAUFMAN & BEGHETTO 2004). When creativity first became a subject of scientific inquiry in the 1950s, the focus was on creative personality and creative thinking techniques (GUILFORD 1950). Several decades later, the social aspect of creativity was added to this focus (HENNESSEY & AMABILE 2010). However, from the 1990s onwards, the field started to become more diversified. While this has significantly increased the understanding of creativity, it came with a price. The field has simply become too amorphous and polyvalent for anyone to keep track of all the developments surrounding it. Amongst scholars, there is no agreement on what constitutes creativity and many researchers are not able to define this concept at all, as is shown by a literary review done by Plucker, Beghetto, and Dow (2004). They sampled 90 papers with 'creativity' in the title, out of which only 38% attempted to define it. That means that a whopping 62% studied creativity without having defined what it is they were studying.

While creativity is often associated with "radical thinking," problemsolving, or the ingenuity of an individual, for the purpose of this article creativity is regarded as an innovative, integrated approach to the development of a city's space to accommodate the old and the modern, the social and the historical, the utilitarian and non-utilitarian aspects of life in a bid to promote the aesthetic values of existence within the community. The original concept of creativity in post-apartheid South

Africa was to link it with the transformation agenda of the country which involved every aspect of life in the country – from education to culture - from economics to urban regeneration. It is in consideration of the latter that I label Pretoria a creative city because it did all in its power to rearrange things within the city to give an appearance of a transformed city and society. The paper appraises it as a creative city with magnificent and metaphorical architectural designs of buildings and beautification of the surrounding spaces with artworks and other aesthetic objects to promote urban regeneration, or what Stevenson and O'Connor (see introduction by DeVereaux in this volume) refer to as "urban redevelopment and city reimaging." However, this article goes further to interrogate the continued relevance of some of the structures and numerous visual art works that are associated with the Union Buildings in post-apartheid South Africa. The paper calls for a re-evaluation of the art works within the Union Buildings, as they are perceived to be "troubling legacies." The paper scrutinizes the general assumption attached to creativity as a positive instrument of progress and argues strongly that appearances might be deceptive. Critically examined, the paper sees dark hues around the city's creative projects. For instance, the location of all the townships (Soshanguve, Ga-Rankuwa, Mamelodi, Atteridgeville) on the outskirts of the city is an eloquent testimony to the continuation of the apartheid legacy of segregation. By omission or commission, history seems to repeat itself through the racial demarcation of black people who are confined to the deprived townships from other privileged races in Pretoria who live in exclusive suburbs. The creative ingenuity exhibited in this regard is not people-oriented but ideologically driven, albeit in a manner that is not commonly transparent. As a former colonial state, South Africa grapples with painful and problematic history and heritage of the past. Much of this heritage is still being promoted by the visual archives, such as public monuments and artefacts that are found everywhere within the country. In this paper, I attempt to critically address the question of heritage and legacy in the visual domain and propose ways of dealing with problematic extant colonial objects and images, since they generate nervous conditions not only in South Africa but anywhere in the world where activists and other concerned citizens resist the liberal appropriation of indigenous cultural motifs and practices for symbolic, political, and economic gain by (former) settler colonies.

Pretoria, the Creative City

Though fast becoming a very popular tourist attraction, Pretoria is primarily the seat of power of the South African government and where the office of the State President is located. In 1860, the city of Pretoria was named after Andries Pretorius, the apartheid army General who defeated the Zulu people during the Great Trek from Cape Town (Cape of Good Hope). Pretoria is in present day Tshwane Municipality, Gauteng Province, and is the administrative capital of South Africa, while Cape Town and Bloemfontein are the legislative and judicial capitals, respectively. Geographically, Pretoria West serves as the Industrial Area of the city, Pretoria East and North are mostly living areas, while Pretoria Central is the Central Business District (CBD). Pretoria is a city that has invested hugely in exemplary architectural designs, arts galleries, museums, educational centers, malls, botanical and zoological gardens, theaters, concert halls, worship grounds, sports centers and show grounds, efficient transport systems, festivals, visual cultures, arts and crafts. A tourist who visits the city of Pretoria for the first time could not ignore its canopied streets lined with Jacaranda trees, especially if it is in the month of September, when these plants are full of bright pink-vellowish flowers. Indeed. Pretoria was initially regarded as the "City of Roses." but is currently known as the "Jacaranda City." The colossal edifice of the University of South Africa (UNISA) is a marvel to visitors who approach the city from Johannesburg. This magnificent piece of architectural work that looks like one unit when seen from a distance is, in fact, made up of separate pieces of buildings when seen from within. It is not the only academic institution of higher learning that adorns the city as others include Pretoria University and Tshwane University of Technology, not to mention other public and private tertiary institutions, colleges, and technical schools.

