

Curating empire

MUSEUMS AND THE BRITISH IMPERIAL
EXPERIENCE

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CHAPTER 7

A museum for Sierra Leone? Amateur enthusiasms and colonial museum policy in British West Africa

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As one gazes up at the monumental cotton tree that stands at the symbolic centre of Freetown it is easy to miss the unprepossessing little bungalow that it both literally and metaphorically overshadows. Once a telephone exchange, and before that a railway station, since 1957 this inconspicuous building has housed Sierra Leone's National Museum. With its antiquated displays and chaotic storerooms, the museum is little visited today and barely has resources to pay the meagre salaries of its few staff members, let alone refurbish its galleries or modernise its facilities. For a country emerging from civil conflict and beset with many more pressing problems, the museum seems something of an irrelevance. And yet such a place raises questions. How did this institution come into being in the first place? What functions has it performed in the past? What legacies or burdens does it carry into the present? What, in particular, accounts for its current state of neglect?

Bernard Cohn's collection of essays, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge*, remains influential in our understanding of the colonial museum. As Nicholas Dirks writes in the foreword to the collection, 'Colonial conquest was not just the result of the power of superior arms, military organisation, political power, or economic wealth ... Colonialism was made possible, and then sustained and strengthened, as much by cultural technologies of rule.'¹ The museum was one such technology through which the British, on a continental scale, were able to transform the unknown into the known: that which could be collected, classified, categorised, and thereby commandeered and controlled. In the context of mid-nineteenth-century India, the establishment of the Archaeological Survey of India, and the building of a



7.1 Freetown's Cotton Tree c. 1958, pictured soon after the establishment of the Sierra Leone Museum (later Sierra Leone National Museum) in the bungalow in the right foreground.

vast national collection of archaeological specimens, Cohn argues that 'the power to define the nature of the past and establish priorities in the creation of a monumental record of a civilization ... are among the most significant instrumentalities of rulership'.²

In light of such arguments, the neglect of Sierra Leone's National Museum in the post-colonial era might be regarded as purposeful in intent: a tacit act of resistance against the hegemonic forces of colonialism, against even the memory of colonialism. There is, no doubt, some truth in this. And yet this interpretation relies on a number of assumptions: an assumption, for example, that these cultural technologies of rule were applied evenly across different territories in the British Empire and at different periods, or that the establishment of museums in colonial contexts necessarily served colonial agendas. By examining the institutional histories of colonial-era museums in British West Africa, and of Sierra Leone's National Museum in particular, it is possible to interrogate some of these received wisdoms and refine our understanding of the relationship between museums

and colonial rule in the region. In place of grand narratives of colonial subjugation and cultural imperialism, a closer reading of the colonial archive reveals a different story in which the significance of the agency of a small number of individuals, whose personal enthusiasms and activities had a more ambiguous relationship to the colonial project, becomes apparent.

Activating the authorities

The introduction of museums and legislation to protect monuments, antiquities and artworks came late to British West Africa in relation to many other territories of the British Empire. Although small museums had been established earlier at elite educational institutions such as Achimota College in the Gold Coast and the Bo School in Sierra Leone, it was not until the eve of decolonisation that national (or proto-national) museums were established in the region. The high-water mark of this movement was undoubtedly 1957, the year of the Gold Coast/Ghana's independence, when national museums were opened in Accra, Freetown and Lagos. This period of museum-building followed on from a period, between 1938 and 1948, during which the Colonial Office sporadically considered adopting a more formal policy of museum development in West Africa. In the event, however, the implementation of such schemes was regarded as too low a priority for the cost to be justified, and the development of these museums was not ultimately a consequence of any coherent colonial policy.

While this chapter is primarily concerned with the Sierra Leonean context, it should be noted that by the late 1930s the Colonial Office often sought to develop common policies across Britain's West African territories. It is therefore necessary to consider the history of Sierra Leone's national museum in the context of policy debates relating to the region more widely. Although Sierra Leone was Britain's oldest and once most prestigious West African territory, by the mid-twentieth century its importance had long been eclipsed by the larger and more economically significant territories of Nigeria and the Gold Coast. Interestingly, a corresponding hierarchy of values was also apparent with regard to perceptions of each territory's archaeological and artistic heritage. Thus, the focus of museological attention in the region was directed primarily to Nigeria, then the Gold Coast, with Sierra Leone included, one suspects, as a matter of courtesy. Britain's smallest West African colony, the Gambia, was often excluded from these considerations altogether.³

Insofar as British West Africa lacked a European settler population or the monumental traces of past civilisations that precipitated

museological advances elsewhere in the British Empire, the fact that a policy of museum development was considered at all in the region resulted from the convergence of a number of significant factors in the late 1930s. These included a significant reform of Britain's overarching colonial policies;⁴ changes in European appreciation of African art;⁵ chance archaeological discoveries that challenged prejudices concerning West African civilisation;⁶ and, not least, the presence in the colonies of a number of middle-ranking colonial officers, mostly in the education service, who had personal, amateur interests in indigenous West African art, antiquities and ethnology. Among these figures was E. H. Duckworth, Inspector of Education in Nigeria and editor of *Nigeria*, Kenneth Murray, an art teacher in Nigeria who would go on to become Nigeria's first Surveyor of Antiquities, and H. V. Meyerowitz, Supervisor of Arts and Crafts at Achimota College in the Gold Coast.

Although Duckworth and Murray had long been advocates of traditional Nigerian art and had already begun lobbying for a museum, it was the discovery in 1938–39 of seventeen remarkable cast-bronze heads at Ife in southwestern Nigeria that forced the issue. The bronzes, reckoned to date to the mid-fifteenth century, caused a sensation in the international art and museum world and, in the absence of any effective legislation to prohibit the exportation of antiquities from Nigeria, Duckworth and Murray became increasingly concerned that they would be smuggled out of the country. Frustrated at the seeming indifference of the colonial authorities in Nigeria, they appealed, through various interlocutors in the British intelligentsia, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Malcolm MacDonald, to intervene.⁷

MacDonald duly sent a despatch to the Governor of Nigeria.⁸ But, despite the consequent passing of a customs order prohibiting the export of 'antique African sculptural works of art' and the Governor's assurances that provisions for a museum were under consideration, at least three of the Ife heads were indeed smuggled out of the country.⁹ In April 1939, after further lobbying from Duckworth and Murray, a deputation including John Rothenstein, Director of the Tate Gallery, Kenneth Clark, Director of the National Gallery, Julian Huxley, and H. V. Meyerowitz (on leave from the Gold Coast) visited the Colonial Office to press the case for further action. This resulted in a more decisive despatch from MacDonald, this time addressed to each of the governors of Nigeria, the Gold Coast and Sierra Leone, requesting that urgent action be taken 'to exercise government control over the exportation of objects of historical or cultural interest' and to 'secure for the Government itself the means of acquiring, under appropriate conditions, such objects as may be thought desirable to prevent the wilful injury to such objects'.¹⁰

