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The Art of Diplomacy in Dakar: The International Politics of Display at the 1966 Premier Festival Mondial des Arts N&#65533;gres

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The Art of Diplomacy in Dakar

The International Politics of Display at the 1966 *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

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in Art History

by

Lauren Elizabeth Taylor

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Art of Diplomacy in Dakar

The International Politics of Display at the 1966 *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*

by

Lauren Elizabeth Taylor

Doctor of Philosophy in Art History

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Professor Steven D. Nelson, Chair

This dissertation examines the displays of the visual arts that appeared in the 1966 *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* (First World Festival of Negro Arts) with respect to mid-century international politics. In addition to performances of dance and music, film screenings, poetry readings, and a scholarly colloquium, the state-sponsored Festival, held in Dakar, Senegal, included two major art exhibitions. The first, titled *l'Art Nègre: Sources, Évolution, Expansion* (Negro Art: Sources, Evolution, Expansion), brought together more than 500 works of African art loaned from collections in nineteen countries. The other, called

Tendances et Confrontations (Tendencies and Confrontations), was composed of contemporary art by African and African-descended artists working on the continent and throughout the diaspora. Drawing upon archival documents and photography from collections in Senegal, France, Switzerland, and the United States, my project examines the various diplomatic roles played by the visual arts at the event.

On one hand, the arts reinforced symbolic or spiritual ties posited to be shared by all humankind. For example, both Senegalese President Léopold Sédar Senghor and UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), a major financial and intellectual contributor to the Festival, considered intercultural exchange to be essential to achieving peace after the Second World War and decolonization. On the other hand, the arts acted as useful bartering chips; they were offered, withheld, rejected or praised in efforts to manipulate international politics amid the Cold War and alongside burgeoning nationalist movements accompanying African independence. By considering the relationship of the arts to international conceptualizations of black identity, continental African diplomacy, post-colonial Senegalese relations with France, and Cold War rivalries, my project unsettles an art-historical tendency to portray the artistic programming accompanying African independence as only reflective of nationalist, domestic politics.

The dissertation of Lauren Elizabeth Taylor is approved.

Andrew Apter

George Thomas Baker

Saloni Mathur

Steven D. Nelson, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2019

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of two remarkable women.

Mary Nooter Roberts, a model of how, as a scholar and as a teacher, to lead with love,

and

Laura Marjorie Taylor, to whom I owe my name, my love for the arts, and my eternal gratitude.

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Introduction

> *I do not send congratulation telegrams to heads of state when a rocket trial has succeeded, when humans are shot into space to reach the moon. I believe we are called for much greater revolutionary achievements than for study of the cosmos- we have to create a new humanism- which this time will include the entirety of humans on our planet. On the way to this goal we organized the Festival…*
>
> *Léopold Sédar Senghor, April 22, 1966* [1]

In April of 1966, thousands of enthusiasts, artists, and intellectuals from around the world convened in the newly independent nation of Senegal to attend the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*, or First World Festival of Negro Arts. For twenty-six days, creative expressions overtook the city, presented aloft the soaring rhetoric of the nation's first president, Léopold Sédar Senghor, whose leadership brought the festival to fruition.[2] Since taking office six years earlier, when Senegal gained its independence from France, Senghor had invested heavily in the arts, declaring the budding nation's cultural development to be integral to its growth on all other fronts.[3] But beyond serving national development, Senghor also posited that the arts held the key to unlocking peaceful progress for a broader audience: humanity at large.

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[1]Translation by Anita Kolettu. Gisela Bonn, "Afrikas Unruhe: Gesprach Mit Leopold Sedar Senghor," *Christ Und Welt*, April 22, 1966.

[2] One source estimates that over 10,000 people from abroad attended, but exact attendance numbers are unknown. Newell Flather, "Impressions of the Dakar Festival," *Africa Report* (1966).

[3] The importance that Senghor placed upon cultural development and his understanding of its inseparability from economic, social, and political development are examined at length by Tracy Snipe. Elizabeth Harney and Abdou Sylla have examined the ways in which this investment manifest in relation to the visual arts. Tracy D. Snipe, *Arts and Politics in Senegal, 1960-1996* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1999); Elizabeth Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow : Art, Politics, and the Avant-Garde in Senegal, 1960-1995* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Abdou Sylla, *Arts Plastiques Et Etat Au Senegal* (Dakar: IFAN-CH.A. Diop, 1998).

For Senghor, the precarious diplomatic landscape of the 1960s, destabilized by the rapid decolonization of Africa and the increasing intensity of Cold War rivalries, primed the arrival of a new world order in which African-descended people would occupy a more just position than ever before. He called this envisioned future the Civilization of the Universal: a world in which networks of intercultural exchange would enrich each society, allowing all to reach their maximum potential. In pursuit of this long-term goal, the Festival provided a venue in which to cultivate international dialogue, attracting contributors and audiences from around the world to enjoy performances of dance and music, film screenings, readings of literature and poetry, and displays of the visual arts—all by people of African descent. But while the festival's humanist rhetoric portrayed the event as a stage for amity and reconciliation, behind the scenes, tensions mounted. Senegal jockeyed for position on the continent, Senghor's dissenters within and beyond Senegal became increasingly critical of his leadership, and the Eastern and Western blocs competed for influence among the continent's newly-formed nations.

Balancing the necessity to negotiate the moment's brewing conflicts with the ambition to reify humanist ideals, the Festival's lineup included two major art exhibitions staged to run for its duration. The first, titled *l'Art Nègre: Sources, Évolution, Expansion* (Negro Art: Sources, Evolution, Expansion), brought together more than 500 works of African art loaned from collections in nineteen countries in the *Musée Dynamique* (Dynamic Museum), a state-of-the-art facility constructed expressly for the show's inauguration. The other exhibition, called *Tendances et Confrontations* (Tendencies and Confrontations), displayed contemporary art by African and African-descended artists in the spacious atrium of the city's *Palais de Justice*, a complex of courthouses. This dissertation is devoted to examining the relationship of these exhibitions and their arts to the fraught international politics of the mid-sixties. I argue that, on

one hand, the arts reinforced symbolic or spiritual ties theorized by Senghor and contemporaneous humanist thought. On the other hand, the arts acted as useful bartering chips; they were offered, withheld, rejected or acclaimed in efforts to manipulate international politics. By considering the relationship of the arts to international conceptualizations of black identity, continental African diplomacy, post-colonial Senegalese relations with France, and Cold War rivalries, my project unsettles an art-historical tendency to portray the artistic programming implemented by the inaugural administrations of independent African states as only reflective of nationalist, domestic politics. Before entering focused studies on the *Musée Dynamique*, *l'Art Nègre,* and *Tendances et Confrontations*, the pages that follow situate the Festival amid a broader history, and position my project amid larger fields of study.

The Origins of the Event

The *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* can be understood as one occasion amid several mid-century conferences and congresses that facilitated dialogue between people of historically colonized regions.[4] Whereas preceding meetings focused primarily upon political action and philosophy, in 1956, the pan-African literary review *Présence Africaine*, founded by Senegalese writer Alioune Diop, hosted a conference devoted to cultural action and philosophy:

[4] Though Senghor did not attend them, the meetings that planted the seeds of the non-aligned movement demonstrated the possibility and productivity of bringing together the nations of the global south, as representatives of Asian and African states assembled at the Bandung Conference (1955), the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conferences in Cairo (1957) and Conakry (1960), and the Belgrade Conference (1961). Even earlier, the First Pan-African Conference in London (1900), the Pan-African Congresses beginning in Paris 1919, the meetings of the League Against Imperialism (1927-1936), and the All-African People's Conference (1958) might be cited as precursors to the Festival. The relationship between Panafricanist and Nonaligned movements is outlined in Joseph Hongoh, "The Asian-African Conference (Bandung) and Pan-Africanism: The Challenge of Reconciling Continental Solidarity with National Sovereignty," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 70, no. 4 (2016).

The First Congress of Black Writers and Artists. Diop would later become the President of the Association for the First World Festival of Negro Arts, and indeed, the Congresses that he organized in the fifties were formative precedents to the Festival. After the First Congress of Black Writers and Artists in Paris, a second edition followed in Rome in 1959; there, a formal resolution was written on behalf of a "Commission of the Arts" to recommend that the next Congress should be accompanied by a multimedia festival. The representation of the continent through creative outlets, the committee wrote, "can be of extraordinary value to the native states of Africa (or of imminent harm, if delivered to remain by default, under alien domination.)"[5] After decades of derogatory representation fueled by colonialism and white supremacist thought, organizers believed it was urgent to provide an internationally-visible platform through which Africans and African-descended people were portrayed in a positive light, speaking on their own behalf through their arts. To this end, the committee laid out guidelines for the event that they imagined:

> The Festival should include singing, drumming and dancing, and perhaps drama and poetry readings arranged to take place when the Congress is in session. It must be supported with an excellent exhibition of arts by Africans and people of African descent. […] It should be clear that the manifestation of the plastic and performing arts at the Congress is of greatest importance in demonstrating the vitality and excellence of African culture.[6]

The hypothetical festival discussed in Rome acquired a name and host country within one year. The First World Festival of Negro Arts was initially planned to occur under the administration of

[5] The committee felt that cinema was especially powerful in this regard. *The Unity of Negro African Cultures: Second Congress of Negro Writers and Artists, Rome, 26 March-1st April 1959* (Paris: Présence Africaine), 456.