Preserved for posterity is Kruger House built in 1884. This house was the home of one of the South African Presidents (Paul Kruger) and is known to have been the first house in Pretoria to have electricity. The statue of Paul Kruger can also be seen at Church Square (formerly Market Square), a city center where the first church in Pretoria was built. This beautiful, historical square is surrounded by huge stone buildings, including the General Post Office, banks, and most importantly, the court of justice that was used during the notorious Rivonia Trial of Nelson Mandela and the other liberation fighters. Sammy Mark's Square is a location that serves as a museum to display the artifacts of entrepreneur Sammy Mark's possessions. In present day Pretoria, this location has become a shopping mall with a huge space for outdoor performances; it also accommodates a public library. Other important malls around Pretoria include Africa Mall, Menlyn Mall, Brooklyn Mall, Hatfield, Arcadia, Queenswood, Waverley, and Centurion.

There are several modern hotels and restaurants in Pretoria – from Sheraton (Corner of Church Street and Wesley) to the "romantic and expensive" Touch of Class Guest House, located at 26 Nicolson Street, in Baileys, Muckleneuk, a suburb of Pretoria. Of great historical importance is Victoria Hotel (directly opposite Bus Station), the oldest hotel in Pretoria, built in 1892. As mentioned earlier, though a very modern city, Pretoria has "creatively" incorporated the apartheid concept of Township dwelling, where groups of black Africans live together in a community rather than being integrated more widely. As stated before, the popular townships around Pretoria are Mamelodi, Soshanguve, Ga-Rankuwa, and Atteridgeville. The rich people, particularly whites, live in the suburbs, such as Faerie Glen, Waterkloof, Muckleneuk, and Hartbeespoort Dam area.

The National Cultural History Museum, which was built in 1892, holds African cultural and archeological artefacts. Prinsloo Agricultural Museum houses farming instruments and methods of farming that were used in the past. The Van Gybland-Oosterhoff Collection preserves Dutch items of historical importance. Voortrekker Monument, constructed in 1800, is a huge and very high granite building on top of a hill, built in honor of the Afrikaners who trekked from Cape Town during the era of British control (1835-1854). The monument is surrounded by a wall of several wagons, which symbolize the "Battle of Blood River." (ekalatours.com/Pretoria-tour/). Freedom Park Memorial preserves the memories of South Africans who lost their lives during wars. The Wonderboompoort is one of the forts (walls) built to fortify the city during war time. Wildlife, Lion Sanctuary, Rietvlei Nature Reserve, Hennops Hiking Trail, National Botanical Garden, and National Zoological Garden display the city's biodiversity, hiking culture, and assorted species of animals and plants.

In the city of Pretoria there are many public libraries and theaters, including the State Theater complex that contains many performance spaces. Also prominent are Pretoria City Hall, with thirty-two tower bells, Reserve Bank, Correctional Service Museum that stores items made by inmates, Air Force Base, South African Police Services Museum, and Melrose House, a mansion used in 1899 as the British Headquarters. The train service, including the fast train (Gautrain), begins in Johannesburg and terminates in Pretoria. Rugby and soccer enthusiasts enjoy exclusive times in the Pretoria stadium. Pretoria Show Ground promotes sporting and religious activities around Pretoria.

Since the demise of apartheid in South Africa, the nation has been grappling with questions about the possession of colonial and apartheid-era monuments/images and memorabilia, as ethical implications around the continued use of these images/objects abound. For some visual art historians and political critics, a troubling legacy of colonialism raises alarming concerns about the issue of artistic representation and continued visual presence of colonial supremacy. Not too long ago, South African students in tertiary institutions revolted against public display of apartheid-originated art works. In particular, students in the University of Cape Town defaced and destroyed the statue of Cecil Rhodes that was displayed on the campus. The students, in line with the thinking of O'Connor (see introduction by DeVereaux in this volume), seem to have believed that this kind of creativity "represents the last grasp of western imperialism." It resonates OPEC's concept of creative handling of the world's crude oil resources, where the less privileged nations mine their oil and OPEC determines the selling price per barrel. Logically, the owner of a good has the exclusive right to fix prices, but this is not the case with OPEC. In this instance, the poor produce, and the rich set the price. Creativity, known for its energizing potential, deflates when it suits its purpose.

Colonial legacies in South Africa served their purpose, once upon a time; the case is no longer the same. If Pretoria wants to be truly recognized as a creative city, it must evolve from the provocative, deadly practices of the past and embrace the progressive, reconciliatory routine of the present. Before I discuss the Union Buildings in detail, it is proper to take a cursory look at the colonial experience in South Africa, as this will throw some light on the significance of the Union Buildings.

