

CONTEXTUALISING HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES WITH EXHIBITIONS OF THE NEW NATIONAL MUSEUM IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO^a

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Abstract: A new National Museum of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MNRDC) was established as a cultural Official Development Assistant (ODA) project by the Korean government. It opened on 23 November 2019 in Kinshasa. The objectives of the new museum are to promote the history and culture of various ethnic groups, protect heritage and exhibit cultural diversity in order to unify the people and the nation, and educate the public about the DRC history and culture. However, the exhibitions do not meet the objectives of the National Museum nor do they contextualise the history and cultural identity of the DRC. In order for the MNRDC to function as a national museum or a central national museum, its exhibition must be reconstructed in such a way that meets its purposes while historical artefacts accurately representing the DRC's history must be displayed.

Keywords: *exhibition, restitution, MNRDC: Musée National de la République Démocratique du Congo, DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo, national identity, cultural diversity*

Introduction

The new DRC National Museum (Musée National de la République Démocratique du Congo, hereafter referred to as MNRDC) opened in Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (hereafter referred to as DRC), on 23 November 2019. In accordance with the Project for the Establishment of National Museum, the establishment of the MNRDC was started at the request of the DRC president when Korean President Lee Myung-Bak visited the DRC in 2011. This was the largest cultural Official

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Development Assistant (ODA) project supported by the Government of the Republic of Korea to developing countries and was made in accordance with political decisions (Kim 2016: 409, 426). The project took a longer time than expected and lasted for about 8 years, from 2012 to 2019, costing \$21 million in total (about KRW 21.4 billion). The Kickoff Ceremony took place on 22 October 2014, but the groundbreaking ceremony was held two years later on 27 July 2016. After four years of construction, the completion ceremony was held on 14 June 2019 with a soft opening and after a trial period of three months, the museum finally opened officially on 23 November 2019 (Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the DRC 2016; Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the DRC 2019; KOICA Press Release 2019a; KOICA Press Release 2019b).

When planning the construction of the new National Museum, its objectives were formulated as follows: (1) to protect the history and cultural heritage of various ethnic groups of the DRC and to display cultural diversity to heal the pains and wounds caused by the civil war and to provide a place to educate; (2) to cultivate a national pride and identity through promoting cultural pride and bring historical awareness; and (3) to ensure that people around the world had a proper understanding of the history and culture of Africans and the DRC (Kim 2016: 408–409).

A relevant work to the present article is by Sarah van Beurden, which showed deep insights into Belgian colonialism and the cultural policy of the Mobutu Sese Seko government. Van Beurden demonstrated how Belgium and Mobutu engaged in museum politics to justify their rule (Van Beurden 2015). She considered how the museum became a political tool to promote the legitimacy of the country after the colonial period in terms of “technologies of power.” In particular, focusing on the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Belgium (Musée Royal de l’Afrique Centrale, hereafter referred to as MRAC) and the National Museum of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Institut des Musées Nationaux du Congo, hereafter referred to as IMNC), she examined how the Congolese arts and cultural heritage were strategically exploited by the politics of memorialisation and current identity politics. In other words, she argued that the ethnic artefacts, or “national treasures,” were used and exhibited to develop national identity (Van Beurden 2009: 2).

However, the present article focuses on analysing the remains of the IMNC’s exhibition rather than discussing Sarah van Beurden’s research. Its aim is to check the purpose of the new National Museum, which was continuously

raised during the construction process, and to analyse whether the exhibitions as well as the artefacts in the MNRDC meet the purpose of the construction. Furthermore, it aims to provide suggestions to the new National Museum in order to ensure that it contextualise the DRC's historical and cultural identities (Brown 2018).

Since 2014, when the DRC National Museum construction project began, I participated as an expert in African history and conducted fieldwork eight times. Also, from 4–13 January 2020, I personally visited the MNRDC to conduct fieldwork and wrote a paper based on the fieldwork results.

Purpose of New National Museum

The construction of the MNRDC is linked to the dream of the former President Mobutu Sese Seko. In 1968, Senegalese President Léopold Sédar Senghor visited President Mobutu Sese Seko and asked him about Congo's world-renowned artworks. Following this, President Mobutu Sese Seko planned to build a magnificent "Museum of Africa" inspired by Tervuren's MRAC and the Palace of Versailles. Two years later, he created the Institut des Musées Nationaux du Congo (IMNC) and built a temporary museum on Mount Ngaliema, where the President's park was located, before his real dream, a "Museum of Africa," came true. This is an iconic place, historically called "Mount Stanley" where the Statue of Stanley, who explored Congo River on behalf of Leopold II, stands (Demeulemeester 2018; Van Beurden 2015: 104).

During the construction of the new National Museum, representatives of the DRC and Korea who participated in it continued to confirm the purpose of the museum. In other words, the new museum was aimed at preserving historical and cultural heritage, integrating the nation and people, cultivating national identity, educational functions, and landmarks that recreated the image of the DRC.

First, the most important reason for the construction of the new National Museum was to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of the DRC safely. On 27 July 2016, Elvis Mutiri wa Bashara, Minister of Culture and Arts, attended the groundbreaking ceremony of the new National Museum of the DRC in Tembe Na Tembe, Kinshasa. She explained that the new National Museum will safely keep and preserve the DRC's historical and cultural heritage (Mediacongo 2020). As of 15 February 2019, IMNC General Director

Paul Bakwa-Lufu Badibanga, in an interview with the French RFI, explained that they aimed to build the DRC National Museum, among other things, with an emphasis on keeping cultural heritage safe for a long time. Currently, the DRC does not have a museum deserving the name “national museum” and is not following international standards pertaining to preservation, and thus, the new National Museum has a great significance (Guilleux 2019).

This argument demonstrates that the preservation of the DRC’s historical and cultural heritage is the primary purpose of the new National Museum. The reason for this was that the “Museum of Africa” that Mobutu had planned was not built, and the IMNC was temporarily created, and thus, the DRC’s historical and cultural heritage was not properly managed.

The second most important purpose was to unite the nation and its people. The new National Museum’s motto is “Vivre Ensemble! Live Together!” The MNRDC is expected to serve as a foundation for national development and a space for healing the pains and wounds caused by civil war and ethnic conflicts while embracing the cultural diversity of the DRC. Therefore, the plan of the exhibition was to convey the historical conflicts in the DRC, recognise the diverse ethnic groups and lead them to the power of national development (Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the DRC 2020). At the ground-breaking ceremony on 27 July 2016, Elvis Mutiri wa Bashara, Minister of Culture and Arts, stated that the new National Museum will contribute to the DRC’s national pride and strengthen national identity (Mediacongo 2020). At the inauguration ceremony on 14 June 2019, the Minister of Culture, Astrid Madiya Ntumba stated, “This will be a place of unity, harmony, tolerance, and peace that brings happiness to all visitors” (Donponews 2019; KOICA Press Release 2019a). IMNC General Director Paul Bakwa-Lufu Badibanga argued that the new National Museum will be a place for people to gather and exhibit histories and cultures of various ethnic groups, demonstrating that all communities are living together to achieve unity (Guilleux 2019).