[6] Ibid., 457.

the Premier of the Mali Federation, Modibo Keïta.[7] The event was envisioned as an independence celebration of the Mali Federation, the short-lived Union formed by the former French colonies of Senegal and French Sudan after their decolonization from France in 1960. Forecast to take place in the Federation's capital city of Dakar in January 1961, the event promised to provide an "inventory of the artistic riches of the negro world" in art, music, and literature.[8] The decision to hold the event in Dakar was discussed in the media as a natural outcome of geography. One Los Angeles-based reporter wrote that, as the westernmost point of the continent, conveniently accessible to the United States and Europe, "Dakar owes it not only to itself, but all the world" to be the host of such a grand gathering.[9]

Soon after, the Mali Federation dissolved. On August 20, 1960, Senegal seceded from the Federation after a series of disagreements over political, economic, and military issues. The resulting split yielded two independent states: Mali, under President Keïta, and Senegal, led by President Senghor. The festival withstood the Federation's collapse. Three months later, the event had already been reframed; still based in Dakar and maintaining its name, organizers continued to describe the proposed Festival as an independence celebration—but now, for the

[7] The way in which the Festival's location was selected is not known for certain, but according to Nigerian reporter Onoura Nsekwu, the Paris-based Society for African Culture (SAC) eagerly sought out hosts. He writes that the SAC "knelt before governments and cried to them to help it realize its dream," and in response, Keïta was the only head of state to offer to host. He continues, "Modibo Keïta's promise to SAC had hardly escaped his lips when it was smothered by the political crisis which threatened the very existence of his country. So the years 1960-2 saw the Society still on its knees, this time, crying to Senegal's strong man, Mamadou Dia for patronage." Onuora Nzekwu, "Nigeria, Negritude and the World Festival of Negro Arts," *Nigeria Today* 1966, 80.

[8] "Negro Arts Festival," *Los Angeles Sentinel*, September 1, 1960.

[9] Ibid.

Republic of Senegal.[10] The festival's shifting identity throws into relief the growing intracontinental tensions of the moment. Independence inflamed philosophical and ideological disagreements among burgeoning African nations in relation to various issues: which overseas nations would make the best allies? Were socialist or capitalist models better-suited to manage the postcolonial economy? And did the notion of African unity denote only symbolic camaraderie, or should it be a basis for political, military, and/or economic affairs?[11]

Negritude, Universal Humanism, and African Socialism

Faced with these decisions and endless others, Senghor was guided in his policymaking by concepts that he had engineered over his lifetime: Negritude, Universal Humanism and African Socialism. Senghor described negritude as the "ensemble of cultural values of the black world."[12] He had conceptualized the idea alongside fellow black literary intellectuals living, studying, and working in Paris in the 1930s.[13] Senghor used the term to characterize and affirm a collection of internal qualities—like intuitiveness, expressiveness and rhythm—that he theorized

[10] Alioune Diop. "Alioune Diop to Vittorino Veronese, November 16, 1960," November 16, 1960, UNESCO Archives: Box 7 (=96) A 066 (663) « 66 ».

[11] For example, by 1961, Mali was identified with the more leftist Casablanca Group, a set of nations named for the Moroccan city where they first conferred. The Casablanca Group called for significant integration between African nations. Senegal identified, by contrast, with the Monrovia Group, who advocated for more nationalist policies. Both groups united in 1963 as the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

[12] *The Unity of Negro African Cultures: Second Congress of Negro Writers and Artists, Rome, 26 March-1st April 1959* 269.

[13] Aimé Césaire of Martinique and Leon Damas of French Guyana are most often cited as Senghor's partners in the formation of negritude, but this three-person origin story is increasingly being complicated by scholarship calling attention to the important but overlooked contributions of women. T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting, *Negritude Women* (Minneapolis, Minn: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

were shared by peoples of African descent. By positing that a uniquely African subjectivity and culture both existed and were valuable, negritude became the basis of a literary movement and political philosophy that sought to counteract French assimilationist policy, colonial injustice and racism more generally.

During the Second World War, Senghor served in the French Army. He spent a cumulative two years in Nazi prison camps before returning to Paris, where he was appointed Dean of the Department of Linguistics at the *École nationale de la France d'Outre-Mer*, a school that provided training to future colonial administrators. In the years to follow, while aiding Diop in the development of *Présence Africaine* and publishing his own literary work, he also became increasingly involved in politics, representing Mauritania and Senegal in the French National Assembly beginning in 1945.[14]

As Senghor's career ventured further into the political arena, his vision of negritude operated on an increasing number of axes, oriented not only in opposition to colonial oppression but also in dialogue with intercultural dynamics on a more global scale. By 1959, Senghor openly judged earlier iterations of negritude as forms of "anti-racial racialism," but said that it was inevitable that the ideology would evolve, as "the very excesses of Nazism, and the catastrophes it engendered, were soon to bring us to our senses."[15] Senghor biographer Janet

[14] There, he advocated for Senegalese independence, remarking in 1946, "I would like to assure the whites of our unshakable will to win our independence and that it would be stupid as well as dangerous for them to wish to make the clock march backwards." Originally in *Gavroche* in August 1946, reprinted in Janet G. Vaillant, *Black, French, and African : A Life of Léopold Sédar Senghor* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), 207.

[15] Léopold Sédar Senghor, "Negritude and African Socialism (1961)," in *The African Philosophy Reader*, ed. P.H.; Roux Coetzee, A.P.J. (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 400. In referring to negritude as an "anti-racial racialism," Senghor alludes to the description famously applied by Jean Paul Sartre in *Black Orpheus*, wherein he calls the movement "anti-racist

Vaillant suggests that the Second World War influenced Senghor's re-configuration of negritude in the second half of the 1940s:

> The harsh lesson of the Nazis was that racial pride and cultural exclusion led to horror and death. The lesson of the Greeks, freshly understood during long nights of captivity, was that it is the cross-fertilization of peoples and cultures that provides the most fertile soil for the flowering of a people and its culture. […] [Senghor] had recognized, mastered and become proud of himself as a blend of numerous influences: his mixed ethnic background, Peul and Serer, his mixed religious heritage, Catholic and animist, and his mixed culture, African and French.[16]

Whatever the cause, by the early 1960s, Senghor's formulation of negritude sought not only to recover the elements of black identity and culture that racism and colonialism attempted to erase, but also to recognize the African cultural, social, economic, and political offerings that could enrich a future Civilization of the Universal. For Senghor, ancient civilizations throughout the world each had their own competencies and methods for expressing consciousness, and bringing these culturally-originating aptitudes and worldviews into dialogue promised to improve humanity.[17]

Senghor sometimes used the term Universal Humanism to describe his beliefs about the potential outcomes of intercultural exchange. Like earlier articulations of humanism, Universal Humanism theorized a route to the liberation and well-being of mankind. Senghor's humanism

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racism." Jean-Paul Sartre and Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Anthologie De La Nouvelle Poésie Nègre Et Malgache De Langue Française Précédée De Orphée Noir / Par Jean-Paul Sartre* (Paris: PUF, 2011).

[16] Janet G. Vaillant, *Vie De Léopold Sédar Senghor. Noir, Français Et Africain* (Paris: KARTHALA Editions, 2006), 264.

[17] Several scholars have pointed out the influence of French philosopher and Jesuit Priest Pierre Teilhard de Chardin on Senghor's thinking. See: Vaillant., Augustine Shutte, "African and European Philosphising: Senghor's "Civilisation of the Universal"," in *The African Philosophy Reader*, ed. P.H.; Roux Coetzee, A.P.J. (London and New York: Routledge, 1998).

varied from many of its precedents, however, by de-centering Western enlightenment values. Senghor detected both strengths and weaknesses among the traditions of rationalism and empirical thought that he understood to be European in origin, and he believed that these approaches functioned best when placed in conversation with the equally-valuable methods used elsewhere for understanding and expressing consciousness. He wrote,

> The great civilizations of antiquity – Egypt, Sumeria, India, China, Greece – were born at the meeting points of the world's roads, and the world's races. […] The Civilization of the Universal will not be European civilization – in either its Eastern or Western form – imposed by force, but a biological and psychic miscegenation, a *symbiosis* of the different civilizations.[18]

As Senghor's words reveal, post-war negritude maintained the essentialist claims of its earlier formulations but emphasized in equal measure the necessity for active networks to cultivate dialogue between peoples.