2. South Africa and the Colonial Experience: A Panoramic View

The history of colonialism, in Africa generally and South Africa in particular, would be skewed without reference to the Berlin Conference. Historically, colonialism is said to have been configured for Africa through the conference convened in 1884 by the German Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, to discuss the partitioning of and civilizing mission for the continent. It is noted that "no person native to Africa was invited to the Berlin Conference, nor were Africans invited to comment on the outcome" [of the deliberations] (RUSSEL WARREN HOWE cited in HUL-SE 2007:37). "Bismarck's grand design turned out to be largely in the interest of Europe without regard to how it impoverished the peoples of Africa" (NWANKWO 2009:27-44). This 'civilizing mission' probably encouraged the Dutch commercial merchants to pitch camp at the Cape of Good Hope (today's Cape Town) in 1652, and in 1948, the government in power under D. F. Malan instituted the apartheid system which amounted to what Mandela described as:

A moral genocide: an attempt to exterminate an entire people's self-respect. The United Nations called that "a crime against humanity," but the former masters of the Union Buildings believed that they were doing God's work on earth, and humanity be damned. With admirable logic, apartheid's Calvinist orthodoxy preached that black and white souls inhabit separate heavens, rendering it morally imperative for the chosen few to respond to those who rose in opposition to God's will with all the might that God in his bounty had awarded them. The ordinary black foot soldiers who rebelled were terrorised into submission, beaten by the police, sometimes tortured, in some cases assassinated, very often jailed without charge. (CARLIN 2013: 3)

The architects of apartheid impressed it upon the world to believe that the black people who fought for their freedom in their own land were 'terrorists' (PERRY 2013: 36). Apart from many social and politicallymotivated and dehumanizing Acts [Group Areas Act, Immorality Act, Separate Amenities Act] to humiliate the blacks, Carlin (2013: 3) goes on to enumerate some of the ordeals black South Africans experienced during the close to 100 years of apartheid regime:

the chiefs of South Africa's dominant white rule, the Afrikaners, administered a system that denied 85 percent of the population – those people born with dark skin – any say in the affairs of their country: They could not vote; they were sent to inferior schools so they could not compete with whites in the workplace; they were told where they could and could not live and what hospitals, buses, trains, parks, beaches, public toilets, public telephones they could and could not use. (CARLIN 2013: 3)

A detailed history of the colonization of South Africa can better be appreciated from historical documentations by writers such as Meyer (2012), Giliomee & Mbenga (2007), Visagie (2012) and Adhikari (2010). The first two European countries to colonize the land were the Netherlands (1652-1795 and 1803-1806) and Great Britain (1795-1803 and 1806-1961). Although South Africa became a Union with its own white people

government in 1910, the country was still regarded as a colony of Britain until 1961. After the Second World War in 1948, the National Party won the elections in South Africa, marking the beginning of white Afrikaner rule in the country under the supervision of Britain. The year 1961, when South Africa became a republic, witnessed the introduction of more than three decades of white Afrikaner supremacy over the black people in the country, independent of Britain (HELDRING and ROBINSON 2012). "1880 saw four white polities in South Africa, namely the Cape Colony and Natal (under British reign), the Oranje-Vrijstaat (Orange Free State), and the ZuidAfrikaansche Republiek (South African Republic) - under Afrikaner reign" (CHANAIWA 2000: 194). "The black people groups living in all four of these areas were dominated by the white people, as a 'policy of severely unequal segregation' was imposed on them" (BETTS 2000: 314). The majority of the original (indigenous) people of the land - the Khoikhoi - was forced out of most of the country to the southern and south-western parts to make a living there. Some of them were incorporated by especially Xhosa Chiefdoms, and their children became Xhosa (GILIOMEE and MBENGA 2007: 74).

In the middle of the 17th century, the Dutch, with their home base in Amsterdam, had the 'largest trading enterprise' in the world (GI-LIOMEE and MBENGA 2007: 40), called the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC) established in 1602 (MITCHELL 2007: 49). Their most important trading partners were India, Malaysia, and Indonesia, and the best way to reach them was by sea.

3. Settlers at War

As is common knowledge, the Dutch arrived in South Africa in 1652, followed by the English. The Indians came in as indentured workers. The presence of France was minimal. The two contending forces were the Dutch (Boers) and the English. In 1795, VOC was on the brink of bankruptcy. Britain had founded the British East India Company and decided to take control of the Cape as a halfway station to the East. This resulted in the two superpowers engaging in protracted warfare to gain control of the Cape. The most disastrous of the wars was the Anglo-Boer war that lasted for three gruesome years (1899-1902). With the realization that war would not serve their colonial purpose in South Africa, the two forces decided to mend fences, which led to a peace treaty and formation of a union.