The significance of MacDonald's interventions is evident from a letter from Duckworth. 'It is amazing how dead the Nigerian Government are about the constant loss of antiquities', he wrote. 'These communications from London are of the greatest value in activating the authorities here. The Governor was doing nothing.'¹¹ While stopping short of insisting on the establishment of museums, MacDonald's despatch did indeed 'activate' the colonial authorities, prompting the Governor of Nigeria to support an application to the Carnegie Corporation for a grant to construct a modest museum at Ife, and eventually leading to the passing of ordinances providing 'for the preservation of monuments, relics and objects of archaeological, ethnographical or historical interest' in the Gold Coast (1945), Sierra Leone (1946) and Nigeria (1953).¹² Without Colonial Office intervention at this time it is doubtful whether an Antiquities Service would have been established in Nigeria in 1943, with Murray appointed as Nigeria's first Surveyor of Antiquities. This remained a unique position within British West Africa and was fundamental in determining the direction of museum development in Nigeria.

West African museum palaver

In the early years of the Second World War, under the influence of figures such as Arthur Creech Jones, a founding member of the Fabian Society Colonial Bureau, a new 'developmental' paradigm in British colonial policy began to be implemented. This sought to reconfigure the relationship between metropole and colony as one of 'partnership', and envisaged Britain's role as a paternalistic one of guiding colonial peoples along the road to self-government through social and economic development. As the historian John Hargreaves notes, the planners of decolonisation in West Africa 'hoped to synchronize a gradual devolution of political authority with progress in building more modern forms of civil society ... above all through progress in education'.¹³ Thus, as well as the passing of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act in 1940 – which created the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund and the Colonial Research Fund – and the appointment, in 1943, of the Asquith and Elliot Commissions to guide colonial policy with regard to the development of higher education, there was a renewed interest in the role of regional research institutes such as the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute in British Central Africa (RLI, established 1938), and the Institut Français d'Afrique Noire (IFAN, established 1936) with its network of regional museums and headquarters in Dakar, Senegal.¹⁴

In British West Africa there was an attempt to create a similar research institute, based at Achimota College near Accra in the Gold

Coast. The Institute of West African Arts, Industries and Social Science (IWAAISS) was first proposed in 1937 by the artist-educator H. V. Meyerowitz and the anthropologist Meyer Fortes, and was eventually established in 1943 with a grant from the Colonial Welfare and Development Fund.¹⁵ Meyerowitz's vision for the Institute was that it should contribute to the development of a new post-colonial West African society that was less dependent on European capital through fostering indigenous crafts and industries in a process of 'humane industrialisation'.¹⁶ In contrast to the strong sociological turn of the RLI under the directorship of Max Gluckman, which led to the separation of the research institute from its museum, the work of IWAAISS was envisaged to embrace economic, sociological and cultural aspects of society more holistically. Recognising the significance of 'social happiness and stability, as well as material wealth' in the improvement of the standard of living in West Africa, emphasis was to be placed equally on the arts and industries in the development of a 'diversified' economy.¹⁷ A museum, it was argued, was 'as important as a record office is in administration', and it was anticipated that the Institute would house 'a permanent and efficient exhibit and reference-collection of the material arts' of the region.¹⁸ The collection and display of 'surviving masterpieces of metal-work, wood carving, ceramic, and textiles' was thus envisaged as a core activity of the Institute, providing 'tangible proof of past proficiency, local initiative, and continuous [artistic and technological] development'.¹⁹

In 1944 two proposals – both linked with IWAAISS – were received by the Colonial Research Committee, which administered the Colonial Research Fund, concerning the development of museums in British West Africa. The first was written by the biologist and public intellectual Julian Huxley, and was evidently submitted to the Committee on the advice of its chairman, Lord Hailey.²⁰ Huxley was a founder of the influential policy think tank, Political and Economic Planning, and, with Arthur Creech Jones, was also a member of the Fabian Colonial Bureau. With Creech Jones as vice-chairman, Huxley served on the Elliot Commission on Higher Education in West Africa and spent ten weeks touring West Africa with the Commission in early 1944. During this tour, Huxley met Murray and Duckworth in Nigeria, and H. V. Meyerowitz and his wife, Eva, in the Gold Coast. Having formed part of the delegation that appealed for intervention over the Ife bronzes in 1939, he remained convinced of the need to establish a network of museums in the region.

In his memorandum, Huxley remarked on the great wealth of West Africa's archaeological, ethnological and artistic heritage, but argued that it has been 'shockingly neglected' by the British administration.²¹

As well as stressing the need for research, collection and conservation, it is clear that Huxley saw the development of museums in West Africa as an integral part of Britain's long-term decolonisation process, in which first a sense of national identity needed to be inculcated in each territory and a new ruling class formed that would share European sensibilities and values: 'Knowledge of and interest in the history and cultural achievements of the region will be of great importance in fostering national and regional pride and self-respect, and in providing a common ground on which educated Africans and Europeans can meet and cooperate.'²²

Huxley's proposals were evidently modelled on IFAN and, indeed, his papers contain detailed notes on the French institution taken from an article written by its director, Théodore Monod, published in 1942.²³ Huxley thus advocates a federated institutional structure with its headquarters at IWAAISS, national museums in the capital cities of each of Britain's West African territories, and a further ten to twelve local museums in significant provincial locations. IWAAISS would take the lead in developing the 'general direction of policy', providing expertise and training, and publishing research findings, while the governments of the individual territories would take over the maintenance of the national and local museums, and employ additional researchers and curators if desired.²⁴ Huxley estimated that the likely cost for the scheme over ten years would be in the region of £250,000 to £400,000, which would be found through a combination of grants from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund, the Colonial Research Fund, and the respective colonial governments.²⁵ Huxley had similar ideas for the development of higher education in the region and he seems to have envisaged an increasingly federalised British West Africa, perhaps more akin to the federal structure of French West Africa. That such grandiose schemes were still thinkable in 1944 demonstrates how little anticipated it was that the actual process of decolonisation would be so swift, and that, within a mere twenty years, Britain would no longer have any West African colonies.