Grounded in negritude and aimed towards achieving the Civilization of the Universal, Senghor developed African Socialism, the paradigm through which he described his political and economic philosophy as Senegal's first president. Senghor had long admired the democracy of Ancient Greece, where, he wrote, "the *Polis* was no longer centered on the Palace, but on the *Agora*."[19] But he perceived capitalism to be based in materialism and individualism, traits that he found incompatible with the inherently communal characteristics he associated with Africanity. Still, he felt that the models underlying existing socialist states were not well-equipped for

[18] Léopold Sédar Senghor, "Negritude and African Socialism (1961)," ibid., 447.

[19] Emphasis in original. Translation mine. "Negritude Et Civilisation Greco-Latine Ou Democratie Et Socialisme" (paper presented at the Conférence au Palais de l'Université, Strasbourg, November 20, 1964).

application on the African continent. Contrasting African Socialism with preceding Soviet and Chinese examples, he described:

> The specific object of African socialism […] was to fight against foreign capitalism and its slave economy; to do away, not with the inequality resulting from the domination of one class by another, but with the inequality resulting from the European conquest, from the domination of one people by another, of one race by another. […] In hard fact, we must have the clear sight – and the courage – to admit, the rise in the standard of living of the European worker has been effected, through a colonial slave economy, to the detriment of the masses of Asia and Africa.[20]

Comfortable adapting wholesale neither the forms of democracy nor of socialism promoted by rivaling blocs of the cold war, Senghor framed African Socialism as an alternative to both.

Upon independence, the Senegalese Prime Minister Mamadou Dia enacted certain significant socialist reforms. Under colonization, the economy of Senegal was largely private-sector, left in the hands of large French companies. Upon independence, under Dia's leadership, Senegal implemented a state monopoly on groundnuts, the country's most significant export, reclaiming control of an industry that had, until then, overwhelmingly benefited French interests.[21] But unlike other newly-independent countries, like Guinea, where national identification with socialism was part of a broader effort to cut ties with Western powers, Senghor welcomed ongoing business and diplomacy with France as well as other countries from both the Eastern and Western blocs. In fact, Senghor had worked to temper Dia's socialist reforms, concerned that they might negatively impact Senegal-France relations.[22] For this reason,

[20] "Negritude and African Socialism (1961)."

[21] Catherine Boone, "State Power and Economic Crisis in Senegal," *Comparative Politics* 22, no. 3 (1990).

[22] Ibid., 348.

some contemporary critics call Senghor's approach "armchair socialism," suggesting that his theoretical declarations were rarely implemented in practice.[23] For the President, African Socialism served less as a set of principles guiding policymaking, and more as a philosophical vision of government: one in which cultural values, national politics, and economic growth were inextricably intertwined, and always engaged in dialogue with the rest of the world.

This outlook helps to explain Senghor's robust investment in the cultural sphere at the dawn of independence, when art and performance academies and venues bloomed throughout the newborn nation.[24] To cultivate a lively visual arts scene, Senghor nurtured the growth of the *École Nationale des Beaux Arts* in Dakar, established in 1960. Modeled upon French arts academies, the *École Nationale* provided instruction in the areas of music, dance, drama and fine arts.[25] The Senegalese government purchased works by its artists as décor for federal buildings at home and embassies abroad.[26] For Senghor, the arts were both a tool for creating a better society

[23] For example, see: Kaye Whiteman, "Mamadou Dia: First Prime Minister and Key Figure in the Politics of Senegal," *The Guardian* (2009), https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/feb/03/mamadou-dia-obituary-senegal.

[24] The percentage of the national budget that Senghor devoted to the arts is a matter of some dispute. While scholars writing on Senegalese art of the 1960s have often cited a quote from Senghor suggesting that as much as 25-30% of the national budget was devoted to supporting the arts, Cohen's analysis of Senegalese budget records suggests that the Ministry of Culture may in fact have received less than 1% of the national budget. Joshua Cohen, "Locating Senghor's École De Dakar: International and Transnational Dimensions to Senegalese Modern Art, C. 1959-1980," *African Arts* 51, no. 3 (2018).

[25] Ebong discusses the school's relationship to French precedents. Ima Ebong, "Negritude: Between Mask and Flag - Senegalese Cultural Ideology and the École De Dakar," in *Reading the Contemporary: African Art from Theory to the Marketplace*, ed. Olu Oguibe and Okwui Enwezor (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press).

[26] Ima Ebong, Joanne Grabski, Abdou Sylla and Elizabeth Harney have discussed the role of the state in supporting the development of Senegalese art at independence. See ibid.; Joanna Grabski and Elizabeth Harney, "Painting Fictions/Painting History: Modernist Pioneers at Senegal's Ecole Des Arts," *African Arts* 39, no. 1 (2006); Harney; "The Ecole De Dakar: Pan-Africanism

and the point of a society's very existence; he wrote, "Culture is the first requirement and ultimate goal of development."[27]

Steeled, perhaps, by his belief in the central importance of the arts to a nation's success, the dream of the Festival persisted despite several delays in its timeline. In September 1963, an Association of the World Festival of Negro Arts, chaired by Diop, was formed to organize the event.[28] The *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* finally opened on April 1, 1966, during the weekend preceding Senegalese National Day (April 4) when Senegal marked its sixth anniversary of independence. In his speeches and essays, however, Senghor spoke of the festival not as a commemoration of Senegalese nationhood, but as a step towards world peace. On the date of its opening, Senghor declared the Festival's commitment to bettering the world:

> By contributing to the defense and celebration of negro art, Senegal is aware that it is helping to build the Universal Civilization. […] We hope, in any case, that the wide-ranging dialogue which has been initiated here today will help build the earth, to perfect humanity.[29]

The event, he declared, was but one step in humankind's progress towards an ideal future.

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in Paint and Textile," *African Arts* 35, no. 3 (2002); Abdou Sylla, *L'esthétique De Senghor Et L'école De Dakar: Essai* (Dakar: Les éditions feu de brousse, 2006).

[27] Léopold Sédar Senghor, "The Role and Significance of the Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres," in *Seven Stories About Modern Art in Africa*, ed. Clémentine Deliss (London: Whitechapel, 1966 (reprinted 1996)), 226.

[28] See David Murphy, "Introduction," in *The First World Festival of Negro Arts, Dakar 1966: Contexts and Legacies*, ed. David Murphy, Postcolonialism across the Disciplines (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), 19.

[29] Senghor, "The Role and Significance of the Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres," 226.

The Coinciding Unrest

Tensions simmered beneath Senghor's philosophical advocacy of African liberation and global harmony. The President's popularity plummeted among his constituents, as the utopic promises of independence appeared less and less realistic amid a gradually declining economy and an increasingly authoritarian administration. Checks on Senghor's power as head of state were gradually eliminated in the years leading up to the festival. In 1962**,** Prime Minister Dia was sentenced to imprisonment "in perpetuity" after he was accused, by Senghor, of having attempted a *coup d'etat*.[30] After the incident, a new national constitution was implemented that strengthened presidential authority by abolishing the parliamentary system, altogether eliminating the office of Prime Minister. In the years that followed, Senghor began to outlaw rivaling political organizations. By 1965, his Senegalese Progressive Union was the only legal political party; this allowed for Senghor to run unopposed in succeeding presidential elections (1968, 1973).

Only one month before the Festival's opening, student protests erupted in Dakar in response to the *coup d'état* unseating Ghanian President Kwame Nkrumah. The public demonstrations allegedly lead the Senegalese government to intimidate residents from engaging in disorderly behavior by importing thousands of police officers from France.[31] Senegalese

[30] Maâti Monjib, "Mamadou Dia Et Les Relations Franco-Sénégalaises (1957-1962)," *Horizons Maghrébins - Le droit à la mémoire* (2005).

[31] Murphy suggests that the protest of Nkrumah's ousting may be related to the perception that Senghor's cultural African Unity was ineffective as a liberation strategy in comparison to Nkrumah's political Pan-Africanism. He writes, "The irony of the apparent death of Nkrumah's dream of a United States of Africa just as Senghor's dream of black cultural unity was about to be realized was probably not lost on the protestors." Murphy, 23.

historian Abdolaye Bathile writes that some of the arrested were pressured through "electrical torture" to confess to planning underground resistance movements in Southern and Eastern Senegal.[32] Onouru Nzekwu, a Nigerian journalist, detected undertones of political discontent during the Festival:

> Ripples broke the placid surface of Senegal's political pool. In themselves they were perhaps insignificant, but coming as they did on the eve of the festival, when the world was converging on Dakar, one-time capital of French West Africa, Senegal's capital city and the venue of the festival, they proved so annoying as to lead to the expulsion of seven students from the University of Dakar; so disturbing (especially soon after the military-inspired political changes in Nigeria and Ghana) as to justify the return to Senegal of 2,000 of the 7,500 French troops which left the country only the previous July, and so threatening that the President […] pleaded with the people of Senegal to allow him to see the Festival through. Coming when it did, the President's plea sounded like a desperate effort to save his office. But seen in context it translated into the sacrifice of the dignity of his office on the altar of black civilization. Caught unawares, Senegal had no ready answer to the President's touching plea. She therefore retired and while she still deliberated on an appropriate reply, the festival came and went.[33]

As he implies that public disapproval for the Festival was so great as to threaten its ability to take place, Nzekwu is one among several attendees who identified a disconnect between Senghor's international ambitions and the interests of ordinary Dakarois.