The above argument implies that the history of the DRC suffered several civil wars and conflicts and thus, did not have a unified national identity. Through the new National Museum everyone hopes to be reborn as a nation and a people with a common history and experience.

Third, many are hoping that the new National Museum will play an important role as an educational institution and become a landmark of the DRC. The new National Museum is expected to promote the cultural diversity of the Congolese and provide young people with an opportunity to learn and discover the DRC's cultural heritage. Further, it is expected to be the landmark representing the national image and establish itself as the hub for exhibition centres, education, and cultural activities (Tshiambi 2019). Baek Soo-Khee, Vice President of the Korean Agency for International Cooperation (KOICA), stated that, "The new museum will display various cultures and history as well as serve as a landmark for exhibitions, education, and cultural activities" (Dépêche KOICA 2019). In addition, she stated, "I look forward to the museum being the most DRC-like museum and a living educational place where the Congolese can learn the power of history and culture" (KOICA DR Congo Office 2019b). Elvis Mutiri wa Bashara, Minister of Culture and Arts, stated that the new National Museum will become a first-class educational facility that fosters citizenship and will contribute to the DRC's national pride (Mediacongo 2020).

As can be seen above, many have debated what the purpose of the new National Museum should be. These purposes can generally be evaluated as a good reflection of the situation in the DRC. However, no one has given a serious consideration of how and what contents the museum should exhibit. I think the DRC is primarily responsible for the lack of serious consideration. In order for the exhibition to be aligned with the purpose of its construction, more research on the contextualisation of historical and cultural backgrounds of the artefacts must be done first.

The MNRDC Exhibition Status¹

The new National Museum building has a size of 6,421 m² and a site of 15,000 m². It consists of two floors above the ground and has two permanent exhibition halls, a planning exhibition hall, an outdoor exhibition hall, and a storage room as well as a curriculum laboratory and educational facilities. The first floor has a planning exhibition room and on the second floor two

1 Currently, the MNRDC does not have a website or museum catalogue. Therefore, first, I tried to grasp the exhibition situation based on the data obtained in the fieldwork. The leaflet, audio guide, and exhibition panel explaining artefacts are shown in Appendix 1. The audio guide explains only 103 items, including 98 artefacts for the first permanent exhibition hall, and five for photographs in the hallway. Second, the explanations from the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the DRC and KOICA DR Congo Office were used.

permanent exhibition halls. In the three exhibition halls, 423 artefacts are on display and explained in French and English. In the hallway between the exhibition halls on the second floor, photographs of ethnic groups are displayed. On the outdoor exhibition, ecosystem reserves, UNESCO World Natural Heritage sites of the DRC, and endemic species are exhibited in order to provide a learning experience for students (KOICA DR Congo Office 2020).

On both the first and the second floor, 12,002 artefacts are stored. The total number of artefacts held by the IMNC (Institut des Musées Nationaux du Congo) is 45,000, and out of them, 12,002 have been transferred to the new National Museum, of which 423 are exhibited in its exhibition halls. The remaining 33,000 artefacts are stored at the IMNC and partly displayed in the existing exhibition hall (KOICA DR Congo Office 2019a; *Franceinfo* 2019; *Le Point Afrique* 2019).

At the entrance to the first floor of the MNRDC, alongside the lyrics of the Congolese national anthem, an excerpt from a leader of the Korean independence movement against the Japanese Empire, Baekbeom Kim Koo's "My Wish" on the power of culture is on display in French.² On the wall of the lobby with the theme of "One Congo," about 450 of Congo's ethnic names are on display in the form of murals symbolising the size of the population in the shape of the Congo River (KOICA DR Congo Office 2019a).

The Temporary Exhibition Hall (Salle d'exposition temporaire) on the first floor is painted in ocher and consists of musical and communication instruments. Here, artefacts of the DRC's traditional musical instruments are exhibited that were used in joyful moments of life or important rituals.

The first Permanent Exhibition Hall (Salle d'exposition 1) on the second floor is painted in red with the theme of "Man Facing Existential Challenges." This hall is divided in three sections: (1) History, (2) Daily Life (Traces of Life), and (3) Craft (Deep water, fertile land). In all, 217 artefacts are on display with an audio guide available for 58 of them. The first hall consists of artefacts related to Congo's history and daily life from prehistoric to modern times. There, one can see how the DRC people have lived for the past thousands

2 It is written, "Ce que je désire infiniment, c'est le pouvoir de la culture élevée, car elle peut nous rendre heureux et de surcroît, donner du bonheur aux autres." Kim Koo (1876–1949) le président du gouvernement provisoire de la République de Corée. It means, "What I desire very much is the power of noble culture, for it can make us happy and moreover, gives happiness to others."

of years. Through the artefacts based on different themes, one can see the distinctive ritualism and production activities reflecting the environment of each region. In the centre of the hall, an image depicting a traditional boat floating on the Congo River is displayed in order to demonstrate the importance of the Congo River to the Congolese.

The second Permanent Exhibition Hall (Salle d'exposition 2) on the second floor is painted in blue with the theme of "Life Cycle and Cultural Expression" and divided in two sections: (1) rites in the course of life (a village with perpetual memories) and (2) social order of the community (the forest that protects memories). There are 116 artefacts on display with audio guides available for 40 of them. In this hall, one can see the artefacts used in rites of passage, such as life and death, for each life cycle of the Congolese. Artefacts used for birth relics, ceremonies, weddings, and funerals are on display. In addition, the hall introduces the meaning of shamanism that leads to the stability of the community, and exhibits art that symbolises the power of the ruler and the Congolese living in village communities. It is a compact representation of life and culture.

Contextualising DRC History and Culture in the MNRDC Exhibition

Professor Placide Mumbembele is a museum scholar at the IMNC who was studying what the new National Museum should represent. In particular, he pointed out that the fact that DRC's ethnic groups are linked to the Congo River makes it seem as if it is portraying a colonial museum from the 1930s or 1940s, or simply a colonial museum. He argued that the MNRDC is taking a colonial approach to history and society. He also pointed out that this exhibition method is problematic in that it does not show the changes and developments of the DRC and the Congolese (*Franceinfo* 2019; *Le Point Afrique* 2019).

Particular attention should be paid to the fact that the MNRDC exhibitions show the history of the DRC on only two panels. It can be said that these exhibitions do not properly reflect the purpose of the new National Museum, which, as mentioned previously, does not contextualise the historical and cultural identities of the DRC.

First, there is a problem with the first Permanent Exhibition Hall, which displays both pre-colonial and colonial periods. The European arrivals, slave

trade, and colonial times are described in one panel with only three types of artefacts displayed: Belgian helmets, swords, and guns.

The following is a copy of the museum's English text on the panels.

In the 15th century, the Portuguese arrived at a river located downstream of the Congo River and thus began trade between the Congo region and Portugal. Since then, the slave trade prevailed to several kingdoms and empires, and by the contact with the western world, Christianity spread to several regions. The slave trade lasted until the 19th century in Africa and it deeply affected these kingdoms and empires.