The second proposal received by the Colonial Office in 1944 relating to museums in West Africa was drafted by Heiner Meinhard, a German anthropologist who had worked at the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin prior to fleeing to Britain in the lead up to the Second World War, and who was temporarily working as an assistant curator at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford.²⁶ Meinhard was a friend of Meyer Fortes, and one wonders whether Fortes – who was then Head of Sociology at IWAAISS – had encouraged him to draft the proposal. In contrast to Huxley's multisited network of national and local museums, Meinhard's recommendation was for the creation of a single 'Central Museum of

West African Ethnology and Archaeology'. Although IWAAISS is not explicitly mentioned in Meinhard's memorandum, it is likely that this was the intended location of the central museum (reference is made, for example, to collaboration with 'sister institutes' such as IFAN and RLI).²⁷ As might be expected of someone with his professional background, Meinhard's proposal was better informed on matters of anthropological and museological practice than Huxley's. He went into some detail about the technical requirements of the building, providing a sketch plan of its proposed layout, and citing recent innovations in museum planning at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris and in museums in Leipzig, Hamburg, and the USA.²⁸ Significantly, Meinhard argued that, since 'modern political boundaries are artificial from an ethnological point of view', the museum's research and collecting activities should not be geographically restricted to British dependencies in West Africa but should encompass the wider 'West African cultural area' as far south as Angola, regardless of sovereign power.²⁹ While presenting a more academically robust proposal (though, of course, still mired in the 'tribal paradigm' typical of the period), Meinhard lacked Huxley's political acumen.³⁰ The proposal failed to link the museum's 'three-fold task of preservation, research, and teaching' with the objectives of Britain's colonial policy, which would surely have been necessary to attract support under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act.³¹

Given the straitened economic context of the Second World War and the ambitious scale of Huxley's and Meinhard's proposals, it is perhaps not surprising that they received a cool reception at the Colonial Office. Criticisms were not, however, limited to matters of cost. As well as feeling that a large programme of museum building would be 'out of proportion' given more pressing claims for funds, Lord Hailey cast doubt on the value of museums and archaeological research to local populations. 'A sense of history, guided by scientific method', was, he reasoned, 'a very late development even in western civilization', and he believed that there was 'little or nothing in local sentiment about these matters which might make it politically desirable to follow such a course' of museum development.³² Hailey did, however, express concern that critics might have grounds for claiming that other nations, such as the USA and Germany, were being allowed to take a lead in archaeological and ethnological research in British territories in West Africa, and that Britain was lagging behind in these matters – a charge that had been made by Northcote Thomas as early as 1906 and reiterated in Huxley's proposal.³³ Despite his reservations, Hailey therefore recommended that the issue be further explored when resources permitted.

In March 1945 the Colonial Office forwarded copies of Huxley's

and Meinhard's proposals to the respective governors of Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and the Gambia, together with a letter outlining Hailey's views, inviting their responses, and proposing that the Colonial Office commission a further study into the situation after the war.³⁴ The proposals received a mixed response from the governors. Generally, they supported the idea that museums should be established in their respective territories, but they also agreed with Hailey that such an expensive programme could not be justified at the time. Gerald Whiteley, writing on behalf of the Governor of Nigeria, suggested that 'Huxley's scheme ... [wa]s more of an ideal to be aimed at than a practicable proposition which [they had] any hope of carrying out'.³⁵ Both he and Sir Hubert Stevenson, Governor of Sierra Leone, took exception to the proposal that such initiatives should fall under the control of IWAAISS in the Gold Coast. Whiteley put this most forcefully: 'I consider Nigeria large enough to formulate its own museum policy and I consider it necessary that we should be left unfettered to direct our research to our own needs.'³⁶ Indeed, by the time Whiteley's letter was sent in September 1945, Meyerowitz had committed suicide and the future of IWAAISS, which had been faltering anyway, was thrown into doubt.³⁷

It was the anthropologist Raymond Firth, in his capacity as secretary of the Colonial Social Science Research Council, who recommended that Hermann Braunholtz be approached to undertake a further study 'on the preservation of antiquities and establishment of museums in British West Africa' on behalf of the Colonial Office. Braunholtz was Keeper of Ethnography at the British Museum and had twice served as President of the Royal Anthropological Institute. Firth reasoned that he was 'well fitted, by his knowledge and his judicial temperament, to give valuable advice'.³⁸ Due to war-time staff shortages at the British Museum, it was not until February 1946 that Braunholtz was able to undertake the mission. The amount of attention Braunholtz paid to each territory during his survey reflects the size of the territories, of course, but is also another indicator of their perceived archaeological and ethnological value. Thus, during the eleven weeks of his tour, Braunholtz spent six weeks in Nigeria, twelve days in the Gold Coast, five days in the Gambia, and just four days in Sierra Leone. In the last two territories, he did not venture beyond the capital cities of Bathurst and Freetown.³⁹

In Nigeria, Murray was responsible for co-ordinating Braunholtz's more extensive itinerary, and the two travelled together for most of the time, visiting archaeological sites, attending cultural performances, meeting artists, and reconnoitring the locations of proposed museum developments. Murray had by this time been in post as Surveyor of

Antiquities for three years, and it is fair to surmise that he had a strong influence on the recommendations that Brauhnoltz eventually put forward in his report. In addition to Murray, Brauhnoltz spent six days with Bernard Fagg in northern Nigeria. Fagg was a trained archaeologist who had been working in the colonial administration at Jos in Plateau Province since 1943. Fagg devoted much of his spare time to archaeological research in the region and would become Assistant Surveyor of Antiquities in Nigeria in 1947.⁴⁰ He was also the brother of William Fagg, who, as Assistant Keeper of Ethnography at the British Museum and Secretary of the Royal Anthropological Institute, was a close colleague of Brauhnoltz.

After the tour, Brauhnoltz was slow to complete his report, sending it in sections to the Research Department at the Colonial Office between March and December 1948.⁴¹ The report includes a general section that was intended to be sent to all territories in British West Africa (nine pages), and three further sections with specific recommendations for Nigeria (fifteen pages), the Gold Coast (eleven pages), and Sierra Leone and the Gambia (six pages covering both). In his report, Brauhnoltz drew on Huxley's 1944 proposal as well as scholarly publications by Murray, Fagg and A. J. Arkell to reiterate the significance of West Africa's 'antiquities and arts' and to argue for their 'scientific, historic, aesthetic and ... educational value' from general, local and national perspectives. 'In its totality', he argued, 'it constitutes a cultural heritage, the destruction or disappearance of which would be a grievous loss to the world as well as to West Africa in particular'.⁴²

Brauhnoltz went on to argue for the significance of material culture in the West African context where there are few written records of pre-colonial life: these material traces were to be regarded as 'historical and cultural documents of the first importance', 'the only tangible evidence of the past that remains'.⁴³ It is worth quoting from Brauhnoltz's report at greater length, since this provides perhaps the fullest expression of colonial museology on the eve of decolonisation:

In the political and educational spheres [artefacts or antiquities] are the indispensable means of creating in the African a balanced perspective of his own place in history. Properly interpreted they should be the means to give him a sense of pride in and continuity with his own past, from which will spring confidence in his future progress. The realisation that he has a solid background of indigenous culture should help to counteract the bewilderment and instability engendered by the sudden impact of alien values and ideals.⁴⁴

Under this rationale, Brauhnoltz argued that 'a long term policy should be prepared without delay to provide the framework for the eventual development of archaeological services and museums on a

scale commensurate with the importance of the Colonies and the value of their cultural possessions'.⁴⁵ He then went on to debate whether these plans should be 'co-ordinated under a central direction' for all four West African colonies:

If federation and centralisation become keynotes of Colonial policy, the unified direction of the educational and scientific services provided by museums may eventually be desirable for the whole of West Africa. But for the present there is a very strong case on several grounds, such as local sentiment and special knowledge of local conditions, for independently planned archaeological and Museum services for each of the Colonies, or at any rate for the Gold Coast and Nigeria.⁴⁶

To these ends, Brauholtz expressed his 'substantial agreement' with the recommendations of Huxley's 1944 memorandum, excepting those sections addressing the role of IWAAISS, the activities of which were suspended by then anyway. Thus, Brauholtz concluded:

For the present it would seem best for each Government to frame its own programme, and to make its own application for grants from the [Colonial Development and Welfare Fund] towards the capital cost of museums and other buildings, and from the [Colonial Research Fund] for specific research projects.⁴⁷

Finally, Brauholtz made it clear that Nigeria, 'being by far the largest of the West African colonies', containing 'more numerous antiquities and works of art of importance', and having best preserved 'its traditional culture and craftwork', should be prioritised when it [came] to implementation of such proposals.⁴⁸

Indeed, this was the topic of the very first letter that Creech Jones, who had become Colonial Secretary in 1946, sent to Sir John Macpherson when he assumed the governorship of Nigeria – a matter that he admitted was 'rather outside the range of ordinary administration'.⁴⁹ Aware of the resource implications of implementing a museum development programme, Creech Jones was nevertheless quite insistent:

I am convinced that we cannot afford to continue neglecting our responsibilities in the matter of arts and antiquities in Nigeria, as I am afraid that they have been neglected in the past. The cultural importance of the whole subject is in my belief very great. But it seems to me to have a wider importance than that. I believe that we have much to gain politically in Nigeria itself by making as much as we possibly can of the remaining cultural riches and also by encouraging the development of arts among people who have so much aptitude for them. I very much hope that you will be able to give this subject the stimulus which I am sure that it needs.⁵⁰

Despite this remarkable expression of support from the most senior figure in the Colonial Office, Macpherson promised little more in his reply than 'to review the whole field in co-operation with all concerned, including particularly the new University College and other non-Governmental organisations interested in such matters'.⁵¹ It is interesting to note here how Macpherson deflected responsibility for such matters away from central government towards the newly reorganised higher education sector and non-governmental organisations such as UNESCO, the first director-general of which was, of course, none other than Huxley.

As the sections of Braunholtz's report gradually assembled on the desk of J. G. Hibbert, Head of Research at the Colonial Office, Britain faced a deepening economic crisis and was confronted with a new wave of anti-colonial agitation, particularly in the Gold Coast. This was clearly not an auspicious moment to be proposing ambitious Fabian-inflected colonial development programmes so far outside the scope of 'ordinary administration'. Indeed, a letter dated 29 December 1948, from William Monson, Chief Secretary to the West African Council (a high-level forum on which each of the West African colonial governors sat), to Leslie Gorsuch, Head of the West African Department at the Colonial Office, effectively provided the last word on more than a decade of bureaucratic machinations concerning the development and implementation of a colonial museum policy in British West Africa. Having reread Braunholtz's report and noting the demonstrable lack of sustained interest in the collection and preservation of antiquities in the region outside Nigeria, Monson concludes:

In these circumstances I have not made any approach to the West African Governments, nor do I believe that the conditions which would make such an approach profitable are likely to arise in the near future. Resources are scarce and inevitably antiquities and ancient monuments come very near the bottom of the priority list. If the African members of Finance Committees had that sense of history and veneration for ancient material objects which is a part of the culture of the older civilizations, we would be on much firmer ground, but I fear that they will not acquire that feeling for a long time to come.⁵²

Monson's pronouncements displayed little concern for the progressive, if paternalistic, agenda of the lobbyists, and they signal a changing political landscape in the colonies in which African representation on government committees and councils had increased considerably, thereby shifting the balance of power. Following Monson's rebuff, Colonial Office interest in promoting the establishment of museums in the region came to an abrupt closure, and thus ended what Eva Meyerowitz had earlier described in a letter to Braunholtz as the 'museum palaver'

in British West Africa – much ado about nothing, one might conclude.⁵³ And yet, of course, the museums *did* get built – but this was largely in spite of, rather than because of, official colonial policy.

A museum for Sierra Leone?

In the decade or so between 1948 and the time they became independent post-colonial nations in 1957, 1960 and 1961 respectively, each of the Gold Coast/Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone saw the establishment of national or 'proto-national' museums. Since there was no higher-level policy co-ordinating these initiatives, each must be understood in relation to local actors and contexts. Indeed, the relationships between government, nation and museum were very differently configured in each colonial context. In Nigeria, Murray remained a stalwart of the Department of Antiquities long into the post-colonial era until his death in 1972. Under his and Bernard Fagg's direction a core network of national museums was established at Esie (1948), Ife (1948), Jos (1952), Lagos (1957) and Oron (1959). After independence, this network continued to expand under the directorship of Ekpo Eyo to form what is today the largest and most extensive museum system in Africa. According to Flora Kaplan, Eyo and his successor, Yaro Gella, advocated a strong role for culture in political and economic development and saw Nigeria's museums as 'pivotal places for envisaging collective identity and national goals'.⁵⁴ In the Gold Coast, the development of a national museum in Accra became a joint endeavour of the new University College of the Gold Coast and the Gold Coast's Monuments and Relics Commission, which had been established by the 1945 Monuments and Relics Ordinance. Plans for a new museum building were in place by 1952, and the institution was eventually opened under the auspices of a new Museums and Monuments Board as part of Ghana's independence celebrations in 1957. As Crinson argues, issues of national identity and regional loyalties were critical throughout the period of the museum's development, and the idea of a national museum was by no means consistent with Nkrumah's more radical post-colonial politics.⁵⁵ Here, then, the museum represented a novel, but highly contested, intervention in the profound negotiations of identity, modernity and history that accompanied the colonial Gold Coast's transition into post-colonial Ghana.