4. The Union Buildings as a Peace Symbol

Many tourists who visit Pretoria target the Union Buildings, a historical site, as well as a cultural space for the South African people. Conceived in 1910 to commemorate the 'Union' of the South African people during the colonial era, the iconic buildings do not only attract visitors because of their sprawling splendor but also because of the aesthetic view of the surroundings – the gardens, grounds, and art works. Some of the artefacts represent South African history and culture of the past, and they awaken a national consciousness of the present.

Historians have noted that even before the unification of the four South African colonies (Transvaal, Orange Free State, Natal, and Cape of Good Hope) on 31 May 1910, the growing administrative needs of the Transvaal required more government offices in Pretoria. One of the last measures adopted by the Transvaal colonial government approved the building of a very large office block. The surplus in the Transvaal treasury at the date of unification was to be devoted to this project. According to an article by Schutte entitled, "The Birth of the Union Buildings," the Anglo-Boer (1900-1902) Vereeniging Peace Agreement document, which signaled the end of the war between the Boers and the British, was signed in Melrose House, Pretoria on 31 May 1902, putting the whole country under the British rule, though the Transvaal and Orange River Colony were awarded independent governments after a negotiated process. General Louis Botha, at the 1907 Colonial Conference in London. said that the unification will "make those two great races of South Africa one solid, united and strong race." Between October 1908 and May 1909, the National Convention was charged with the unification of the four provinces. It must be noted that there was no Black, Colored, and Indian representation during the unification plans. Louis Botha later became South Africa's first Prime Minister, while Herbert Gladstone was appointed the Governor-General. On 31st May 1910 South Africa was united and the 'Union of South Africa' was born. The Union Buildings became an edifice in commemoration of the newfound unity amongst the settlers. Sir Herbert Baker, a British trained architect, was commissioned by the Transvaal Government under the leadership of General Louis Botha in 1909 to design the buildings that were to represent the union and peace treaty, and Meintjeskop was chosen as site for this project.



Fig. 1: Union Buildings with General J. B. M. Hertzog's image in the centre, 2012.

Hamilton road-bound visitors to Pretoria approach the Union Buildings at the Edmond Road intersection in the far Eastern side, while visitors from the northern side access the premises of the Buildings from Government Road right at the corner where the Embassy of Swaziland is presently situated (Blackwood Road). An excellent view of the sprawling and imposing monumental edifice can be gleaned from Church Street, where the Buildings tower directly opposite. Another landmark is Sheraton Hotel on Church Street, which lies directly opposite and offers a clear view of the Union Buildings to lodgers at the hotel. Though motorists can only get into the premises from either Edmond or Government Roads, we shall, for convenience, take a tour of the Buildings from Church Street, where it can be accessed using any of the five available metalfenced gates. Also, for the sake of convenience, we shall divide the space into lower and upper levels.

Lower Level

From Church Street, one approaches the lower level first, a huge field with pine trees where political rallies, sports, and certain entertainment events take place on important occasions. Beautiful landscapes, gardens with beautiful flowers and trees, shrubs, an arboretum, walkways, amphitheaters, monuments, and numerous artworks, all add up to make the space a place to be.

Upper Level

As viewers ascend the space through numerous stone steps, the main building lies with its imposing massive statues. Indeed, the main building forms the upper level of the Union Buildings precincts.

The design of the Union Buildings was guided by the nature of the site. About halfway up Meintjieskop and running parallel to Pretoria's main thoroughfare, Church Street, there was a fairly wide natural shelf, which eventually broadened in the east into the Bryntirion estate, where Baker had already built several stately homes for wealthy Pretorians, government ministers and judges, including Government House, later known as Goede Hoop and today the government guest house. Roughly in the middle, this shelf was breached by a narrow ravine, which, once through the edge of the shelf, widened into a shallow basin merging into the hillside. Although the hollow was traversed by a footpath and contained the remains of a shallow dam and a small quarry, Meintjieskop had escaped the attention of previous developers. On either side of the breach Baker envisaged identical wings of rectangular office blocks, each representing one of the two official languages at the time (English and Dutch). They were to be linked by a semicircular wing or rotunda, skirting the perimeter of the basin because of his insistence on the foundations for every structural wall and pillar being taken down to bedrock... towering chimneys and twin domed clock towers, placed at the spot where the rotunda joined the two rectangular wings on either side of the amphitheatre. Identical statues of Atlas holding up the world would crown each of the towers. In addition, lofty paired Ionian columns would front the entire length of the rotunda. (SCHUTTE 2016)

Roman, Greek, and Italian architectural designs informed the construction of the buildings. In fact, the description "Acropolis" is commonly associated with the buildings. The greatest worth of the Union Buildings lies in the stonework of the walls and in their ornamentation.