At the end of the 19th century, as European colonization of Africa was being intensified, Leopold II, King of the Belgians, privatized the Congo Free State. The exploitation of red rubber and Congolese labour under Leopold II was atrocious, which earned him strong condemnation from the international community. In 1908, the King of Belgium controlled the region as the Congo Free State, which remained as the Belgian Congo until its independence.

Second, in the first Permanent Exhibition Hall, "The DRC today, after independence" is described in chronology on only one panel. From the time of independence to the present, it does not accurately describe the history of the DRC by explaining it on only one panel.

At the end of the Second World War, with the intensification of claims for independence, the Belgian King Baudouin proclaimed the independence of the Congo in Leopoldville on 30 June 1960. In this historical moment of the independence of the Congo, Joseph Kasa Vubu, the first President of the Republic, and its Prime Minister Patrice Emery attended. After independence, the country had to overcome political turmoil such as secession, coup d'états, and civil wars, to become the DRC today.

- First Republic: 1960–1965

1960 Independence of Congo (30 June)

1960 Proclamation of the Independence of the State of Katanga by Kapend Tshombe Moïse (Katangese secession)

1965 Coup d'état of General Mobutu Sese Seko, who proclaimed himself President of the Republic.

- Second Republic: 1965–1997

1970 Change of name to Republic of Zaire by President Mobutu Sese Seko

1996 Revolt of Laurent-Désiré Kabila against the dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko (First Congo War).

- Transition period: 1997–2006

1997 Accession of Laurent-Désiré Kabila to the office of President of the country, which was then renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

1998 Rebellion against Laurent-Désiré Kabila (Second Congo War).

2001 Assassination of Laurent-Désiré Kabila. His son Joseph Kabila inherited power and became President of the DRC.

2003 End of the Second Congo War.

2006 The first presidential, legislative and regional elections in the Congo were held. Joseph Kabila was re-elected President.

2011 The second presidential and legislative elections, Joseph Kabila was re-elected.

2018 The third presidential, legislative and second regional elections, Félix Antoine Tshilombo Tshisekedi was elected President of DRC.

On 23 July 2015, after the Round Table discussions on the new National Museum (Kim 2016: 430–431), the DRC Director, Joseph Ginyangula Ibongo, who was head of the IMNC, summarised the exhibition as follows: The new museum should display historical events and characters of the DRC to show the history that has been hidden for a long time in order to cultivate education and national consciousness. He summarised the various opinions of the participants at the Round Table, and from this, decided that the history of the DRC should be exhibited by dividing it into the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods:

1. The history of the Congo before the time of the colonial period was pre-Arabic and European invasion. Thus, it should cover the prehistorical and archaeological as well as national, kingdom, and empire of the Congo.
2. The period of colonial rule covers colonialism and its consequences (slave trade, explorers, missionaries, etc.), the period of colonial rule in the Congo Free State (1885–1908) and the Belgian Congo (1908–1960).
3. The post-colonial period deals with the independence from 1960 to the present (IMNC 2015).

However, this decision to divide the exhibition changed over time. In official letters from IMNC to KOICA (IMNC 2016a; IMNC 2016b), the DRC Director's intention for the new National Museum was well expressed. In the letter from 31 May 2016, Joseph Ginyangula Ibongo stated that a small number of historical artefacts of the IMNC were planned to be displayed in the two Permanent Exhibition Halls along with the artefacts of the ethnic groups. In a letter from 9 June, he argued that the new National Museum should not be a history museum, but a folk museum that exhibits artefacts from various ethnic groups of the DRC. The first permanent exhibition room should exhibit artefacts of these ethnic groups, and the second permanent exhibition room should exhibit a small number of historical artefacts held by the IMNC along with the artefacts of the ethnic groups.

In the process of building the new National Museum, the IMNC agreed with Project Management Consultancy (PMC) to discuss the need for an exhibition of historical artefacts in order for the new National Museum to be truly established as a national museum. To this end, the second Permanent Exhibition Hall was set to exhibit historical and cultural artefacts as a venue for national integration showing “one nation, one people.” Despite this discussion, the DRC Director and the IMNC strongly objected to exhibiting historical artefacts in the second Permanent Exhibition Hall; unlike what the Basis Design Study (BDS) stated, they denied reaching such a conclusion (West Africa Team 2013). Instead, the DRC Director insisted that the new National Museum should become a folk museum (Sangmyung University and GDC Consulting Consortium 2016).

In the end, in an interview with the RFI in February 2019, IMNC General Director Paul Bakwa-Lufu Badibanga stated that the new National Museum was essentially envisioned as a folk museum exhibiting art and daily life items from various ethnic groups of the DRC (Guilleux 2019).

Based on Joseph Ginyangula Ibongo's and on Bakwa-Lufu Badibanga's statements, the IMNC does not think it was considering a balanced exhibition from the start. I rather wondered if they were planning an exhibition excluding history altogether.

Eric Kuikende Banshona, an MNRDC researcher at the Education Department, stated that the DRC Director, who served as the head of the IMNC, deemed it unimportant for historical artefacts to be exhibited at the museum. The argument is that the history of the DRC has strong ties with Belgium and thus, if one attempts to exhibit the history of the DRC, it is difficult to avoid the conflict with Belgium at any level. For instance, the history of the DRC, which can be divided into pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial, was largely influenced by Belgium. In addition, the DRC Director did all his museum work as well as his doctorate with the support of Belgium. He received his PhD between 1995 and 1999 in Art History and Archaeology at the Université Catholique de Louvain in Belgium. He explained that he was more concerned with folklore and culture and did not want to focus so much on politics or history. Further, the DRC Director was discovered and recruited by Joseph Cornet, the first IMNC director and a successor of Lucien Cahen.³ And during the time that the DRC Director was serving as the director of IMNC, projects were conducted with financial support from Belgium. One can conclude that all of his expertise in museums was acquired in Belgium and thus, is deeply influenced by Belgium. It is also then understood that he tried to lead the museum in a direction that will not jeopardise his personal relationship with Belgium and maintain financial

3 Mobutu actively supported the IMNC to promote Zaire's authenticity and Zairianization. On 30 April 1971, Zaire decided to receive Belgian support for the next five years. The Tervuren Museum provided experts and allowed the IMNC staffs to receive internships. Also, at the request of Mobutu, Belgium's Lucien Cahen took office as director of the IMNC in 1970. Joseph Cornet became the director in 1971. In 1986, Lema Gwete, the first Congolese director, took office and was director until he was dismissed during the power change in 1997. In 1992, all Belgians staff members left the IMNC and they were replaced by Congolese staffs (van Beurden 2015: 185, 191–192, 306). After the Lema Gwete, Esole Eka Likote (1997–2002), Ngangeli Olimu Joseph (10 April 2002–7 October 2002), Bakua-Lufu Badibanga (2002–2004), a woman named Shae-A-Tshilulila (2004–2006), Joseph Ginyangula Ibongo (2006–2016), Bakua-Lufu Badibanga (2016–up to now) have been or are in charge.

support. Therefore, it is logical to understand that the DRC Director did not want any conflicts with Belgium (Banshona 2020b).