In the Sierra Leonean context, a Monuments and Relics Commission had also been established, in 1946, by ordinance. The Commission was very active in the late 1940s and early 1950s, due to the diligence of its first chairman, a retired Krio physician and amateur historian named M. C. F. Easmon.⁵⁶ Although the Commission was not expli-

citly charged with developing a museum, this was identified as one of the priorities of the organisation in its first annual report. Subsequent reports show how a collection was gradually assembled and a temporary display set up in the British Council's library. This collection was envisaged as 'the nucleus of a future Museum'.⁵⁷ It was, however, largely thanks to the personal enthusiasms of Sir Robert Hall, Governor of Sierra Leone between 1952 and 1956, that these museum plans materialised. In 1953, Hall promoted the establishment of a Sierra Leone Society, the stated aim of which was to encourage 'the advancement of knowledge about the Colony and Protectorate of Sierra Leone'.⁵⁸ In his address to the inaugural meeting of the society in 1954, however, Hall cited the museological advances made in Nigeria, the Gold Coast and French West Africa, and challenged the membership to 'undertake the task which Government c[ould] not yet afford' – that task being to establish a national museum in Sierra Leone.⁵⁹

Outlining his vision for such a museum, Hall lamented the loss of Sierra Leone's traditional arts and crafts which, he argued, were being 'obliterated' under the 'constant impact of foreign imports and foreign skills'.⁶⁰ The Governor admitted that the existence of a museum could do nothing in itself to arrest this decline in indigenous crafts, but, he argued, it could 'contribute towards the growth of a national pride in what is past and what is traditional, by collecting and preserving objects and making them available for contemplation and study'.⁶¹ Thus, in a contradictory manner not untypical of the colonial mentality, Hall promoted a kind of 'salvage ethnology' characteristic of anthropological museums of the day, while failing to acknowledge the forces of colonialism, which he himself represented, as the primary agent of rapid social and cultural transformation.

It is worth noting that in his previous posting in the Tanganyikan colonial service, where he served between 1926 and 1952, Hall had also been involved in the establishment of the Tanganyika Society and its journal, *Tanganyika Notes and Queries*. On retirement from the colonial service he acted as the secretary and later president of the Vernacular Architecture Group, at which time he edited *A Bibliography of Vernacular Architecture*.⁶² He later emigrated to New Zealand where he became associated with the Gisborne Museum, building up its historical resources and conducting a study into early *Pakeha*-Māori relations in the region. Hall's tenure of office in Sierra Leone was a troubled one, and it has been suggested that he may have been a more effective historian than he was a colonial governor.⁶³

Toward the end of his speech to the Sierra Leone Society, Hall acknowledged the need to explain why his challenge to create a national museum was addressed to a group of amateur enthusiasts rather than

to government:

There is an obvious retort; why, if in Nigeria and the Gold Coast there are museums set up by the State, should not the same happen here? The main answer to that is that the State has not acted here: it has not seen its way to find the finance in competition with other pressing needs, and in any case it has not been subjected to the force of public opinion on the matter.⁶⁴

In another era, a colonial governor might have carried the authority of 'the State' and cared less about 'public opinion'. Here, however, one detects Hall's frustration at the lack of values shared between Sierra Leone's Legislative Council, which was by then dominated by indigenous interests (notably representatives of the Mende-dominated Sierra Leone People's Party), and himself as Governor, an office which was becoming more symbolic in nature. Thus, Hall's characteristically, even stereotypically, English concern to safeguard disappearing arts, crafts and traditions seems increasingly incongruous with the aspirations of Sierra Leone's new political elite as they anticipated self-rule and embraced a forward-looking, modern vision for their new independent nation.⁶⁵

Hall's museological sensibilities were, however, shared by the members of the newly formed Sierra Leone Society whom he was addressing. Alongside British expatriates in the colonial service, this society also included members of Freetown's Krio elite, who were often Western-educated professionals and strongly Anglophilic in outlook. While the Krio elite were robbed of political influence at the national level by constitutional reforms that had favoured up-country elites, they did retain pockets of symbolic power, not least in institutions such as Freetown's City Council, Fourah Bay College and, indeed, the Monuments and Relics Commission. It would be this Krio elite, headed by the figure of M. C. F. Easmon, that would carry forward a vision for Sierra Leone's National Museum into the post-colonial era.

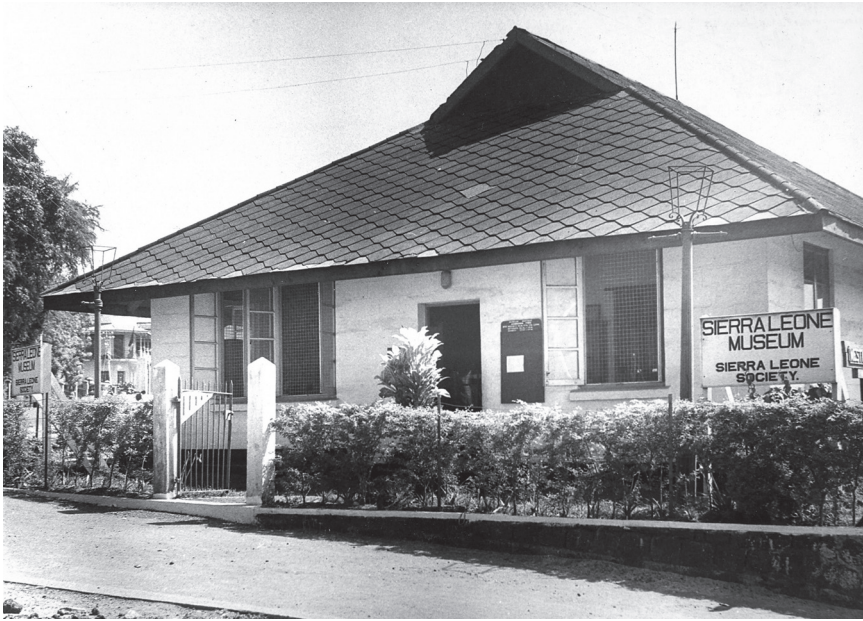
In addition to Easmon, among the council members who directed the activities of the Sierra Leone Society were Ernest Jenner Wright (a distinguished medical doctor, who was the Society's first chairman), Christopher Okoro Cole (a senior lawyer who became Chief Justice and later Acting Governor-General of Sierra Leone), Arthur Porter (an historian who later became Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sierra Leone), and Wilmot Dillsworth (a town clerk on Freetown City Council who succeeded Easmon as chair of the Monuments and Relics Commission). All of these men were prominent members of Freetown's Krio elite. Despite being Krio-led, it is clear, however, that Hall's patronage of the Sierra Leone Society remained critical to achieving its