5. The Union Buildings as a Troubling Legacy

Though regarded highly as "a national heritage site, symbolizing the soul and essence of the state... a landmark in the Tshwane urban landscape," (NHRA) [Dept. of Public Works Website 2004], there is more to the building than meets the eye. A statement of Significance formulated in the Conservation Management Plan by UBAC regards the Union Buildings as "a place or site of significance that enriches people's lives, providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and city landscape, to the past (history) and memories. It is a tangible expression of a proudly South African identity and experience." Viewed differently, the buildings do not boast of any pride of place because they represent a decadent layer of South Africa's history. Its significance may range from history, culture, aesthetic, heritage, scientific, social, and political, to economics. The significance and symbolism of the buildings are as varied as they are problematic. The sight of the buildings signal entrenchment of the colonial legacy; they remind a critical observer of the divide-and-rule tactics of the colonizer against the colonized.

The idea of a massive new office building to house the government departments in Pretoria was conceived at a time when the unification of the four British colonies was drawing closer; hence, the name *Union Buildings* emerged as the name for this project. However, there is also a deeper symbolism. The east and west wings of the buildings with their respective towers are associated with the (white) Afrikaans – and English-speaking communities in South Africa, which had been alienated from each other because of the Anglo-Boer War but were now united in a new state, symbolized by the rotunda and by the amphitheater as a place to gather and exchange ideas.

During the first ten years of democracy in South Africa (1994-2004), the name remained since it had acquired new meaning, symbolizing reconciliation and union between the white community that had ruled the country during the years of apartheid and the oppressed African, Indian, and Colored communities. It is of symbolic significance that the amphitheater was featured as the venue for the inauguration of the first State President of the South African democracy in May 1994 and at subsequent inauguration ceremonies. This is a continuation of Baker's original concept of the amphitheater representing a place of gathering. A number of guns of British and German origin, positioned at various locations on the site, reflect on South Africa's military history, in particular the Anglo-Boer War and World War I. There are several monuments and memorials in the grounds of the Union Buildings, reflecting different stages in South Africa's political history. Schutte stated that the Delville Wood Memorial is the oldest and most visible amongst these. The Battle of Delville Wood was a fierce action fought by the First South African Infantry Brigade at d'Elville, a forest area north-east of the village of Longueval, France, as part of the Battle of the Somme during World War I. On 15 July 1916, the Brigade under Major-General H. T. Lukin was ordered to clear the flank of the British brigade. The South Africans were made to understand that they had to do so at all costs and accepted the orders as such. They stormed the forest before dawn on 15 July 1916 but had no time to dig in properly before the Germans set up an artillery barrage and counter-attacked in force. Yet the brigade held its ground. On the night of 17 and 18 July, the forest was subjected

to a bombardment that devastated it. This was followed by continuous counterattacks, the sheer weight of which threw the brigade back. On the evening of 20 July, the survivors were relieved. Of the 3,153 men, all but 755 were killed, wounded, went missing, or were taken prisoners-of-war (SCHUTTE 2016).

Schuttte went on to say that a memorial designed by Herbert Baker was inaugurated at Delville Wood on 10 October 1926. Two smaller replicas were erected in South Africa, one in Cape Town, and one at the Union Buildings. This memorial was inaugurated on 21 July 1929 by the well-known author and politician, Sir Percy Fitzpatrick. Also positioned on each side of the Delville Wood Memorial is a 5-inch, British breech-loading gun on a carriage, dating back to the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) that was fought between the British Empire and the Transvaal and Orange Free State Boer republics. At the intersection of Ziervogel and Edmond Streets, southwest of the Union Buildings, is a large cannon mounted on steel wheels. This piece of artillery is a survivor of the World War I epic of the German cruiser Köniasbera. Below the Delville Wood Memorial used to stand a life-size bronze statue of South Africa's third Prime Minister, General J. B. M. Hertzog (1866-1942). This statue was removed immediately after Nelson Mandela's funeral; Mandela's statue currently occupies the space.



Fig. 2: General J. B. M. Hertzog in its present location.

On top of one of the war domes, stands a bronze image of two men representing the Afrikaans – and English-speaking South Africans leading a warhorse into battle. This image is known to have been inspired by the Greek sculpture of the twin gods, Castor and Pollux, and their horses guarding the headquarters of the Roman Empire.



Fig. 3: Two men leading a war horse to battle.