When I participated in the Project for the Establishment of a National Museum, I often got into a debate with the DRC Director regarding the exhibitions. During meetings, he agreed that the history of the DRC should be exhibited as a national museum, but several times he overturned the decision of displaying history. I argued that the new National Museum should exhibit the history of the DRC in order to reach the status of a National Museum or a Central National Museum. If the IMNC does not own historical artefacts, I suggested that these should be obtained from other institutions of the DRC. I also presented my personal research in order to support my argument. However, the DRC Director objected that the new National Museum was not a history museum and that it should prioritise exhibiting artefacts that pertained to the DRC's ethnic groups and culture. Moreover, he argued that due to a limited number of artefacts that pertained to history, he opposed the idea of exhibiting such artefacts.

In January 2020, in an interview with an MNRDC official during my fieldwork, visitors expressed the view that they had inquired about historical artefacts and that the explanations regarding them were insufficient. Visitors complained that the exhibitions did not display the details of the DRC's history. They claimed that the explanation of history was very limited. The MNRDC official stated that if the new National Museum was built to cultivate national identity, it would be necessary to focus on all three periods: pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial. For this reason, the MNRDC insisted that it was planning exhibitions about the history of the DRC as a special exhibition for the first anniversary of its opening. An MNRDC official argued that the IMNC and the History Department at the University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN) needed to cooperate with each other to hold a special exhibition (Banshona 2020b).

Considering that the history of the DRC is mostly written by Belgium and that this subject is still taught as if it was written by Belgium, not by the DRC, in schools, the exhibition in the new National Museum should be able to show the true history of the DRC but it does not. In other words, the exhibition of the new museum follows the Belgian identity or mindset (Banshona 2020a). The issue with the current exhibition is that it concentrates on the exhibition of prehistoric times and folklore materials while showing very little history

of the colonial and post-colonial periods. To put it short, it does not show the history and culture of the Congo from the Congolese perspective. I think such an exhibition can never contextualise the history and culture of the DRC.

In an interview⁴ with some MNRDC members held on 8 January 2020, they were asked about the current exhibition. Professor Henry Bondjoko, director of the museum, stated that he was satisfied with the new National Museum as a museum expert, but the visitors were not satisfied and that it did not meet their expectations. However, he stated that the main focus of the MNRDC exhibition was to show the value of the various ethnic groups of the DRC. He argued that this type of exhibition was necessary because during the colonial period Westerners distorted or prejudiced the values of ethnic groups and devalued them as useless or magical. Through these exhibitions, the Congolese argued that they would have the opportunity to re-enjoy their culture, which was separated and cut off by colonialism. He insisted that history is not only cultural but embedded in every aspect of life. He also added that it is impossible for the MNRDC to display artefacts of all ethnic groups but, as an alternative, it is considering additional exhibits of photos and other materials in empty spaces. Mrs. Jeanine Yongolelo Amusubi also stated that according to the visitors, the exhibitions were not comprehensive. Mrs. Gina Mianda mentioned that the current exhibition did not tie all the Congolese together (Bunjokoko 2020; Mianda 2020; Amusubi 2020).

I pointed out that the current exhibitions have only a few historical artefacts, and it is a problem that all are centred on ethnic groups and cultural artefacts. The MNRDC insisted that an exhibition on history is essential to function and qualify as a national museum (Kim 2020).

The Deputy Director, Franklin Mubwabu, explained that he is planning a special exhibition to show the history of the DRC (see Appendix 2). Mrs. Jeanine Yongolelo Amusubi added that the reason for the need of a special exhibition stems from the needs of visitors who are not satisfied with the current exhibition. In other words, it is necessary to hold a special exhibition because the current exhibitions do not display the rich history of the DRC. The director expressed the need for a special exhibition every year in order

4 In the morning interview at the MNRDC conference room, the Director, Professor Henry Bondjoko, Deputy Director Mr. Franklin Mubwabu, Researcher Eric Kuikende Banshona, Madame Gina Mianda in charge of administration, Colette Awomo Manunga of Restoration, and Jeanine Yongolelo Amusubi in the Conservation Department attended.

to commemorate the memories of the Congolese history. For example, in January, the DRC was hosting the anniversary of the death of President Laurent-Désiré Kabila and Prime Minister Patrice Émery Lumumba, and these are some of the special memories that the Congolese should maintain and share with the whole nation. However, although the MNRDC is currently a national museum, these are not exhibited anywhere in the museum (Bunjoko 2020; Amusubi 2020; Mubwabu 2020).

On the purpose of the new National Museum, DRC government officials explained what the new museum should be, but there was no official discussion of where the MNRDC stands on this matter. This situation is linked to the question, “Does the MNRDC have the status in line with the Central National Museum of the DRC?” In other words, will the DRC government treat the MNRDC the same as the seven national museums⁵ or does it see it as the Central National Museum? Under the current circumstances, the MNRDC does not have the status of the Central National Museum of the DRC, which requires a critical debate in the future and a legal settlement of its status. However, even if the MNRDC is viewed similarly as the seven museums, the exhibition of historical materials is essential in order to contextualise the history and culture of the DRC.

Restitution of Belgian Artefacts and Contextualisation of the DRC’s History and Culture

It is important to realize that a special exhibition plan can show the contextualisation of DRC’s historical and cultural identities. I also think that the issue of returning Belgian artefacts is related to this. The issue of restituting artefacts from Belgium was first formally raised in April 1960, when the independence was in progress, in *Notre Kongo*, the periodical publication of the political party, Alliance des Bakongo (hereafter referred to as ABAKO).⁶ ABAKO filed for the return of rights and of the DRC artefacts held by Belgium. Since then, the DRC and Belgium continue to debate over

5 These seven museums are: Musée National de Lubumbashi in Katanga; Musée National de Kananga in Kasai-Occidental; Musée National de Mbandaka in Equateur; Musée National de Boma in Bas-Congo; Musée National de Kinshasa in Académie des Beaux Arts; Musée National de Kikwit in Bandundu; and Musée d’Art Contemporain in Centre de Butembo and Echangeur de Limeté.

6 Created by the Bakongo ethnic group as a centre, the Alliance des Bakongo (ABAKO) was started as a cultural organisation to protect language, developed into a political organization, and led to an independence movement from Belgium (Lemarchand 1961: 344).

the ownership of artefacts held by Belgium (Van Beurden 2015: 100). I agree with Benedict Anderson (1991: 200–201) that the creation of a national identity requires both oblivion and memory. A museum is a place where one can use this strategy well, depending on the collection, research direction and content of the exhibition. The DRC's National Museum has emerged as the most representative place for a debate on the nation's construction process after decolonisation and independence. The collection was controversial in that it could show the standards or characteristics of the colonial past and the future after independence. Mobutu Sese Seko recognised the museum as an important tool in the struggle for cultural guardianship (Van Beurden 2015: 2).

Mobutu Sese Seko's cultural politics led to the return of DRC artefacts from Belgium and, after independence, the country emerged as a leading protector of cultural heritage. Mobutu held an "authenticité campaign" and extensively campaigned to restore Congolese culture through the restoration of the traditional culture. These movements can be perceived as a process of decolonisation and as part of the national building process (Van Beurden 2015: 19).