7.2 Dr McCormack Charles Farrell Easmon delivering a speech at the opening of the Sierra Leone Museum on 10 December 1957. Alongside Easmon are Sir Milton Margai (*third from left*), Mr Kandeh Bureh (*fourth from left*), and Mrs Janet Taylor-Cummings (*second from left*).

objectives, particularly with regard to establishing a museum. Thus, the minutes of the Council for the Sierra Leone Society for 16 March 1955 report that the government had offered to lease the old Cotton Tree Telephone Exchange to the Sierra Leone Society for its museum for a nominal £1 a year and, furthermore, to renovate the building and maintain it for an initial period.⁶⁶ The Council duly accepted this offer, and the minutes of the subsequent meeting report that a decision had been taken to name the museum 'THE SIERRA LEONE MUSEUM', with the hope expressed 'that this wi[ould] in due course develop into a true National Museum of Sierra Leone'.⁶⁷

Through 1956 and 1957 the disused telephone exchange was gradually refurbished, the collections assembled by the Monuments and Relics Commission were donated, and the new museum's displays organised (the latter task largely undertaken by A. P. Kup, a British historian who was then lecturing at Fourah Bay College). Easmon's



7.3 The Sierra Leone Museum at the time of its opening in 1957.

adept facilitation at this time was crucial and his ability to co-ordinate input across the Monuments and Relics Commission, the Sierra Leone Society, and the Sierra Leone Society's Museum Committee was facilitated by the fact that he was then serving as chairman of all three entities simultaneously. Indeed, to these roles he would also add that of curator, since the Museum Committee's attempts to raise sponsorship funds to employ a trained curator for the museum were not successful and the task inevitably fell on his shoulders.

The Sierra Leone Museum was officially opened on 10 December 1957 by Sierra Leone's Chief Minister (soon to become Prime Minister), Sir Milton Margai (Figure 7.2). As Easmon noted in an article entitled 'Sierra Leone's Own Museum', published in the *West African Review*, this was the same year 'in which the larger modern museums at Accra and Lagos were opened' – a notable fact given the diverging routes along which these initiatives had been forced to develop.⁶⁸ According to the Monuments and Relics Commission report for 1957, a staggering ten thousand people visited the museum in its first week of opening, and subsequent museum reports show that annual attendance figures in excess of 250,000 were sustained into the mid-1970s.⁶⁹ Photographs of the museum from this time show visitors peering at displays of stone

nomoli and *mahen yafe* carvings, ceremonial regalia, initiation society masks, country cloths, and other historical and ethnological artefacts. They also show how little has changed in the intervening years, since the displays are more or less the same today, if a little more cluttered.

And so we return to that unprepossessing little bungalow standing in the shade of Freetown's Cotton Tree. Only ever intended as a temporary location for the museum, the inadequacies of the Cotton Tree Building were evident from the very start and the desire to build or move into a more suitable museum building have remained on the agenda throughout the museum's history. The most elaborate of these schemes, for which architectural drawings survive, dates to 1967. This envisaged a new six-storey building on the existing museum plot, complete with lecture theatre, library, laboratories, stores, offices, exhibition halls and a roof-top restaurant that would compete with the 'modern' national museums developed in Nigeria, Ghana and elsewhere in Africa. Needless to say, the costs of such a development were regarded as being 'far in excess of what the country could justifiably afford for building a museum', and there was little hope of receiving external financial aid for a scheme of this nature.⁷⁰

It was, however, also in 1967 that the Sierra Leone Museum finally became Sierra Leone's *national* museum. The Sierra Leone Society had gone into decline after independence and had become defunct by 1964, its academic activities being superseded the same year by the establishment of a new Institute of African Studies at Fourah Bay College.⁷¹ Through an amendment of the Monuments and Relics Act in 1967, Sierra Leone's Monuments and Relics Commission was given the authority to 'acquire, maintain and administer the Sierra Leone Museum founded by the Sierra Leone Society'.⁷² At that time, the Commission itself fell under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, but was transferred, in 1973, to the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs following a reorganisation of government departments.

A national museum in ruins?

The sorry state in which Sierra Leone's National Museum is to be found today is sometimes attributed to the civil war that beset the country between 1991 and 2002. This is not the case, however, as a magazine article entitled 'A national museum in ruins', published before the war, makes clear. The author remarked:

A casual glance at Sierra Leone's national museum ... presents a picture of a sadly neglected edifice ... [I]t appears Sierra Leoneans have no interest in the museum. Said an observer, 'there is nothing in there for me to see... Our past has been emptied, ravaged and distorted'.⁷³

Indeed, after the buoyant attendance figures of the 1960s and 1970s, the number of visitors to the museum dropped considerably. The author of the article attributed this lack of interest to the impoverished nature of the museum's collections and noted that the museum had no resources to acquire new artefacts to replace those which, he implied, had been sold off. He did not hold the government itself to blame for underfunding the institution, citing an official source that 'the annual subvention is fairly reasonable in the light of the country's economic problems'.⁷⁴ Instead, he alluded to the 'intricate web of political, economic and aesthetic threads' in which the history of the museum was entangled, and the 'hegemony of European and predominantly British interests which determined collection policies until recently'.⁷⁵

This is a curious piece of journalism, which makes the common mistake of supposing that the British had significant interest in such a museum and, indeed, that there was any kind of policy in operation in the colonial era (whether a collections policy or a policy of museum development). As I have shown in this chapter, despite the efforts of a few dedicated individuals, no such policies were adopted in British West Africa. From a Colonial Office perspective, museums were regarded as indulgences of limited value, the expense of which simply could not be justified. In the West African context, therefore, colonial era museums could hardly be described as 'cultural technologies of rule': they were, rather, the pet projects of museum-minded individuals at various tiers of the colonial service (from education officers such as Murray to governors such as Hall or, indeed, the Colonial Secretary himself in the figure of Creech Jones). The enthusiasms of these individuals were often academic in nature and they were convinced of the social value of preserving traditional crafts and skills in the countries where they originated. These interests and convictions were not widely shared, however, among either the British colonial administration or the emerging local elites. In the words of Monson, this agenda came 'very near the bottom of the priority list', and, in Sierra Leone at least, it has rarely been anywhere else. As Hall noted in 1954, 'the State has not acted here'. In the post-colonial era, it has still not acted.

The likes of Murray, Duckworth and Meyerowitz, who tirelessly campaigned for a colonial museum policy in the 1930s and 1940s, were only too aware that West Africa's past was being emptied out by the very hegemonic forces they represented. One of their primary motivations for arguing for the establishment of museums in West Africa was to stem the flow of African artworks and antiquities into European and North American museums and art markets. Indeed, they were among the earliest proponents of the repatriation of cultural property in these contexts.