Other reporters from abroad noted the disparity between the living conditions of most of Dakar's residents and the mint-condition infrastructure that had been rapidly assembled in preparation for the Festival; one Swiss reporter called Dakar "the meeting of two civilizations."[34]

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[32] Abdoulaye Bathily, *Mai 68 À Dakar Ou La Révolte Universitaire Et La Démocratie* (Paris: Editions Chaka, 1992), 30.

[33] Nzekwu, 83.

[34] Lison Tripet, "Le Sens Et La Portée Du Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres," *Construire*, June 1, 1966. Nelson has discussed the ways that filmmaker Djibril Diop Mambety critiques the disjuncture between Senghor's theorized negritude and the lived experience of most Dakar residents in his 1969 faux-documentary *Contras City.* Steven Nelson, "A Tale of Two Cities: The Films of Djibril Diop Mambety," *Artforum international.* 47, no. 3 (2008). Faye and

In preparation for Senegal's national debut before an international audience, a number of construction projects were implemented to reinforce the impression that Dakar was modern, clean, and affluent. After arriving in the Dakar airport, recently improved by major renovations, tourists would have cruised on freshly-carved highways to the city's new museum, stadium and theatre.[35] To prevent the internal problems of Dakar from interrupting this performance of the urban ideal, sheets of corrugated metal were erected along the perimeter of the impoverished neighborhood called the *Medina*, shielding the lives of the city's most economically underprivileged residents from the view of its guests.[36] As money funneled into major cultural works projects, discontent grew among Dakarois who perceived the target audience of these investments to be someone aside from themselves.[37]

Thioub have argued that the urban poor were oppressed under Senghor's leadership of the 1960s, which favored the development of an elite class. Ousseynou Faye and Ibrahima Thioub, "Les Marginaux Et L'état À Dakar," *Le Movement Social* 204 (2003).

[35] Art Historian Tobias Wofford has discussed how, at the 1966 Festival, air travel was deliberately invoked as a symbol of modernity by Festival organizers, adding significance to the airport renovation completed in preparation for the festival. Tobias Wofford, "Diasporic Returns in the Jet Age: The First World Festival of Negro Arts and the Promise of Air Travel," *Interventions* 20, no. 7 (2018).

[36] Lloyd Garrison, "Senegal Returns to Reality's Grip," *The New York Times*, May 9, 1966.

[37] Bathily's study of the circumstances that led to the eruption of student protests in Dakar in 1968 provides an inventory of the economic and social problems causing widespread dissatisfaction with Senghor in the latter half of the sixties. See: Bathily. Sendra and Ndour have argued that the different venues involved in the festival attracted different kinds of crowds based upon ticketing prices and availability, and venue types. For example, while the stadium attracted Dakar residents of various classes, the Sorano Theatre was associated with an exclusive elite. Estrella Sendra and Saliou Ndour, "Fiftieth Anniversary of the First World Festival of Negro Arts: A Comparative Study of the Involvement of the Population in the World Festival of Negro Arts in 1966 and 2010," *Interventions* 20, no. 7 (2018).

Abroad, opinions on Senghor varied. Negritude's critics, including Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka, French West Indian writer Frantz Fanon, and Senegalese filmmaker Ousmane Sembene, decried Senghor's worldview for being insufficiently political, essentializing, and elitist. Senghor was also criticized for the close relationship that Senegal maintained with France after the beginning of Independence. The nations of Algeria and Guinea refused to participate in the Festival on these grounds, viewing the event as a manifestation of neocolonialism. Three years after the First World Festival of Negro Arts, anti-negritude sentiments came to a head when a counter-festival was organized in Algiers in rejection of Senghor's cultural philosophy. The event, called the Pan-African Cultural Festival, issued a manifesto declaring the necessity for African culture to do more than posit spiritual ties and cater to social elites; the arts, it said, must be used to improve the economic and social experiences of the masses.[38]

Still, the festival received widespread international support. It attracted the financial and organizational backing of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as the UN organization's own mission was grounded in claims regarding the lofty potential of intercultural exchange in the pursuit of world peace. The French government funded the construction of the *Théâtre National Daniel Sorano*, the Festival's primary venue for musical, dance, and theatrical performances, and French Minister of Culture Andre Malraux attended the event and delivered formal remarks. Major Cold War powers, the U.S.S.R and the

[38] "Pan-African Cultural Manifesto," (1969), https://ocpa.irmo.hr/resources/docs/Pan_African_Cultural_Manifesto-en.pdf.
On the relationship of the Algiers Festival to negritude, see: Samuel D. Anderson, "'Negritude Is Dead': Performing the African Revolution at the First Pan-African Cultural Festival (Algiers, 1969)," in *The First World Festival of Negro Arts, Dakar 1966: Contexts and Legacies*, ed. David Murphy, Postcolonialism across the Disciplines (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016).

United States, each contributed substantially to the festival and created documentary films about the event.[39] Several leaders from throughout the African continent attended, including heads of state like Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia and leaders of kingdoms like Bamum Sultan Hadj Seidou Njimoluh Njoya of the Cameroon Grasslands. A number of participants from South American and Caribbean locations took part as well. In the end, thirty countries contributed performers or artworks to the Festival, and museums and collections in several other nations contributed works of African art for display in *l'Art Nègre*.[40]

My Intervention

Appearing in Dakar amid the philosophical, political, and social contexts described above, the arts of the 1966 Festival provide materials for investigating the relationship between independence, negritude, and international relations. The coinciding participation of various global powers gives rise to several questions: In what ways were the arts used to negotiate the relationship between universalizing humanist claims and nationalist exceptionalism, or more generally, between Senghor's philosophical rhetoric and political action? How best can the contributions of France be understood to affect this celebration of post-colonial liberation? And in what ways might the Festival's content and activities have brokered relationships between African nations and with the Eastern and Western blocs?

[39] William Greaves. *The First World Festival of Negro Arts.* William Greaves Productions, 1966; Leonid Makhnach and Irina Venjer. *African Rhythms.* Sovexportfilm, 1966.

[40] The countries that submitted performances or works were: Antilles, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Congo-Leopoldville, Cote d'Ivoire, Dahomey (now Benin), Ethiopia, France, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Haiti, Jamaica, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom, United States of America, Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), and Zambia.

In responding to these questions, it is tempting assume a set of polar oppositions, evaluating the Festival on a rubric that juxtaposes nationalism against humanism, the neo-colonial against the post-colonial, and bloc against bloc. But influenced by philosophical scholar Souleymane Bachir Diagne's dialogical interpretation of post-war negritude, this dissertation argues that Senghor attempted to perform a simultaneous espousal of positions elsewhere understood to be incompatible. Rather than publicly taking a side amid the moment's debates, he adopted paradigms like African Socialism and Universal Humanism, which considered rivaling worldviews to be analogues rather than opposites. [41]

It is not my goal to argue that Senghor's performance of ideological harmony was completely successful or sincere, as I will underscore throughout this dissertation by identifying the economic and political advantages that such multiculturalist rhetoric imparted upon Senegal and its president.[42] But Senghor's post-war revisions to negritude are nonetheless essential to consider in generating a historically-precise account of the relationship between his worldview and Senegalese art. While several scholars have related the nation's independence-era arts to the

[41] Souleymane Bachir Diagne, *African Art as Philosophy: Senghor, Bergson and the Idea of Negritude* (New York, NY: Seagull Books, 2012).

[42] Prior scholarship has laid the groundwork for challenging the Festival's universalist claims by considering the particular economic and political advantages that the mega-event imparted upon Senegal at a decisive historical moment. Historian Andrew Apter sets a methodological precedent for this route of inquiry in his examination of Nigeria's 1977 reply to FESMAN, the Second World Festival of Black and African Culture (FESTAC), arguing that FESTAC promoted a construction of pan-Africanism that suggested the economic and political exceptionalism of its host nation. Apter Andrew, *The Pan-African Nation : Oil and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria* (University of Chicago Press, 2005).

traits that Senghor links to African identity, like "intuition, emotion, rhythm and vital force," few have rigorously considered their relationship to Universal Humanism or African Socialism.[43]

Existing scholarship on Senegalese arts of the 1960s has rightly identified the important role that they played in Senghor's plan for national development, most powerfully in book-length studies by political scientist Tracy Snipe and art historians Elizabeth Harney and Abdou Sylla.[44] Senghor's own writing on the qualities of "African-Negro aesthetics" is often placed in dialogue with works by *École de Dakar* artists as scholars argue that Senegal's state-sponsored painters and designers contributed to the creation of a national aesthetic.[45] But as art historian Joshua Cohen has pointed out, prior work framing Senghor's support for the arts as a project of cultural nationalism has largely left unaddressed their role on an international stage and their connection to Senghor's inter- and trans-national theories.[46] Cohen notes this absence in relation to Senegalese art history, but the broader field of African Art studies has been affected by the tendency to study independence-era arts as a tool for consolidating national identity, while

[43] Ebong, 130.