Mobutu Sese Seko promoted the nation's construction through the "authenticité campaign" and "Zairianisation." The Authenticity Movement and Zairianisation were economic programmes and processes, as well as socio-political and cultural theories in which Mobutu Sese Seko's government was involved in order to promote the ideals of the state and create a Congolese national identity (Huckstep 2005: 215).

More than anything else, the authenticity campaign could be understood as an attempt to integrate the nation by creating a concept about national consciousness and state consciousness. This movement arose from the revolt against the dominant customs and values of non-Africans and colonialism. It reflected the hopes of the people for the new government, idealism and optimism (Bobb 1999: 47–48).

In October 1973, Zaire's leader, Mobutu Sese Seko, wearing his trademark leopard-skin hat, criticized the "systematic looting" of a valuable cultural heritage by Western colonising countries at the United Nations headquarters in New York. As Mobutu Sese Seko took power and nationalised mineral resources, he thought of the "nationalisation" of Zaire's cultural heritage

as a resource to be protected. His demand for Belgium to return authentic and valuable artefacts not only represented a cultural significance but also economic and political values (Van Beurden 2015: 1).

Sarah Van Beurden studied the common strategies of legitimate political power through the management of cultural heritage. She named this strategy “cultural guardianship” and, at the end of the colonial period, Belgians used such strategy to justify their colonisation. Mobutu Sese Seko used this strategy to secure political legitimacy, as can be seen in the restoration of the culture through legitimacy movement and the establishment of the IMNC. In other words, Mobutu Sese Seko tried to strengthen its sovereignty through cultural protection, which is called cultural politics (Van Beurden 2015: 1–2).

Museums, collections, and exhibitions are important subjects for studying the field of history because they have been accepted as major elements in the construction of identities, especially national identities. In the course of decolonisation, regardless of political changes on the surface, the national identity after independence was bound to depend heavily on Western cultural traditions and relationships. The DRC’s politics of museum culture had to rely on Belgium’s heritage in many ways, and the DRC-Belgian relationship continued despite tensions. DRC’s artefacts held by Belgium are of great economic and symbolic value, so there is a conflict between rights and returns (Van Beurden 2009: 3).

Therefore, another important issue raised by the opening of the new National Museum is the restitution of artefacts held in Belgium. If these artefacts are returned, this will eventually demonstrate the contextualisation of the DRC’s history and culture. This is because the exhibition can be changed according to the purpose of building the museum and eventually contextualises the history and culture of the DRC. I have already mentioned that there is a need to discuss the return of the artefacts that Belgium has plundered since the new museum was built (Kim 2016: 426–427). President Félix Tshisekedi, who attended the MNRDC opening ceremony on 23 November 2019, thanked Belgium for conserving many of the Congo’s cultural heritages, but found that many of the artefacts held by the MRAC were looted and asked that they be returned. The DRC did not require an immediate return of the Congo artefacts and cultural heritages from Belgium. “We have other urgent issues,” said President Tshisekedi in an interview with the Belgian daily *Le Soir* prior to his visit to Brussels in September 2019. For that reason,

to President Tshisekedi, despite having the largest territory in sub-Saharan Africa, free primary education was a huge challenge with weak public finance. He insisted that the process of returning works of art should be done in a gradual, progressive and organised manner, and that the restitution of the artefacts held by Belgium would revive the Congolese collective memory (*Jeune Afrique* 2019; *Le Point Afrique* 2019; Mfundu 2019).

Belgium's ethnographic museum MRAC has many African artefacts, 80% of which are from 120,000 artefacts belonging to the DRC. Belgium returned 1,042 ethnographic and art objects between 1976 and 1982. They accepted Mobutu Sese Seko's request to return the looted heritage (Van Beurden 2015: 101). However, in the past, the return of the artefacts was in the form of a donation from Belgium in order that they did not lose face. Since then, the Congo National Museum planned by Mobutu had not been completed and Belgium had not returned any artefacts. Also, some of the artefacts had been stolen with the fall of Mobutu Sese Seko (*Le Point Afrique* 2018; *Le Point Afrique* 2019). This fact added to the reason why Belgium was more reluctant to return the artefacts.

In contrast to Mobutu Sese Seko's active efforts to return the artefacts, his succeeding rulers have not raised the issue of their return. Former President Joseph Kabila has commented on the return of looted artefacts held by Belgium but never made an official request. The problem of "looted treasures"⁷ in Africa during the colonial period has long been a controversial topic (Lime 2019). In the past, Western countries opposed African requisitions for reasons of inadequate facilities and political instability. The DRC's new National Museum has made these claims disappear, and it is interesting to see what Belgium's next move will be (BBC News 2019).

In an interview with RFI in February 2019, Paul Bakwa-Lufu Badibanga mentioned that there was enough space to display the artefacts in the new museum if they were to be returned. However, as mentioned above, the return of artefacts is not a newly raised issue, but a problem that has been raised steadily. Badibanga claimed that the return of artefacts should not mean the dismantling of Western museums and causing disruptions in operating the museum. First, it will be important to know which artefacts the Belgian museums possess. Thus, the focus should be on identifying and investigating which museums hold which artefacts. It is also very important

7 For "looted treasures," see Lime 2018.

to determine whether the artefact was legally acquired or looted at the time of colonisation (Guilleux 2019).

The debate on the return of African artefacts is being discussed in earnest by French President Emmanuel Macron since November 2018. At his request, the report written by the Senegalese economist Felwine Sarr and the French art historian Bénédicte Savoy recommended amendments to the Cultural Heritage Administration Act in order to return colonial looted cultural properties. The report estimates that approximately 90% of African cultural properties all over the world are currently in Europe, and that for example the British Museum in London and the Quai Branly Museum in Paris both hold more than 70,000 artefacts. Western museums have refused to return cultural properties as excuses for their lack of preservation and management ability. I think that the opening of the DRC's new National Museum, although it is only one example, is likely to dismiss the Western museums' pretexts. It is expected that African countries will provide a breakthrough in the struggle to reclaim their cultural properties looted by Western explorers and colonists (*Franceinfo* 2019; Ross and Pennetier 2018).

The DRC's new National Museum has opened, but to date the DRC has not taken any actions to bring back the artefacts. However, from the content of the speeches held at the opening ceremony of the new National Museum on 23 November 2019, it is clear that the debate on the return of looted artefacts from the colonial period has only begun. Professor Placide Mumbembe stated that "returning the artefacts is a legitimate question." He insisted that the DRC and Belgian researchers should be able to collaborate on the artefacts stored in the MRAC, and that they should interact and make temporary exhibitions in order to smoothly solve the problem of returning artefacts. This effort can ultimately be a solution to the healing of history (*Franceinfo* 2019; *Le Point Afrique* 2019).

I think the aforementioned arguments are persuasive. It will take a long time to get the artefacts back because a return will be possible only when relations between the two countries have been improved. Realistically, it is improbable to solve this problem in a radical way. Therefore, it is not right for the DRC to push the Belgian government for the return of relics emotionally. In order to persuade the Belgian government and the people, the DRC first needs to study the artefacts. It is also necessary to present how the artefacts will be managed after they are returned.