On the opposite side of the Union Buildings, in the far north-eastern corner of the gardens, lies the Police Memorial. This monument was officially unveiled in May 1983 by the last Prime Minister, P. W. Botha, to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the South African Police. Names of fallen police heroes that are inscribed on the bronze metal write the history of employment discrimination against non-whites during the apartheid era as only very few black names are displayed. On the lawns opposite Church Street is a bronze equestrian statue of South Africa's first Prime Minister, General Louis Botha (1862-1919). The monument was unveiled on 15 November 1946 by Botha's eldest daughter, Helena de Waal. There are panels on the sides of the pedestal, depicting the National Convention of 1909-1910, which led to the establishment of the Union of South Africa, the Treaty of Versailles, Botha as Prime Minister of the Transvaal Colony, Botha as Commander-in-Chief of the Transvaal Republican forces during the Anglo-Boer War, and Botha as a young farmer.



Fig. 4: General Louis Botha on a horse back. Side panels (bronze) below.



Fig. 5: A panel depicting Botha as an Army Commander.

The Dark Side of Creativity

Differences of opinion have haunted the Union Buildings from the colonial era, and these are continuing today. At the time of the design and construction, there was criticism regarding what was considered the extravagance of the project and the fact that Herbert Baker had been chosen to design the buildings without regard to tender process and competitive bidding among leading local architects. The construction methods and use of sandstone also did not escape criticism. Even the formal declaration of the Buildings as a national monument in 1994 was controversial at the time.

The Union Buildings are arguably the most recognizable building of South Africa's building heritage. From a tourism and marketing perspective, it is still a leading icon of South Africa. It is internationally recognized as the seat of power, and it enjoys a similar status to that of the White House in Washington DC or the House of Commons in London. The Union Buildings were designed to celebrate the achievement of the Union of South Africa in 1910 after years of strife, civil war, and division amongst the settler population. However, the reconciliation that took place in order to achieve this union excluded the majority of the population of South Africa – the blacks, Indians, and colored. The vision of the new state of that time was therefore narrow, racist, and elitist.

As already discussed, the site is littered with items that remind us of war rather than peace. The monuments seem to brag about the past without regard for the feelings of the black population. Statues of the colonial masters that are found all over the Union Buildings seem to indicate the might of the oppressors, and deep thought might reveal that this action is synonymous with rubbing salt into a wound. The Battle of Blood River displayed openly in the precinct of the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria, as is the case in The Blood River Heritage Site near Dundee in KwaZulu Natal, commemorates the defeat of the Zulu people during the reign of Dingane by the Boers. Some people may view this as an impressive site, but he/she who wears the shoes knows from where the discomfort comes. Why should apartheid, which enslaved the indigenous people of South Africa, be glorified in art works and monuments? It must be emphasized that some of these items bring back macabre and ghastly memories. Even after the end of apartheid, P. W. Botha blatantly refused to appear before the Truth and Reconciliation Committee to atone for the misconduct of the past, yet his statues are found in Pretoria and other cities of South Africa. On the amphitheater dome perches the

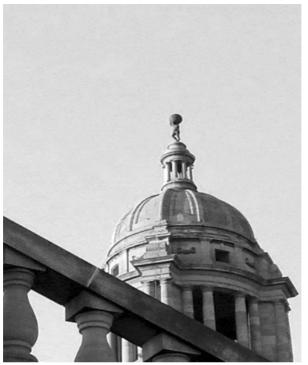


Fig. 6: Image of Atlas on the Clock Tower.

figure of Hermes, the Greek god of travel, whose duty was to serve as the messenger of other Gods. In this context, the symbolism of Hermes is better imagined than described. Also, the association of the Union Buildings with the Acropolis brings to mind the Greek high city, which contained ruins of the Parthenon or the massive granite-built ruins of Great Zimbabwe (Webster's New Encyclopedia 1992: 7). Within the Buildings are two identical figures of Atlas on the Clock Tower carrying a globe. Greek mythology holds that Atlas was a great Titan who revolted against the gods and, as punishment, was condemned to carry the world on his shoulder and head. Atlas pleaded with Perseus to turn him into stone, but he was transformed into Mount Atlas (Webster's New Encyclopedia 1992: 81). The identical Atlas on the Tower Clock represents the Dutch and the English people who occupied prominent places during the colonial times. The union between the two groups also seems to symbolize the scramble for Africa during colonialism. Presently, these images seem not to suit the transformation and decolonization agenda of post-apartheid South Africa.