However, while these advocates of museums in West Africa may have had the best of intentions, their ideas also manifested a paternalism that did not question the appropriateness of the cultural institutions for which they lobbied. In his letters and articles, even Murray admitted: 'at present there are not many Africans who will patronise a Museum but, as education spreads, the demand will grow'.⁷⁶ For all their respect for local populations, these educationalists did not doubt – even less so figures such as Huxley and Creech Jones – the superiority of contemporary European values, or that West Africans would inevitably aspire to these same values once they had been educated out of their 'primitive' state. This logic remained fundamental to the developmental doctrine of Fabian colonial policy, revealing its ideological rootedness in Victorian cultural evolutionist thinking. The value of museums was taken for granted in Europe and, as some of the more odious correspondence quoted in this chapter reveals, was even regarded as a trait only to be found in the 'older [i. e. more advanced] civilisations' and therefore unlikely to emerge in West Africa.

Thankfully such linear notions of progress have now been discredited. We have come to understand that there are different ways of relating to the past and that museum-mindedness, with its peculiar obsessions with collecting, preserving, ordering and displaying, is merely the product of a particular historical context and not of universal utility or relevance. Thus, as is so evident in the case of Sierra Leone, the value of the institution of the museum in West Africa cannot be taken for granted. And yet the museums exist and, against the odds, they persist – not as ruins, but as unfinished projects. Colonial legacies of doubtful relevance and uncertain usefulness, they nevertheless form part of the creolising palimpsest of mnemonic forms localised in this particular part of the post-colonial world.⁷⁷

Notes

- 1 Nicholas Dirks, 'Foreword', in Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. ix–xvii, p. ix.
- 2 Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge*, p. 10.
- 3 It was not until 1985, twenty years after independence, that a national museum was inaugurated in the Gambia. Alice Bellagamba, 'Before it is too late: Constructing an archive of oral sources and a national museum in independent Gambia', *Africa Today*, 52:4 (2006), 29–52, p. 41.
- 4 R. D. Pearce, *The Turning Point in Africa: British Colonial Policy, 1938–1948* (London: Frank Cass, 1982).
- 5 Robert Goldwater, *Primitivism in Modern Painting* (New York: Harper, 1938).
- 6 E. H. Duckworth, 'Recent archaeological discoveries in the ancient city of Ife', *Nigeria*, 14 (1938), 101–5; William Bascom, 'The legacy of an unknown Nigerian "Donatello"', *Illustrated London News*, 8 April 1939, pp. 592–4.
- 7 The National Archives, Public Record Office, London (TNA), Colonial Office (CO)

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- 583/234/13, John Rothenstein to Lord Harlech, 10 November 1938; Lord Harlech to Malcolm MacDonald, 11 November 1938.
- 8 TNA, CO 583/234/13, Malcolm MacDonald to B. H. Bourdillon, 6 December 1938.
 - 9 TNA, CO 554/121/8, Order in Council made under the Customs Ordinance, No. 2 of 1939; Bourdillon to MacDonald, 29 March 1939. See also Robert L. Tignor, 'W. R. Bascom and the Ife bronzes', *Africa*, 60:3 (1990), 425–34; Simon Ottenberg, 'Further light on W. R. Bascom and the Ife bronzes', *Africa*, 64:4 (1994), 561–8.
 - 10 TNA, CO 554/121/8, Malcolm MacDonald to B. H. Bourdillon, A. W. Hodson, D. J. Jardine, 30 May 1939.
 - 11 TNA, CO 554/121/8, Extract from a letter from E. H. Duckworth, Lagos, 28 June 1939.
 - 12 The Carnegie application was successful and a grant of \$4,000 was made in 1941 'for the purpose of erecting a small local museum at Ife'. However, the project soon ran into difficulties and, after a war-time review of funding for 'agencies and institutions in the British Dominions and Colonies', Carnegie later revoked the award. See TNA, CO 583/261/5. Regarding the antiquities ordinances, it is ironic that Nigeria's legislation was the last to be enacted. A bill had been drafted in 1940, but its progress again stalled due to war-time circumstances. See British Museum (BM), Eth Doc 261, 'A Bill entitled An Ordinance to provide for the better preservation of objects of aesthetic, historical, archaeological or scientific interest', sent by O. G. R. Williams, Colonial Office, 27 April 1940.
 - 13 John Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa* (London: Longman, 1996), p. 107.
 - 14 David Mills, 'British anthropology at the end of empire: The rise and fall of the Colonial Social Science Research Council, 1944–1962', *Revue d'Histoire des Sciences Humaines*, 6 (2002), 161–88; Agbenyega Adedze, 'Symbols of triumph: IFAN and the colonial museum complex in French West Africa (1938–60)', *Museum Anthropology*, 25:2 (2002), 50–60.
 - 15 F. Meyerowitz, 'The Institute of West African Arts, Industries, and Social Science', *Man*, 43 (1943), 112–14.
 - 16 TNA, CO 859/172/2, Henry Morris, 'West African Institute of Industries, Arts and Social Science: Report of investigator' (1947), p. 3.
 - 17 Meyerowitz, 'Institute of West African Arts', p. 113.
 - 18 *Ibid.*, p. 114.
 - 19 *Ibid.*
 - 20 TNA, CO 927/5/5, Julian Huxley, 'Research and Development in Archaeology, Ethnology, African Art and Museums in West Africa' (1944), in Julian Huxley to C. Y. Carstairs, 14 May 1944.
 - 21 TNA, CO 927/5/5, Huxley, 'Research and Development', p. 2.
 - 22 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
 - 23 Rice University, Huxley Papers, Box 65, Folder 13, 'Summary of relevant points of an introduction by Professor Monod to a chapter on the Institut Français d'Afrique Noire (I.F.A.N.) to a volume published in 1942 by the Hautcommissariat de l'Afrique Française'. In 1944 Huxley visited Monod at IFAN while touring West Africa with the Elliot Commission.
 - 24 TNA, CO 927/5/5, Huxley, 'Research and Development', p. 3.
 - 25 *Ibid.*, p. 1.
 - 26 TNA, CO 927/5/5, Heiner Meinhard, 'Suggestions for a Central Museum of West African Ethnology and Archaeology' (1944), in O. G. R. Williams to G. H. Creasy, 15 November 1944.
 - 27 *Ibid.*, p. 7.
 - 28 *Ibid.*, p. 3; annexe.
 - 29 *Ibid.*, p. 1.
 - 30 Philip L. Ravenhill, 'The passive objects and the tribal paradigm: Colonial museography in French West Africa', in Mary Jo Arnoldi, Christraud M. Geary and Kris L. Hardin (eds), *African Material Culture* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996), pp. 265–82.
 - 31 In his discussion of the National Museum of Ghana, Crinson makes the mistake of conflating Huxley's and Meinhard's proposals, attributing both, including Meinhard's