However, some oppose President Félix Tshisekedi's attitude toward the issue of having artefacts returned. In particular, the claims of the *La Lucha* (Struggle for Change) civic movement that Belgium should return the artefacts because they were looted and stolen are not helping preserve the DRC's artefacts. They claim that the preservation of the artefacts by Belgium is not to the benefit of the Congolese but to their own benefit (*Le Point Afrique* 2019).

It makes no sense to discuss the return of artefacts without explaining the circumstances of the colonial looting. The issue of reparation, rewards and return of artefacts demonstrates that the colonial past is not being liquidated due to racism and unhealthy relationships between former colonial countries such as France and Belgium with French-speaking African countries. The problem of reparation is not only a financial one, but it can also show the efforts needed to mitigate the remaining violence as the dominant form of European and African relations. The work of returning African artefacts must be accompanied by significant conversation efforts, and efforts to transfer artefacts in Europe should proceed case by case, not just be based on anger or paternalism, but as a fair process (Niang 2019).

Records of violent and problematic relations, and the peoples and cultures that produced them, contributed to the European modernism project. They represent the extraction of physical, intellectual and cultural workforce. As Valentin Mudimbe explained, Western countries have always regarded African culture and peoples as “La mission civilisatrice” or the “white man's burden” with an imperial point of view (Niang 2019).

In December 2018, the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Belgium (Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale) was remodeled and reopened. MRAC has a lot of limitations in the content and method of exhibition, so it is called the “only remaining colonial museum in the world.” In particular, the sculptures custom-made by Leopold II during the museum's first opening contain a message that Belgium brought civilisation and prosperity to the Congo and displayed it throughout the museum. After renovations, the exhibition was reconstructed in a way to reflect the colonial history. For instance, a new pavilion space at the entrance of the exhibition space was constructed so as to create a section that reflects the history of colonial events when the collections were brought to this place. The new exhibition direction focused more on the DRC's current culture and future possibilities, while maintaining an anthropological approach like before the remodeling. While dealing with

traditional themes such as marriage, funeral, etc., attempts were made to implement modern exhibition methods by exhibiting contemporary dictions and contemporary articles (Sangmyung University and GDC Consulting Consortium 2019: 6; Cessou 2019).

However, the exhibition of the MARC does not take into account historical consciousness and cultural identity from the perspective of the Congolese. MARC shows the history and culture of the DRC from the Belgian perspective. The DRC's new National Museum needs a strategy to show that the DRC has a long history and developed before Belgium came to the country. As an example, I think the new National Museum should be able to show what the Belgian colonial rule was like and how the Congolese suffered from the colonial rule. But the new National Museum does not display any of the Belgian colonial rule. This is why the exhibition of the new National Museum does not contextualise the history and culture of the DRC.

David Van Reybrouck, the author of *Congo, Une histoire* (2012),⁸ stated that the MRAC in Tervuren was “an embarrassing fossil that shows the glory of colonial rule.” He pointed out that the new MRAC, which opened on 19 December 2018, will be the reason for long-standing glory and pride (Cessou 2018; Van Reybrouck 2012).

On 25 September 2018, 36 people, mainly African descendants of artists and university researchers, published an open letter addressed to the Belgian government. Accusing Belgium of “lagging behind in returning colonial treasures” compared to France, Germany and Canada, they demanded that Belgium return the looted artefacts and artworks from the colonial period to the DRC. They claimed that “more than 90% of Africa's classical art works are outside Africa,” and criticised the West for looting. Artefacts looted during the colonial period are possessed by the British Museum in England, the Quai Branly Museum in France, as well as the MRAC, the Musée africain de Namur, and the Musée des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique in Belgium. Because of this, Africans claim that they cannot show the stolen artefacts to their descendants (Cessou 2018; *Le Point Afrique* 2018).

8 The book, *Congo, Une histoire* (Van Reybrouck 2012), was translated and published in the United States in 2014 under the title *Congo: The Epic History of a People* (Van Reybrouck 2014).

Conclusion and Suggestions

During the completion ceremony on 14 June 2019, Ms. Baek Sook-Hee, Vice-President of KOICA, also addressed the challenges faced by the DRC. She explained the necessity of excavation, preservation, and research of historical and cultural artefacts to be displayed in the National Museum, and mentioned the unique situation facing the DRC. She pointed out that the history and culture of the DRC has a peculiarity that is transmitted orally and that many artefacts are located outside the DRC. She emphasised future obligations, including the collection and research of artefacts from various ethnic groups. Of course, the new collection and research should focus on how the exhibition can show the entire historical timeline of the DRC. If the exhibition can do that, the new National Museum can show Congo's historical and cultural identity from a balanced perspective (Dépêche KOICA 2019).

The MNRDC exhibition should try to unite the Congolese by contextualising the historical and cultural identity of the DRC. In order for the new museum to be reborn as a balanced space that shows the historical and cultural identities of the Congolese people, it is necessary to continuously conduct excavation, collection, research, and preservation. In addition, an exhibition should be set up to show all ethnic groups, all regions of the DRC, and all pre-colonial periods, colonial eras, and post-independence periods. In my opinion, the DRC government's involvement and determination are very crucial for the accomplishment of this aim.

The following efforts are necessary for the new National Museum in order to reflect its original purpose. First of all, I think the exhibition of MNRDC has to show the national identities and national consciousness of the DRC. The MNRDC needs to correct the bias of exhibiting artefacts on folk and cultural materials, and to exhibit historical artefacts.

Based on the current state of the exhibition, the MNRDC cannot be categorised a National Museum or a Central National Museum along with the other seven national museums of the DRC. In order to align with the purpose of the museum, it is necessary for the MNRDC to have a balanced exhibition that contextualises the DRC's historical and cultural identity. In other words, the new National Museum should be a container of the history and culture of a country. From a developing country's perspective, it is not possible to construct a museum by dividing it into history, culture,

and folklore. Also, all museums have space limitations and cannot display all artefacts simultaneously. It is necessary to make efforts to show the historical and cultural identities of the Congolese people by periodically changing the permanent exhibition. The MNRDC then needs to organise the exhibition contents so that it can become a cultural icon of the DRC for national integration and culture creation based on the diverse history and culture of over 450 ethnic groups.

In this sense, the planning of the special exhibition on history is very timely. The question of securing new materials and artefacts to hold a special exhibition on the DRC history is another matter. The historical artefacts held by the IMNC (Institut des Musées Nationaux du Congo) have very limited data on the period before and after independence as well as the period from independence to the present. I contend that the MNRDC needs to collaborate with the History Department of the University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN) and that it is necessary to secure data from other institutions. This is reflected in the draft of a special exhibition on history as shown in Appendix 2. In order to secure new historical data, I recommend collaborating with other institutions such as the Institut National des Archives du Congo (INACO), the Agence Congolaise de Presse (ACP), the Radio-télévision Nationale Congolaise (RTNC), and newspapers such as *Le Potentiel*. I believe that it is more appropriate to secure such work through a business agreement as a national project than to purchase or secure data through financial input. It is necessary for the MNRDC to collaborate with the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the IMNC.