[44] Snipe.; Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow : Art, Politics, and the Avant-Garde in Senegal, 1960-1995*.; Sylla, *Arts Plastiques Et Etat Au Senegal*. As Harney has emphasized, despite the ideology favored by Senghor and the academy, Senegalese artists maintained a significant degree of creative agency and the themes of their work vary widely.

[45] Léopold Sédar Senghor, "African-Negro Aesthetics," *Diogenes* 4, no. 16 (1956); "Standards Critiques De L'art Africain," *African Arts* 1, no. 1 (1967). See: Issa Samb, "The Painters of the Dakar School," in *Seven Stories About Modern Art in Africa*, ed. Clémentine Deliss (London: Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1995 (orig. 1989)); Bernard. Pataux, "Senegalese Art Today," *African Arts* 8, no. 1 (1974); Joanna Grabski and Elizabeth Harney, "Painting Fictions/Painting History: Modernist Pioneers at Senegal's Ecole Des Arts," ibid.39 (2006).

[46] Joshua Cohen, "Locating Senghor's École De Dakar: International and Transnational Dimensions to Senegalese Modern Art, C. 1959-1980," ibid.51, no. 3 (2018).

overlooking such arts' international affiliations.[47] Recognizing this inclination, Salah Hassan has urged scholars to be mindful of the ways that the nationalist arts of independent African states engaged in trans-Atlantic politics and international leftist ideologies.[48] The *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*, an event defined by both its international purview and its commemoration of national independence, offers to shed light on the role of African art amid both nation-building efforts and the global currents that Hassan identifies.

Furthermore, by calling attention to the role of international politics in shaping understandings of the continent's arts in the 1960s, this dissertation illustrates the productivity of considering mid-century diplomacy as a formative influence upon the development of African Art studies. Historiographies of the field, like the well-known companion accounts written by anthropologist Paula Ben-Amos (now Girschick) and art historian Monni Adams, have narrated that in the 1960s, scholarly understandings of the continent's material culture drew from two primary approaches. On one hand, they write, objects were viewed through the lenses of the anthropological and ethnographic disciplines; on the other, they were understood through the conventions of Western museum practices and the disciplinary approaches of Art History.[49] By

[47] See, for example, Okwui Enwezor and Chinua Achebe, *The Short Century : Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945-1994* (New York: Prestel, 2001); Jane Havell, *Seven Stories About Modern Art in Africa* (Paris: Flammarion, 1995).

[48] Salah M. Hassan, "African Modernism : Beyond Alternative Modernities Discourse," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 109, no. 3 (2010).

[49] Paula Ben-Amos, "African Visual Arts from a Social Perspective," *African Studies Review* 32, no. 2 (1989); Monni Adams, "African Visual Arts from an Art Historical Perspective," ibid. As I discuss in Chapter 2, James Clifford's art-culture system posits a similar double-heritage. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1988). See also the historiographical overviews of the African field of Art History compiled in *African Art Studies: The State of the Discipline: Papers Presented at a Symposium Organized by the National Museum of African Art,*

identifying the ways in which the continent's arts were both agents and instruments in mid-century international relations, my project demonstrates that theories of identity and post-war politics must be viewed as more than backdrops or contexts for the ways that African objects have historically been assigned meaning. Rather, they are themselves generators of significance. While art historians analyzing biennials and other international venues for display commonly recognize the influence of the global economy and political landscape upon understandings of contemporary art, the historical depth of such inquiry has been relatively limited with respect to African art, and especially in relation to displays of objects not conventionally categorized as contemporary.[50] The roles that such global currents played in shaping understandings of historical African art and displays that occurred before 1990 (when the first edition of the *Dak'art* biennial took place) are complex, and my project attends to highlighting them as a way to broaden our comprehension about the uses of African art at the time.[51]

In addition to intervening in prior scholarship discussing the arts of Senegal and Africa, this dissertation adds to a growing multi-disciplinary body of literature devoted specifically to examining the First World Festival of Negro Arts. Scholars in various fields have written about

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Smithsonian Institution, September 16, 1987, (Washington, D.C.: National Museum of African Art, 1990).

[50]As examples of prior work examining global political and economic networks in relation to Senegalese art, see: Joanna Grabski, *Art World City : The Creative Economy of Artists and Urban Life in Dakar* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2017); Elizabeth Harney, "The Densities of Modernism," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 109, no. 3 (2010); Rasheed Araeen, "Dak'art 1992-2002: The Problems of Representation, Contextualization, and Critical Evaluation in Contemporary African Art as Presented by the Dakar Bienniale," *Third Text* 1 (2003).

[51] Providing an exception to this general observation, the use of historical African arts in mid-century politics is usefully illuminated in Van Beurden's case study on Mobutu Sese Soku: Sarah Van Beurden, *Authentically African : Arts and the Transnational Politics of Congolese Culture* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2015).

the ways in which the event provided a stage for multiple conceptualizations of black identity,[52] have discussed its implication in efforts to gain power during the Cold War,[53] and have begun to identify key individuals and preparatory activities that shaped the event.[54] The year 2016 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the festival, prompting renewed interest in the event and a number of related scholarly efforts. In Dakar, writer Alpha Amadou Sy and historian Saliou M'Baye, on behalf of the Communauté Africaine de Culture Sénégal (CAC/SEN), organized a major scholarly colloquium to mark the occasion.[55] To coincide with the anniversary, francophone studies scholar David Murphy edited an anthology examining the 1966 Festival and its legacy in ensuing Pan-African festivals, including the 1969 Pan-African Festival of Algiers in Algeria, the 1977 Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Cultures (also called FESTAC) in Lagos, Nigeria, and the 2010 World Festival of Black Arts (also called FESMAN) in Dakar.[56]

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[52] Tobias Wofford, "Exhibiting a Global Blackness: The First World Festival of Negro Arts," in *New World Coming: The Sixties and the Shaping of Global Consciousness*, ed. Karen Dubinsky (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2009); Anthony J. Ratcliff, "When *Négritude* Was in Vogue: Critical Reflections of the First World Festival of Negro Arts and Culture in 1966," *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 6, no. 7 (2014).

[53]See, for example: Jody Blake, "Cold War Diplomacy and Civil Rights Activism at the World Festival of Negro Arts," in *Romare Bearden, American Modernist*, ed. Ruth Fine and Jacqueline Francis (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art 2011); Ratcliff; Lindsay J. Twa, "Revealing the 'Trends and Confrontations' of Contemporary African-American Art through the First World Festival," *World Art* 9, no. 1 (2019).

[54] Cédric Vincent, "'The Real Heart of the Festival': The Exhibition of *L'art Nègre* at the *Musée Dynamique*," in *The First World Festival of Negro Arts, Dakar 1966: Contexts and Legacies*, ed. David Murphy, Postcolonialism across the Disciplines (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016); "Tendencies and Confrontations: Dakar 1966," *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry* 43 (2017).

[55] Saliou Mbaye, "Cinquantenaire Du 1er Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres," *Présence Africaine* 1, no. 191 (2015).

[56] David Murphy, *The First World Festival of Negro Arts, Dakar 1966* (Oxford: Liverpool University Press, 2016).

Murphy, with literary scholars Tsitsi Jaji and Martin Munro, also facilitated the publication of special issues devoted to pan-African festivals in two academic journals, featuring articles based upon the proceedings of a conference held in the United States to commemorate the festival's fiftieth anniversary.[57] In France, the concurrent development of the PANAFEST archive by art historians Dominque Malaquais, Cedric Vincent and Sarah Frioux-Salgas at the National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS, Paris) and School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS, Paris) has located and centralized several primary documents related to the 1966 event and other Pan-African festivals of the twentieth century.[58]

Structure of the Dissertation

Despite the increased attention paid to the Festival in recent years, this dissertation provides the first monograph devoted to its study. My work draws upon archival resources in Senegal, Switzerland, France, and the United States in an effort to describe what the Festival's exhibitions looked like, what they intended to achieve, and which influences shaped their realization. To respond to the challenge of studying exhibitions that can no longer be visited, I have placed archival documentation in dialogue with the scattered glimpses of the displays

[57] The conference, *The Performance of Pan-Africanism: from Colonial Exhibitions to Black and African Cultural Festivals*, was held at the Winthrop-King Institute at Florida State University. The two resulting journals are: David Murphy, Martin Munro, and Tsitsi Jaji, eds., *Interventions, Special Issue: The Performance of Pan-African Identities at Black and African Cultural Festivals*, vol. 20:7 (Taylor and Francis, 2018); *World Art, Special Issue: Pan-African Festivals and Visual Culture: From the Dakar Festival of 1966 to Dak'art 2016*, vol. 9:1 (Taylor and Francis, 2019).