- sketch plan, to Huxley. See Mark Crinson, 'Nation-building, collecting and the politics of display: The National Museum, Ghana', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 13:4 (2002), 231–50.
- 32 TNA, CO 927/5/5, C. Y. Carstairs to G. H. Creasy, 9 January 1945.
- 33 See Paul Basu, 'Material culture: Ancestries and trajectories in material culture studies', in James Carrier and Deborah Gewertz (eds), *Handbook of Sociocultural Anthropology* (Oxford: Berg, forthcoming).
- 34 TNA, CO 927/5/5, G. H. Creasy to A. R. Richards, A. C. M. Burns, H. C. Stevenson, H. R. R. Blood, 19 March 1945.
- 35 TNA, CO 927/5/5, Gerald Whiteley to G. H. Creasy, 20 September 1945.
- 36 *Ibid.*
- 37 After Meyerowitz's death the majority of IWAAISS activities were suspended. In 1947 a report was commissioned to make recommendations for the Institute's future. See TNA, CO 859/172/2, Henry Morris, 'West African Institute of Industries, Arts and Social Science: Report of Investigator' (1947). With the expansion of higher education provision in West Africa following the recommendations of the Elliot Commission, it was proposed that some of the research activity associated with IWAAISS be incorporated into the new university system. Thus, a West African Institute of Social and Economic Research was established at the University College of Nigeria and a Department of Archaeology was created at the University College of the Gold Coast.
- 38 TNA, CO 927/5/5, Raymond Firth to C. Y. Carstairs, 26 March 1945.
- 39 BM, Eth Doc 172, H. J. Braunholtz, 'Special report: Visit of the Keeper to West Africa', 8 July 1946.
- 40 Bernard Fagg later became director of Nigeria's Department of Antiquities when Murray retired in 1957.
- 41 TNA, CO 927/31/5, Hermann J. Braunholtz, 'Report on the preservation of antiquities and on the establishment of museums in British West Africa' (1948). See also TNA, CO 927/31/4, correspondence between J. G. Hibbert and H. J. Braunholtz.
- 42 TNA, CO 927/31/5, Braunholtz, 'Report', p. 3.
- 43 *Ibid.*
- 44 *Ibid.*
- 45 *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- 46 *Ibid.*
- 47 *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- 49 TNA, CO 859/172/2, Arthur Creech Jones to Sir John Macpherson, 13 April 1948.
- 50 *Ibid.*
- 51 TNA, CO 859/172/2, Macpherson to Creech Jones, 29 April 1948.
- 52 TNA, CO 927/31/4, William Monson to Leslie Gorsuch, 29 December 1948.
- 53 BM, Eth Doc 172, E. L. R. Meyerowitz to H. J. Braunholtz, 26 July 1945.
- 54 Flora Kaplan, 'Nigerian museums: Envisaging culture as national identity', in Flora Kaplan (ed.), *Museums and the Making of Ourselves: The Role of Objects in National Identity* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1994), pp. 45–78, p. 45.
- 55 Crinson, 'Nation-building, collecting and the politics of display'.
- 56 Christopher Fyfe, 'Easmon, McCormack Charles Farrell (1890–1972)', in H. C. G. Matthews and Brian Harrison (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 61 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vol. 17, pp. 580–1.
- 57 Monuments and Relics Commission (MRC), *Annual Report of the Monuments and Relics Commission for the Year 1949* (Freetown: Government Printer, 1951), p. 10.
- 58 A. T. Porter, 'The Sierra Leone Society', *Sierra Leone Studies*, NS 3 (1954), p. 193.
- 59 Robert Hall, 'A museum for Sierra Leone?', *Sierra Leone Studies*, NS 3 (1954), 130–5, p. 131.
- 60 *Ibid.*, p. 132.
- 61 *Ibid.*, p. 133.
- 62 Robert Hall, *A Bibliography of Vernacular Architecture* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1972).
- 63 John Hargreaves, personal communication with the author, 2007.
- 64 Hall, 'A museum for Sierra Leone?', p. 134.

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- 65 John Cartwright, *Politics in Sierra Leone, 1947–67* (Toronto ON: University of Toronto Press, 1970).
- 66 Sierra Leone National Museum (SLNM), 'Minutes of Meeting of Council of the Sierra Leone Society held at the British Council on Wednesday March 16 1955 at 5 p.m.'.
- 67 SLNM, 'Minutes of Meeting of Council of the Sierra Leone Society held at the Office of H. E.'s Private Secretary on Friday April 29 1955 at 6.30 p.m.'.
- 68 M. C. F. Easmon, 'Sierra Leone's Own Museum', *West African Review*, 29:373 (1958), 820–1, p. 820.
- 69 MRC, *Report of the Monuments and Relics Commission 1957* (Freetown: Government Printer, 1958), p. 3. See also Janet L. Stone and H. U. Cole, 'The Sierra Leone Museum, Freetown', *Museum*, 18:3 (1965), 38–40, p. 38; Louise Metzger, 'Indigenous art forms in Sierra Leone: The museum as an educational resource', unpublished manuscript, 1982.
- 70 SLNM, 'Minutes of the combined meeting of the Monuments and Relics Commission and the Sierra Leone Museum Committee held in the Conference Room, Department of Communications, Departmental Block, George Street, on Thursday 22nd February, 1968, at 4.30 p.m.'. An extension to the Cotton Tree Building was eventually financed in the mid-1980s by the German Embassy and opened to coincide with celebrations marking the bicentenary of the founding of Freetown in 1987. The extension provided much needed facilities for offices, storerooms and a temporary exhibition space, but was never fully fitted out, and the old Cotton Tree Building continues to house the main display gallery. A more detailed exploration of the post-colonial history of the Sierra Leone National Museum will be the subject of a future publication.
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- 72 Sierra Leone, Monuments and Relics (Amendment) Act, 1967.
- 73 Kofi Akosah-Sarpong, 'Distorted past: A national museum in ruins', *West Africa*, 3812 (1990), p. 2479.
- 74 *Ibid.*
- 75 *Ibid.*
- 76 K. C. Murray, 'Art in Nigeria: The need for a museum', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, 41:165 (1942), 241–9, p. 248.
- 77 See Paul Basu, 'Palimpsest memoryscapes: Materializing and mediating war and peace in Sierra Leone', in Ferdinand de Jong and Michael Rowlands (eds), *Reclaiming Heritage: Alternative Imaginations in West Africa* (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2007), pp. 231–59.