6. The Creative City of Xenophobic Attacks

Besides the art works which represent vermin legacy, Pretoria, like some other South African cities, has become notorious for crimes against women and children, as well as xenophobic attacks of foreign nationals who dwell in the city. The most absurd of these attacks is that the black South Africans concentrate their anger on foreign nationals from other African countries, claiming that they rob them of their jobs, peddle drugs, and commit adultery with their women. These attacks are numerous and have resulted in the killing of many foreign nationals, looting and burning of their shops, and inflicting of wounds on members of their families. This phenomenon has come to be described by some critics as "Afrophobia" rather than xenophobia. The glamor of the creative works in the city seems to fade as soon as one remembers that many women get raped and killed every minute in South Africa and children are sodomized.

7. Conclusion and Recommendation

For those who feel that the visual art tropes and monuments in the Union Buildings should not cause any uproar, it might be necessary to revisit why certain colonial monuments and sculptors were destroyed by South African mobs and students in higher institutions of learning in 2015 and 2016; notably, Cecil Rhodes monument at University of Cape Town Campus. Prime Minister Hertzog's monument, which occupied a central place in the precinct, was, with the agreement of his family members, removed in 2013 to an obscure corner in the eastern part of the Buildings while the towering image of Mandela stands in its former place. Where Herzog's monument presently stands on a rough stone base, there are no inscriptions to indicate to people who it represents. These two cases speak a mouthful on why deep thought should be given to renaming Union Buildings and why certain images should be off-staged.

This paper is not in any way calling for the destruction of the Buildings or the artworks within the site, as this will amount to a waste of scarce resources as well as destruction of the historical evolution of a democratic country. I nevertheless argue that the name of the premises and contents therein should be revisited and repositioned. With adequate political will, this is achievable. After all, the Roman Catholic Church, with its dogmatic stand on religious matters, shifted its mode of operation when it allowed its churches in other parts of the world to incorporate their distinctive cultures in their worship centers (Vatican II).

When Union Buildings was named in 1910, the name was not allinclusive, as it only catered for the concerns of the, then, colonial hegemony. Now that the country is fully independent with everybody sharing a level ground, the name should be revisited. It is not enough to say that the amphitheater has been renamed after Mandela and that the colonial flag that used to adorn the buildings has now given way to post-apartheid flag. "Statues Must Fall: A Preliminary Report by the Department of Arts and Culture Task Team" has recommended that statues of colonial figures should be removed from prominent public locations. The Task Team on Transformation of South Africa's Heritage Landscape was established following the 'Rhodes Must Fall' protests that started at the University of Cape Town in 2015. From research carried out by the task team, public opinion does not favor statues that do not represent "national constitutional values such as freedom and equality."

"It would ask too much for Germans to have Hitler all over their public space. It would be asking too much for South Africa to have Verwoerd occupy public spaces," said the former Arts and Culture Minister, Nathi Mthethwa. The report, however, added that removed statues would not be thrown away or destroyed; rather, they will be on display at designated theme parks. "You have these monuments that represent a very ugly past values that are contrary to the values we have now and what we seek to become. So, there is tension... that is why you had an implosion of protests a couple of years ago, some of these statues attacked. So, a popular feeling was that they must be removed," said task team chairperson, Prof. Mcebisi Ndletyana. AfriForum, a Civil Rights Group composed of white Afrikaners, on the contrary, feels that removing past statues will amount to erasing of minority groups' histories.

It is also sad to notice the nonrepresentation of women in the Union Buildings, despite the fact that women have contributed immensely to the development of South Africa from the colonial times to the present. In 1956, about 20,000 women from all over the country marched to the Union Buildings to protest against the carrying of Pass Books by black people in terms of apartheid legislation. This event, that is currently commemorated annually as National Women's Day, was poignantly captured "in the columned portal in the center of the rotunda behind the amphitheater as the National Women's Memorial." This event site is no longer visible in the Union Buildings. Images of women such as Lilian Ngoyi of the African National Congress, Helen Joseph of the Con-

140 PATRICK EBEWO

gress of the Democrats, Sophie Williams of, then, African People's Party, and Rahima Moosa of, then, South African Indian Congress should be conspicuously displayed in the Union Buildings. Lastly, images in the Union Buildings should include those of the distinctive colonial masters who contributed positively to the liberation of the country, black African freedom fighters, civil rights groups, Indians, Coloreds, and women. Festival, the lifeblood of the African people, should become the rallying point of unification, reconciliation, and social cohesion amongst the different races in South Africa including immigrants, especially those from the continent of Africa. The best place for a festival of this nature to be organized is either Sunnyside in Pretoria or Marabastad, both locations where foreign nationals from several countries conglomerate. It is hoped that a gathering of this nature will help soothe the pains of xenophobia. If Pretoria plans to apply formally to become one of the creative cities of the world, it must be prepared to put its house in order through equitable distribution of resources, adequate representation of races and gender, and it must positively avoid pursuing the dark side of creativity, which in my opinion, poses a challenge to positive growth and development.