[58] These materials provided the basis for a 2016 exhibition at the Musée du Quai Branly (Paris). For a review of this exhibition, see: "Dakar 66: Chronicles of a Pan-African Festival Musée Du Quai Branly, Paris February 16–May 15, 2016," *African Arts* 50, no. 1 (2017).

offered by the photography of the event for various media outlets. In addition to pulling from newspapers and magazines, the figures that I reference draw heavily from the archives of Swiss photojournalist Maya Bracher, who attended the event.[59] My visual materials also include stills from documentary films on the festival commissioned by the governments of the Soviet Union, the United States, and Italy.[60]

Using these materials, my first chapter focuses upon the construction of the *Musée Dynamique*, built in Dakar to host *l'Art Nègre*. The museum was tasked not only to provide a well-equipped space in which to view art, but also to impress, upon its local and international audience, a conceptualization of the places that art, Africa and the nation of Senegal occupied amid the fragile and shifting diplomatic landscape of the 1960s. I argue that by invoking the formal influences of Greco-Roman antiquity, International Style modernism, and the particular design of the Neuchâtel Museum of Ethnography, the museum's architecture simultaneously expressed postwar Senghorian negritude and the humanist aspirations of UNESCO. This chapter thus adds a new dimension to prior literature dealing with post-colonial architecture in newly-independent African nations, a corpus that, to date, has focused largely upon the domestic effects of state-sanctioned buildings rather than their relationship to international audiences.

[59] The photographic archives of Maya Bracher are maintained in the archives of the Neuchâtel Ethnography Museum.

[60] Makhnach and Venjer; Greaves; Sergio Borelli. *Il Festival Di Dakar.* 1966. A documentary film was also created on behalf of Romania: V. Calotescu and C. Ionescu-Tonciu. *Rhythmes Et Images: Impressions Du Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres.* 1968. Senegalese filmmaker Paulin Soumanou Vieyra is known to have made a documentary film about the festival, but no known copies remain. Paulin Soumanou Vieyra. *Le Sénégal Au Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres.* 1966.

My second chapter reconstructs the layout and composition of *l'Art Nègre*, illuminating the international negotiations affecting its realization and the multiple theories of intercultural relations that it engaged. I argue that the arts on display supported multiple models through which people and nations conceptualized their relationships to one another, and to a broader humanity, amid the contexts of African decolonization and the Cold War. Politically and symbolically, the exhibition nurtured ties between Senegal and its former colonizer, France, while also proclaiming African unity in the independence era. It also generated a portrayal of the human family as an entity united by both the networked essentialism of negritude and the universalizing humanism of UNESCO.

My third chapter examines *Tendances et Confrontations*, an exhibition of contemporary art by African and African-descended artists. All of the works in this display had been submitted on behalf of official national delegations from throughout Africa and the Diaspora. I argue that the arts of *Tendances et Confrontations* often exploited or manipulated the international tensions that the spiritual rhetoric of *l'Art Nègre* had attempted to transcend—or, more cynically, mask. Nationalist movements throughout the newly-decolonizing world and East-West tensions of the Cold War shaped the content and effects of *Tendances et Confrontations*. These geopolitical concerns, I show, influenced Senegalese organizers and were also leveraged by them to incentivize international support for the exhibition.

By highlighting the co-inscription of art, philosophy and politics on the Festival's international stage, this dissertation seeks to contribute to a broader disciplinary conversation about what it means to write "global" art histories. As art historians increasingly seek alternatives to pluralist multiculturalism or neoliberal universalism, Senghor's framing of the arts through negritude and Universal Humanism might be understood as an early attempt to theorize

the ways in which creative achievements from around the world can be framed as interrelated while also acknowledging the different cultural, political and geographical circumstances affecting their creation. The First World Festival of Negro Arts offers an opportunity to reflect on the historically-specific ideological and political networks that art straddled, negotiated, and blended, illuminating the complex entanglements underlying a moment so often associated with the strategic essentialism of cultural nationalism.

Chapter One

Roots and Routes: The Construction of the *Musée Dynamique*

The Corniche, the highly trafficked road lining the edges of peninsular Dakar, marks in asphalt where city ends and seaside begins. The taxi-drivers tracing its contours can see two worlds in the twist of the neck, faced on one side with the perpetual movement of people and cars kicking up dust in their hustle between home, work, and social life; and on the other, with the foamy collision of water and sand, a blue horizon studded with hand-painted boats, and, wherever conceivable, beachside soccer. Drivers might not notice the building of the former *Musée Dynamique* (Dynamic Museum, 1966)**,** shielded from the street by trees and a fence.[1] [Figure 1.1] But it is there, perched upon the western beaches of the Soumbédioune Bay, where fisherman dock at the end of a day's work. Today, the building's gate is carefully guarded and crowned with golden letters spelling its current function: "*Cour Suprême*." The columned edifice has not functioned as a visual arts space for decades, spending a six-year stint as a dance school and appointed to house the Supreme Court of Senegal in 1990.[2] Its past as a museum crosses

[1] Prior scholars who have discussed the *Musée Dynamique* include Huchard, who provides an inventory of exhibitions hosted by the museum. Articles by Cedric Vincent as well as by Éloi Fiquet and Lorraine Gallimardet provide the first published accounts of some details about the museum's design and construction. A 2018 exhibition at the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel* and its accompanying publication revealed further information about the Dakar museum's relationship with the Swiss museum upon which it was modeled. See: Bernard Knodel, *Le Musée Réinventé* (Neuchâtel: Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel, 2018); Ousmane Sow Huchard, "The Musée Dynamique," in *Bildende Kunst Der Gegenwart in Senegal* ed. Friedrich Axt and El Hadji Moussa Babacar Sy (Frankfurt am Main: Museum Fur Volkerkunde, 1997); Vincent; Éloi Fiquet et Lorraine Gallimardet, ""On Ne Peut Nier Longtemps L'art Nègre" Enjeux Du Colloque Et De L'exposition Du Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres En 1966," *Gradhiva* 10 (2009).

[2] The modern dance school, the *Centre Africain de Perfectionnement et de Recherche des Interprètes du Spectacle Mudra Afrique* (more commonly referred to by its shortened name, *Mudra Afrique*) was, like the Festival, a project envisioned by Senghor as a way to expressively

only the minds of those with the required historical knowledge or, as becomes decreasingly common with each ensuing year, personal experience.

Occupying the liminal space between land and sea, between Senegal and abroad, between the vibration of the city and the hush of the ocean, the building's mediating role has only become more explicit with time, now a formal site of resolutions for opposing legal forces. But a devotion to conciliatory work, one could argue, is ingrained in its architectural DNA. Upon its construction in preparation for the 1966 *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*, the *Musée Dynamique* was tasked not only to provide a well-equipped space in which to view the exhibition *l'Art Nègre: Sources, Évolution, Expansion* (Negro Art: Sources, Evolution, Expansion), but also to impress upon the local and international audiences that it would attract–a reported 20,000 visitors within the museum's first twenty days–a conceptualization of the places that art, Africa and the nation of Senegal occupied amid the fragile and shifting diplomatic landscape of the 1960s.[3]

The *Musée Dynamique* was conceived within a web of national interests, and its realization was the product of years of international cooperation. The involved parties had been motivated to participate, at least in part, by what the General Co-commissioner of the museum's first exhibition, Georges-Henri Rivière, called "three clear, generous ideas": the desire of Senegalese President Léopold Sédar Senghor to mount an exhibition of African art in Dakar, the

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embody the worldview posited by negritude. Upon its founding, Germaine Acogny was named its director, and its students included several choreographers who would become influential throughout West and Central Africa. See: Sylla, *Arts Plastiques Et Etat Au Senegal*.

[3] "Magnifique Succès Du *Musée Dynamique*: 20,000 Visiteurs Enregistrés Depuis Le 20 Avril," *Dakar-Matin*, April 22, 1966.

wish of the French Minister of Culture André Malraux to facilitate a similar display in Paris, and the goal of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) to create a "pilot museum" as a part of its increased involvement on the African continent.[4] Though Rivière portrayed these initiatives to be simple, their alignment required a formidable reconciliation of agendas. Lodged into the spaces beneath its floorplan and behind its façades, a number of concerns quietly affected the construction of the *Musée Dynamique*: how does a building honor negritude's stake in African identity *and* UNESCO's stake in universalism? What kind of architecture could express the nationhood of a newly-independent Senegal while fortifying ties with the former colonizer, France? And what viewpoint would the construction occupy amid the era's many rivalries– between the eastern and western blocs, and between newly-formed African nations?

This chapter begins by investigating the practical and ideological negotiations that led to the construction of the *Musée Dynamique*, and proceeds to examine the political work performed by the building itself. The pages that follow discuss the Museum's formal influences with respect to Greco-Roman antiquity, International Style modernism, and, most slyly, one particular ethnography museum located in Switzerland.[5] These analyses serve two primary goals. First, by examining the *Musée Dynamique* as an agent of diplomatic relations and humanist discourse, this chapter adds a new dimension to prior literature dealing with post-colonial architecture in newly-independent African nations. To date, this corpus has focused almost exclusively upon the

[4] Georges-Henri Rivière, "Preface," in *L'art Nègre. Sources, Évolution, Expansion.* (Paris: Ministère des Affaires Culturelles, 1966), XXXVI.