Based on my research, the INACO had obtained a lot of data from colonial times up to the time President Laurent-Désiré Kabila was in office, but these were not organised. In particular, Joseph Kasa-Vubu and Patrice Émery Lumumba's Declaration of Independence, newspapers at the time of independence, and Belgian letters and official letters on independence are very vital documents.⁹ Also, the Agence Congolaise de Presse (ACP) has a wealth of newspapers, magazines and photographs, but it has not been able to figure out how much information it has because it has been very poorly organised. Especially since independence, there were a lot of photographic

9 I met with INACO's Director General, Hermelinde Lanza Doodoo, and explained my intentions and asked for assistance. I promised to provide assistance in return if the IMNC requested this. Sample data was obtained with the explanation from the curator, Mobembo Pierre Aime, who was in charge of the archives.

materials, but these were piled up in a cabinet.¹⁰ The national television RTNC reached out regarding this matter but unfortunately, data collection failed. The RTNC informed that if the Minister of Communication and Media were to send a request to the director of RNTC, its media department could cooperate (Sangmyung University and GDC Consulting Consortium 2016).

Moreover, the return of the DRC artefacts held by Belgium can be seen as an urgent issue that must be steadily progressed at the national level. The restitution of the artefacts is a meaningful work that can contextualise the history and culture of the true Congolese as a “recovery” of the lost Congolese history and cultural heritage.

MRAC’s Director Guido Gryseels expressed his intention to return part of the DRC’s artefacts symbolically with the opening of the DRC’s new National Museum in an interview with Professor Shim Ji-young, a member of the PMC, on 25 May 2019. At the same time, he expressed his intention to discuss the specific return method for the representatives of KOICA and PMC (Sangmyung University and GDC Consulting Consortium 2019: 8).

The restitution of the artefacts must be completed through an agreement between the DRC and Belgium governments. Thus, it cannot be done through bilateral consultations between Korea and the KOICA or the PMC and the head of the Belgium Museum. In October 2018, MRAC Director Guido Gryseels had brought up the idea of returning some of the archaeological artefacts to the IMNC Director but the IMNC believed that the return of a few artefacts was insufficient. The issue of returning the artefacts must be led by the DRC’s Ministry of Culture and they continuously communicate with the Belgian government. The South Korean government has decided not to relate the issue to the preparation for the museum’s opening (Sangmyung University and GDC Consulting Consortium 2019: 8).

Due to the establishment of the new National Museum, the issue of repatriation of the Congolese artefacts from Belgium is expected to continue to be a dynamic issue. Many challenges lie ahead, but the DRC needs to continue to work hard in order to regain its lost history and cultural heritage.

10 I met with Jose Robat Nlandu, ACP’s Directeur de Responsable des Archives, to ask for assistance and, in return, promised to provide data upon request. In particular, I worked with Gustave Mpela Mpakasa, Director Assistant in the Image and Photography Department, who was in charge of photographic materials.

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Appendix 1. MNRDC Leaflet: Musée National de la République Démocratique du Congo



Droit d'entrée

- **NATIONAUX**
Adultes | 2 000 FC
Enfants | 2 000 FC
Seniores | 2 000 FC / 65ans
- **NON-NATIONAUX**
Adultes | 10\$
Enfants | 5\$
- **ÉCOLES CONSULAIRES**
5\$ / classe
- **HR**
Pour les visites en groupe de plus de 20 personnes, grâces de venir combiner à 7 jours.

* Une carte d'entrée personnelle doit être présentée.
Sans destination.

Droit d'entrée accordé gracieusement aux personnes en fauteuil roulant, et les bébés en poussette.

MUSEOLOGIE organisée avec nos collègues

Votre Chemin vers le MNRDC

Rue du 23 août 1963 n°1422,
Commune de Lingewa, Ville-Province de Kinshasa

1	2	3
1	2	3
1	2	3

1. Centre des visiteurs
2. Musée
3. Boutique

Adresse
Boulevard Triomphal n°1422,
Commune de Lingewa,
Ville-Province de Kinshasa

E-mail
mnrdc14@gmail.com

Facebook
Musée National de la RD Congo

MNRDC Musée National de la République Démocratique du Congo



Facilités

Le MNRDC possède en son sein deux réserves, trois salles d'exposition dont deux permanentes et une temporaire, une boutique de souvenirs, une cafeteria, une bibliothèque, une salle de séminaire, une salle de conférence, une salle polyvalente, un studio d'enregistrement et des espaces en plus au.



Éducation et Animation culturelle

Nous sommes un service public créé au sein du Musée National de la République Démocratique du Congo. Nous assurons la médiation culturelle entre nos visiteurs et les collections du Musée grâce à différents services que nous nous offrons, notamment les visites guidées, la recherche scientifique, les ateliers pédagogiques, les conférences, les colloques, les expositions thématiques, le multimédia, etc.





Mots du directeur du MNRDC

Nous vous souhaitons la bienvenue au Musée National de la République Démocratique du Congo (MNRDC). Le MNRDC dépend à part entière de l'Institut des Musées nationaux du Congo (IMNC) qui a la mission de gérer tous les Musées nationaux en province et d'en ouvrir tant d'autres sur toute l'étendue du pays. Le MNRDC est le résultat de long processus de la coopération bilatérale entre le gouvernement sud-coréen et le gouvernement de la RDC, des efforts consentis par les experts sud-coréens et congolais (IMNC), et de l'implication financière, matérielle et logistique de la KOICA.

L'objectif primordial de la construction du MNRDC est de faire découvrir la culture de la RDC à travers son patrimoine culturel matériel et immatériel, dont l'IMNC est le dépositaire, et cela, pour que les Congolais se l'approprient afin de relever les défis du développement durable.

À cette fin, chaque étape du MNRDC est conçue dans l'espoir que chaque visiteur passera un moment mémorable et sera le témoin d'une culture florissante.

Exposition

L'IMNC a mis très exactement à la disposition du MNRDC 12 002 objets conservés dans deux réserves répondant aux normes muséales et 423 objets exposés dans trois salles, dont deux salles d'exposition permanente et une salle d'exposition temporaire.



- La première salle permanente met en scène « L'homme face aux défis de l'existence ». Elle retrace l'histoire des Congolais et montre la vie quotidienne ainsi que l'artisanat.
- La seconde salle permanente est axée sur le cycle de la vie et les expressions culturelles. Elle met en évidence l'importance des rites entourés au cours de la vie et l'ordre social communautaire.
- La salle temporaire est dédiée aux instruments de musique et de communication regroupés selon leurs familles.

L'exposition intitulée « Vivre ensemble pour la cohésion nationale » reflète la culture et l'identité profondes des Congolais qui relient les aïeux à leurs enfants.

Heures de visite

- Lundi
fermé au public
- Mardi – Vendredi
9:00-16:30
- Samedi, Dimanche, jours fériés
09:00-17:00

Plan du musée

NIVEAU 1

- Salle d'exposition 1
- Exposition dans les couloirs
- Salle d'exposition 2
- Atelier de terrasse



NIVEAU 0

- Hall
- Salle d'exposition temporaire
- Salle Multifonctionnelle



Concept architectural du Musée

Le chemin culturel qui borde le jardin du musée et qui conduit les visiteurs vers l'intérieur est un espace représentant symboliquement l'histoire congolaise, histoire composée d'un certain nombre de groupes ethniques et motivée par une forte volonté d'intégration culturelle.