References

- ADHIKARI, Mohamed (2010): A Total Extinction Confidently hoped for: The Destruction of Cape San Society under Dutch Colonial Rule, 1700–1795. In: *Journal of Genocide Research*, 12/1-2), 1944, <doi.org/10.1080/14623528.2010.508274 [11.05.2020].
- BETTS, Raymond F. (2000): Methods and Institutions of European Domination. In: BOAHEN, Albert A. (Ed.), General History of Africa, Vol. 8: Africa under Colonial Domination 1880–1935, Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 312-331.
- CARLIN, John (2013): Knowing Mandela. London: Atlantic Books.
- CHANAIWA, David (2000): African Initiatives and Resistance in Southern Africa, in Albert A. Boahen (Ed.), *General History of Africa, vol. 8: Africa under Colonial Domination 1880-1935.* Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 194-220.
- DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS. Towards a Conservation Management Plan: Union Buildings. Pretoria: Architectural Consortium (UBAC).
- GILIOMEE, Hermann/MBENGA, Bernard (2007): New History of South Africa. Cape Town: Tafelberg.
- GUELKE, Adrian (1999): South Africa in Transition The Misunderstood Miracle. London: IB Tauris.
- GUILFORD, Joy P. (1950) Creativity. American Psychologist. 5: 444-454.
- HELDRING, Leander/ROBINSON, James A. (2012): Colonialism and Development in Africa. – In: National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper, 18566 <www.nber. org/papers/w18566.pdf> [27.4.2020].
- HULSE, Joseph (2007): Sustainable Development at Risk: Ignoring the Past. New Delhi, India: Cambridge University Press.

- JENKINS, Orville B. (1996): *The Coloureds of South Africa* <http://www.grmi.org/~jhanna/obj08.htm> [27.4.2020].
- KAUFMAN, James C./BEGHETTO, Ronald A. (2009): Beyond big and little: The four C model of creativity. In: *Review of General Psychology*, 13/1, 1.
- MEIRING, Barbara (2009): Proudly South African: A Toponymical Excursion. In: Language Matters: Studies in the Language of Africa, 39/2, 280-299, <doi. org/10.1080/10228190802579676> [11.05.2020].
- MITCHELL, Laura J. (2007): This is the mark of the widow: Domesticity and frontier conquest in colonial South Africa. – In: Frontiers 28/1-2, 47-76, <doi.org/10.1353/ fro.2007.0034> [11.05.2020].
- NWANKWO, Izuu (2000): Dramatising Development, not Post-Colonialism. In: African Performance Review 3/2-3, 27-44.
- OLIVER, Erna/OLIVER, Willem H. (2017): The Colonisation of South Africa: A Unique Case. – In: HTS Theological Studies, 73/3, <dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v73i3.4498> [11.05.2020].
- PERRY, Alex (2013): The Prisoner. *Time Magazine*, 1926-37, http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2159678,00.html> [27.4.2020].
- PLUCKER, Jonathan A./BEGHETTO, Ronald A./DOW, Gayle T. (2004): Why isn't creativity more important to educational psychologists? Potentials, pitfalls, and future directions in creativity research. In: *Educational Psychologist*, 39/2, 83-96.
- SOUTH AFRICA (2015): Ancient People of the land: The Khoisan people of the Northern Cape, <www.southafrica.net/za/en/articles/entry/articlesouthafrica.net-the-khoisan-people> [27.4.2020].
- VILJOEN, Russel (2001): Aboriginal Khoikhoi Servants and their Masters in Colonial Swellendam, South Africa, 1745-1795. – In: Agricultural History 75/1, 28-51, <doi. org/10.1525/ah.2001.75.1.28> [11.05.2020].
- VISAGIE, Jan (2012): Migrasie en die gemeenskappe noord van die Oranjerivier. In: PRETORIUS, Fransjohan (Ed.), Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika: Van voortye tot vandag. Cape Town: Tafelberg, 97-116.
- VORSTER, Jacobus M. (2005): Nation-building in South Africa: Has progress been made?
 In: *The Ecumenical Review* 574, 473-491. <doi.org/10.1111/j.1758-6623.2005. tb00568.x>[11.05.2020].
- SCHUTTE, Claus (2016): The Birth of the Union Buildings, <www/theheritageportal.co.za/ the-birth-of-the-union-buildings/claus-schutte>[27.4.2020].
- Webster's New World Encyclopedia (1992). New York: Prentice Hall.