[5] The relationship between the Dakar museum and its Swiss precedent, the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel,* is identified in Vincent, 61.

domestic effects of state-sanctioned buildings rather than their relationship to international audiences. Second, by identifying the museum's cohabitation of multiple value systems, this chapter prompts a re-examination of the dialectical model of negritude used by some art historians to understand cultural programming under Senghor, and proposes, instead, a dialogical framework. Together, these dual focuses portray the *Musée Dynamique* as both the agent and instrument of an existential liminality, in the sense that the building occupies several in-betweens: functionally, as a point of contact and exchange between nations, and conceptually, as it cohabitates multiple worldviews.

An Appeal to UNESCO and the Decision to Build

Independent Senegal was not yet an eight-month-old state when a letter arrived in the mailbox of the Director-General of UNESCO, Vittorino Veronese, from Alioune Diop, the Senegalese founder of the journal *Présence Africaine* and eventual president of the Association for the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*.[6] Under the subject heading "*Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres, à Dakar*," Diop reached out to inform the organization of a plan to mount a large-scale cultural festival in April 1961 to mark the first anniversary of Senegalese independence. In brief, vague terms, Diop requested UNESCO's involvement, an appeal that was met with skepticism by Michel Dard, the head of the organization's Arts and Letters Division. After having met with Diop in person to learn more, Dard judged the festival to be too broad and ambitious to be achieved within the proposed time-frame. Incredulous, he recounted the event's range to a colleague:

> It is, in effect, a global festival dedicated to culture, to the plastic arts, music, dance, theatre, artisanal arts, cinema, etc… and moreover, it is not a festival concerning only one

[6] Diop.

> country in the community or even Tropical Africa, but rather a global festival of Negro arts, North and Latin America included.[7]

Beyond issues related to scope and feasibility, Dard also expressed discomfort regarding involvement with *any* festival. UNESCO had never sponsored one, and he thought that it would be risky to "create a precedent, given the excessive number of festivals organized by all countries of the world and even in remote provinces."[8]

By the time that 1961 arrived, the Festival's target date had been delayed to 1963. With this revision of its timeline, the event's function became less clearly linked to a celebration of Senegalese independence and more completely devoted to the broader mission to mount, in Senghor's words, a "defense and illustration of negritude."[9] With the passage of time and shift in purpose, the Organization's trepidation subsided. According to the Senegalese Minister of Education, Francois Dieng, UNESCO promised to help with its facilitation by 1961, when he requested that the Organization send an expert on its behalf to assess the event's material and technical needs.[10] UNESCO ultimately complied but qualified its involvement, agreeing to help

[7] Translation mine. Michel Dard. "Michel Dard to Sankichi Asabuki, November 18," 1960; UNESCO Archives: Box 7 (=96) A 066 (663) « 66 ».

[8] Translation mine. Dard describes to his colleague that UNESCO might be able to contribute by facilitating a "round-table" discussion that accompanied the festival, foreshadowing the role that the organization would eventually adopt by organizing the scholarly "Colloquium on Negro Art." Ibid.

[9] Léopold Sédar Senghor, "The Function and Meaning of the First World Festival of Negro Arts," *African Forum* 1, no. 4 (1966).

[10] François Dieng. "François Dieng to Unesco Director General, November 6, 1961," UNESCO Archive: Box 7 (=96) A 066 (663) « 66 ».

with only a section of the broader festival: a museum exhibition and an accompanying colloquium.[11]

If the festival format had struck UNESCO's representatives as an unfamiliar artistic venue, the museum certainly would not have. The Organization was founded in the wake of the Second World War's devastation in an effort to foster world peace by facilitating international cooperation on educational, scientific, and cultural initiatives—and museums were assigned a central role in advancing this mission.[12] For UNESCO, museums were believed to be especially effective agents for "spreading knowledge and promoting international understanding as a positive contribution to peace."[13] UNESCO founded the bi-lingual (French and English) journal *Museum* in 1948 to foster the exchange of ideas between museum professionals around the world, and in 1953, an international panel of experts working on behalf of UNESCO voted to fund an "International Campaign for Museums."[14] Its impact upon launching in 1956 was far-reaching and varied: it instigated the opening of new buildings and galleries and supported

[11] An undated document in UNESCO's archives suggests that UNESCO offered to host its next colloquium in Dakar as a counter-offer, after rejecting the request to help with Dakar's festival in 1961. It was decided that UNESCO would be responsible for organizing a colloquium, in contract with the government of Senegal, that would coincide temporally with a festival held to celebrate Senegal's second anniversary of independence. "Dr. Adiseshiah's Mission to Africa: Senegal." UNESCO: Box X07 21 (663).

[12] Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) UN Educational, "Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco)," (1945).

[13] "Museum and Museums," *Museum* I, no. 1 (1948).

[14] André Leveillé, "International Campaign for Museums," ibid.IX (1956).

related conferences and teaching initiatives in countries on all sides of the Cold War and on every continent aside from Antarctica.[15]

UNESCO's track record as a sower of museums thus preceded the organization's official entry to Dakar on March 21, 1963, when the Swiss ethnographer Jean Gabus arrived to work on its behalf. He had endured a long journey, traveling from Neuchâtel, Switzerland, where he was the director (1945-1978) of the small lakeside city's Ethnographic Museum and a university professor. But an intercontinental commute was not uncommon for the ethnographer; in addition to completing the far-reaching travel required by his own research, he had become a preferred museological consultant for UNESCO beginning in 1957 with the reorganization of the National Museum of Kabul in Afghanistan.[16] By the time the United Nations' contribution to the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* was realized, he would already have assisted with the creation of a museologist training center in Jos, Nigeria and a conservation project at the Royal Palaces of Abomey in Dahomey (now Benin).

Responding to Dieng's plea, Gabus had been tasked to conduct a nine-day mission to examine the city's museological needs.[17] This goal led him early on to the colonial-style building of the *Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire* (IFAN) in Dakar, a former governor's palace-turned-research institute and museum. In preliminary meetings, IFAN had been favored by the Senegalese organizing committee as a possible venue for the planned exhibition. Its location was

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[15] Ibid., XI (1958).

[16] Pierre Centlivres, "Jean Gabus, 1908-1992," *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, no. 181 (1993): 182.

[17] Jean Gabus. "Voyage J. Gabus À Dakar," March 21-30, 1963; Archives of the Neuchâtel Ethnography Museum: Box 586.571.

ideal, anchoring a major downtown roundabout and surrounded by spacious lawns. But Gabus lamented its limited lighting and space, and warned that its lack of modern facilities would deter potential lenders from allowing their works to appear in the exhibition.[18] Gabus believed that for IFAN to be suitable, several of its interior walls would need to be demolished and its ceiling would need to be lowered–expensive tasks that would yield a still-imperfect result.[19]

What Dakar really needed, he thought, was a completely new museum: nothing too luxurious, which might trigger accusations of frivolous government spending, but rather a strictly functional space.[20] Envisioning that the museum would host several temporary exhibitions rather than a static display, he suggested that it accommodate transformable walls that could be reconfigured in various combinations.[21] Just a week after Gabus's departure, the Senegalese Ministry of Education and the Dakar-based French and Italian architects who would build the museum, Michel Chesneau and Jean Verola, issued an *avant-projet* blueprint for the building, which was at that point known only as the *Grande Hall d'Exposition*.[22] [Figure 1.2]

[18] Claude Vallon, "L'apprentissage D'un Pays Et La Guerre Des Mondes," *Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne*, June 2 1966.

[19] Gabus, 2.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Michel Chesneau and Jean Verola. "Grand Hall D'exposition," April 6, 1963; Archives of the Neuchâtel Ethnography Museum: Box 1137.1432. In 1964, the museum was referred to as the "Museum of Temporary Exhibitions" in a contract related to the exhibition *L'Art Nègre*. "Contre-Proposition Remise Par La Delegation Du Festival." October 23, 1964; Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 1.

The proposed museum was balanced and rectilinear. Its long, slim columns recalled the pilotis used in the 1920s architecture of Gabus's fellow Swissman Le Corbusier, forging a stylistic association further bolstered by its flat roof and unornamented surface.[23] **[**Figure 1.3**]** Its overhanging roof cast shade upon a *cour anglaise*, an elevated walkway that wrapped around the building to lead visitors to an ocean view. Indoors, the proposed ground floor plan was almost entirely open, its space divided only by a short entry hall. [Figure 1.4] A staircase led visitors to an L-shaped mezzanine overlooking the ground floor, with sufficient space to host its own displays. All told, the museum provided 13,360 square feet of exhibition space, the equivalent of about two and a half basketball courts.[24] The building was also equipped with a basement dedicated to storage, air-conditioning apparatuses, and other practical considerations. **[**Figure 1.5]

Aside from requesting a few additions—including a ticket office and, crucially, bathrooms—Gabus approved of the floorplan and drew up a budget.[25] UNESCO covered many of the costs related to the Museum's debut, assuming the fees associated with, for example, Gabus's involvement and the fabrication of state-of-the-art, air-conditioned vitrines. In the end, the value of the organization's contributions totaled about 98,000 US dollars.[26] But the expense

[23] Le Corbusier was, like Gabus, from the Jura canton of Switzerland, adjacent to Neuchâtel.