Ce chemin culturel qui fait office de voie centrale pour les visiteurs relie les principaux sites du musée, qu'ils soient situés à l'intérieur ou à l'extérieur; de plus, ce devrait être un lieu de communication grâce à des événements culturels comme des expositions en plein air, des projections de films, etc.

L'aspect extérieur du MNRDC est inspiré de la beauté traditionnelle congolaise comme le montre les motifs de son design. L'image du village régional et de la maison traditionnelle est réinterprétée avec le toit divisé, et les motifs d'artisans traditionnels interfèrent avec le motif de la façade principale en tant que métaphore architecturale.

L'espace interne du MNRDC est conçu comme un musée durable et respectueux de l'environnement, et cela en tenant compte du climat tropical de la RDC et en adoptant un design passif. Les principaux exemples du design passif adoptés pour le MNRDC sont le toit et la paroi extérieurs en double épaisseur pour réduire l'intensité de la lumière solaire, un système de ventilation et d'éclairage naturel, et un système d'énergie solaire permettant de réduire le plus possible la consommation d'énergie.

Appendix 2. Special Exhibition Plan



REPUBLIQUE DEMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO

Ministère de la Culture et des Arts
INSTITUT DES MUSEES NATIONAUX DU CONGO
Musée National de la République Démocratique du Congo



PROJET D'EXPOSITION TEMPORAIRE SUR L'HISTOIRE DE LA RDC

THEME : L'HISTOIRE DU CONGO A TRAVERS LES IMAGE

1. MOTIVATION :

Depuis l'ouverture du nouveau Musée National de la République Démocratique du Congo, les visiteurs manifestent leurs intérêts pour la culture congolaise. La RD Congo, un pays de plus de 450 ethnies, devra rassembler toutes ces ethnies à travers les expositions du Musée National. Aussi, le Musée National a l'objectif de refléter et renforcer l'identité nationale partant du parcours historique de tous les peuples congolais, avec leur diversité culturelle depuis la préhistoire jusqu'à aujourd'hui.

Sur ce point, l'exposition actuelle du Musée National de la RDC ne rencontre pas la satisfaction de tous les congolais. La majorité de nos visiteurs souhaite voir aussi la partie historique exposée soit par photographie ou par des spécimens. Afin de renforcer l'unité et la cohésion nationale, il est donc impératif de monter une exposition temporaire sur l'histoire de la RD Congo.

2. PARTENAIRES CIBLES

En vue de réaliser cette exposition, le Musée aura besoin de la participation de services ci-après :

✓ LA RADIO TELEVISION NATIONALE

A cette Institution nous visons les matériels ci-après :

- Le Discours de l'Indépendance à la table Ronde ;
- Les images de la révolution de pères de l'Indépendance ;
- Les images de martyres de la pentecôte ;
- Le Discours de Multipartisme du Président Mobutu ;
- Le Discours de mouvement de l'authenticité du Président Mobutu ;
- Le Documentaire de la chute du Régime Mobutu ;
- Le discours patriotique du Président Désiré Kabila ;
- Le Documentaire sur l'assassinat du Président Désiré Kabila ;

- Le Discours d'investiture du Président Joseph Kabila en 2001 après la mort de son père ;
- Documentaire sur la transition 1+4,
- Le Discours d'investiture du Président Joseph Kabila après les élections de 2006 ;
- Les images de moments forts de la campagne électorale de 2011 ;
- Le Discours d'investiture du Président Joseph Kabila après les élections de 2011 ;
- Les images de moments forts de la fin de deuxième mandat du Président Kabila ;
- La cérémonie de la passation pacifique du Pouvoir entre Mr Joseph Kabila et le Président Felix Tshisekedi ;
- Et autres.

✓ **LE JOURNAL OFFICIEL**

A cette Institution nous visons les matériels ci-après :

- Le document sur les partis politiques de la RDC aux élections de 2006, 2011 et 2018
- Les listes de candidats aux élections présidentielles, sénatoriales et la députation Nationale et Provinciale de 2006, 2011 et 2018 ;
- Les Documents de la proclamation des résultats des élections présidentielles, sénatoriales et la députation Nationale et Provinciale de 2006, 2011 et 2018 ;

✓ **LES ARCHIVES NATIONALES**

A cette Institution nous visons les matériels ci-après :

- Les photos de tous les personnages importants de la colonisation ;
- Les photos des pères de l'Indépendance du Congo ;
- Les photos de tous les Présidents de la RD Congo ;
- Les photos de tous les premiers ministres depuis 1960 ;

✓ **LE PARLEMENT**

A cette Institution nous visons les matériels ci-après :

- Les photos de tous les présidents de l'assemblée Nationale depuis 1960 ;
- Le tout premier discours du président de l'assemblée nationale ;
- Les images de discours de Présidents de la RD Congo devant les différents congrès ;

✓ **LE SENAT**

A cette Institution nous visons les matériels ci-après :

- Les photos de tous les présidents du Senat depuis 1960 ;

- Le tout premier discours du président du Sénat ;

✓ **LA PRIMATURE**

A cette Institution nous visons les matériels ci-après :

- Les photos de tous les premiers ministres depuis 1960 ;

✓ **L'ARMEE**

- Les photos de tous les Généraux depuis 1960

✓ **LES UNIVERSITES**

Les photos des Recteurs et Evénements.

✓ **LE GOUVERNEMENT**

Au gouvernement nous sollicitons de l'accompagnement financier.

✓ **LA PRESEIDENCE DE LA REPUBLIQUE**

A cette Institution nous visons les matériels ci-après :

- La voiture du Premier Ministre Patrice Lumumba
- La voiture du Président Mobutu
- Autres reliques des anciens Présidents

✓ **LE COLLECTIF DES CHEFS COUTUMIERS**

A cette Institution nous visons les matériels ci-après :

- Les photos des tous les chefs coutumiers des Royaumes Kongo, Empires Lunda et Luba et le Royaume Kuba ;
- Autres reliques des chefs coutumiers ;

✓ **L'UNESCO**

A cette Institution nous visons l'accompagnement et facilitation de l'obtention de certains objets culturels protégés et difficile à obtenir.

✓ **LA MONUSCO**

A cette Institution nous visons l'accompagnement logistique à Kinshasa et l'intérieur du Pays.

2. PARRAINS DE L'EVENEMENT

1. **Mr. Thomas LUHAKA** : Ministre de l'Enseignement Supérieur et Universitaire.
Notre choix sur son Excellence Mr. Thomas LUHAKA s'articule sur sa maîtrise de l'histoire générale de la RD Congo à travers son émission 'JE CONNAIS LE CONGO'
2. **Professeur NDAY WEL** : Il est bien connu dans la maîtrise de l'histoire de la RD Congo entant que Professeur Historien.
3. L'auteur du Livre : Numismatique de la RDC (les monnaies du Congo)



LA DIRECTION

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