[24] The museum's ground floor measures 750 square meters, while the second-level galleries measure 482 meters; all in all, this allows for 1241 square meters of exhibition space. There are also 794 meters of terrace and 1225 meters of space underground. See: Chesneau and Verola.

[25] Jean Gabus. "Jean Gabus to M. Chesneau and J. Verola," May 17, 1963; Archives of the Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel: Box 1435.1436.

[26] More specifically, UNESCO funded Gabus's work and travel, the training of his intern, Salif Diop, the creation of special air-conditioned vitrines and other custom equipment required by the exhibition, airfare and translation services for the scholarly colloquium to accompany the exhibition, and the publication of an *album de prestige.* "Rappel Des Contributions Generales De

of building the new museum itself would fall squarely upon the shoulders of the Senegalese committee and whatever donors it could cultivate. Gabus estimated that the construction would cost 70 million CFA ($286,000; $2.3 million when adjusted for inflation in 2018), a sum well in excess of the 50 million CFA that the Senegalese committee allotted towards the museum in its 1963 budget.[27] But Gabus asserted that this investment would pay off in more ways than one. Aligned with UNESCO's outlook on the intercultural competencies of museums, he wrote, "This exhibition building, which would also be able to be one of the blocks of a future national museum, will allow easy cultural relations, across multiple exhibitions, with African states, as well as with European, American, or Asian ones."[28]

Gabus's words reveal that he considered his plan to be a diplomatic tool, but also to be legible across cultures. Indeed, the mere construction of the Dakar museum was a test of this hypothesis. Its layout had originally been developed with a starkly different environment and audience in mind: that of the ethnography museum nestled amid the foothills of the Jura Mountains where he worked. The *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel* had originally been the Victorian mansion of tobacco salesman Charles Auguste de Pury, but ten years after taking the museum's helm in 1945, Gabus inaugurated a contemporary addition to the old house. The new 6,460-square foot gallery that he ordered was intended to host temporary and travelling exhibitions as a complement to the infrequently-updated display of the permanent collection kept

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L'unesco Au Titre Du Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres." February 1966, UNESCO Archives: Box 7 (=96) A 066 (663) « 66 ».

[27]. "Procès-Verbal De a Réunion De La Commission Financiere Par Le Comite Directeur." November 18, 1963; National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres Box 42.

[28] Translation mine. ibid., 3.

in the former de Pury residence. [Figure 1.6] Gabus, who often mused philosophically on the abilities and responsibilities of museums, thought that temporary exhibitions could fulfill an ethical role distinct from their permanent counterparts. This belief fit within a broader theory of curation positing that exhibited objects functioned as "witnesses" testifying to the realities of faraway people and places, a conceptualization that would later provide the basis of his museological manifesto, *l'Objet-Temoin* (1975).[29] Gabus believed that the "only true justification of the museum's activities" was to place humans in contact with one another through such object-witnesses, allowing viewers to "arrive at the summits of a common humanity."[30] Permanent collection displays encountered obstacles to achieving this end, he thought, conveying a fixed range of object-witnesses that could connect visitors to cultures only in unchanging, outdated and partial terms.[31] He believed that the nimbleness and diversity offered by temporary displays allowed for them to convey a more multifaceted and updated view, and he called the new wing devoted to this task at Neuchâtel the *Musée Dynamique*.

The name of the *Musée Dynamique* thus refers to the perpetual movement taking place between gallery walls as various displays appeared and were replaced. But the museum was also dynamic in its own movement throughout the world: the functional basement, open gallery, small entrance hall and overlooking mezzanine of the Neuchâtel gallery reveal that not only its

[29] *L'objet Témoin: Les Références D'une Civilisatoin Par L'objet* (Neuchâtel, Switzerland: Ides et Calendes, 1975).

[30] "Principes Esthétiques Et Préparation Des Expositions Didactiques," *Museum* XVIII (1965): 16.

[31] "L'exposition Temporaire Dans La Vie D'un Musée D'ethnographie," *Museum* IV, no. 3 (1951): 170.

name, but also its layout were grafted upon the Dakar shoreline. [32] [Figure 1.7, Figure 1.8] Even its display cases and storage facilities were copies of Gabus's custom designs from Neuchâtel.[33] The two galleries' similarities were palpable when the museum was brought to life in three dimensions; one Swiss journalist at the *Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* remarked that the Dakar building "recalls, in its mobile and functional plan, the Ethnographic Museum of Neuchâtel."[34] [Figure 1.9] Through this importation, Gabus asserted that his layout had near-universal currency, adaptable to audiences in both a lakeside Swiss canton and a burgeoning West African state—and Dakar was only the beginning. Blueprints for the National Museum of Mauritania in Nouakchott, upon which Gabus had consulted in 1963, suggest the intention to incorporate yet another "*Musée Dynamique*" gallery into the Saharan location, though this building was never realized.[35] [Figure 1.10]

UNESCO's support for the designs advocated by Gabus, born and raised in a country that maintained political neutrality during the World Wars and Cold War, appears logical given the Organization's aspiration towards world peace. But the strategic links connecting UNESCO and the curator extended beyond geopolitics, and even beyond their shared understanding of museums as intercultural connectors, into the politics of style. Efforts to achieve an architectural Esperanto, Gabus's designs represented the same ideals identified with contemporary museums

[32] Gabus believed that a short entrance hall helped to prepare a visitor psychologically before they stepped into the broader exhibition. See: "Principes Esthétiques Et Préparation Des Expositions Didactiques," 20.

[33] On the design of these elements, see Knodel.

[34] Tripet; "Le Rôle De La Suisse Au Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres," *Chronique Regionale*, May 4, 1966.

[35] The museum was never actually constructed. See: Knodel.

by a 1956 issue of *Museum.* The journal's opening editorial advised that curators should play an active role in designing museum architecture, and that utilitarianism and flexibility were essential qualities for such future buildings. The ideal museum, the editorial declares, "can be adapted to every change in circumstances and finds its best ally in modern architecture."[36] UNESCO decreed that contemporary museum architecture should be well-balanced, neither excessive nor clinical in its decor, and "impregnated with humanism."[37] To this end, the official poster for UNESCO's International Campaign for Museums featured not an image of a museum, but instead, a giant spiral, using a reference to the Fibonacci sequence as a stand-in for the museum.[38] [Figure 1.11]

Finding an aesthetic through which to express humanist ideals appears to have been equally as important to the curator. When describing the ratios through which he divided space in his designs, Gabus referred to Le Corbusier's Modulor and the Fibonacci sequence—relationships theorized to have universal resonance due to their basis in forms found in nature and human anatomy.[39] The clear geometry, aspiration to transcend national style, and unornamented functionality underlying Gabus's gallery designs align his work with the buildings that architect Philip Johnson and architectural historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock famously called International Style. Identifying Le Corbusier as one of the style's key formulators,

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[36] "Architecture Contemporaine Et Les Musées," *Museum* IX, no. 2 (1956): 70.

[37] Ibid.

[38] "Editorial," *Museum* IX, no. 2 (1956): 72.

[39] Jean Gabus, "Principes Esthétiques Et Préparation Des Expositions Didactiques," ibid.XVIII (1965): 11.

Hitchcock and Johnson discuss the emergence of the tendency for architecture created after the First World War to use mass-produced materials, reject ornamentation, favor flat surfaces, and repeat modular forms.[40]

Whatever intentions underlaid them, the universalizing theories about the museum advocated by Gabus and UNESCO risked overlooking fundamental differences in the role that the institution had historically played in the communities it entered. The development of museums in general, and especially of those exhibiting objects from Africa, had emerged from the same history of colonial exploitation whose end the Dakar Festival had originally been conceptualized to herald. Indeed, Gabus's humanist aspirations sometimes went hand-in-hand with an overtly race-blind attitude.[41] So how did the approach to museum architecture shared by Gabus and UNESCO, a design philosophy founded upon the sidelining of difference, function at an event proclaimed to honor *nègritude*?

The Dialogue of Universalism and Nationalism

The answer to this question is revealed, in part, through the ways that the Senegalese *Musée Dynamique* deviated from its Swiss precedent. The Dakar museum's exterior declares its divergence most explicitly. In Neuchâtel, a seventeen-meter long fresco by the Swiss artist Hans Erni spans the front facade of the *Musée Dynamique*.[42] [Figure 1.12] *Les Conquêtes de l'Homme*

[40] Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, *The International Style (1932)* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997). Le Corbusier's architectural manifesto lays out similar values: Charles-Édouard (Le Corbusier) Jeanneret, *Vers Une Architecture* (Paris: Crès, 1923).

[41] The curator wrote that the "phrase "our brothers of color" has no place in an honest demonstration." Centlivres, 183.

[42] Gabus published a book about the mural. Jean Gabus, *Les Fresques De Hans Erni, Ou La Part Du Peintre En Ethnographie* (Neuchâtel: La Baconnière 1956).

(The Conquests of Man), as it was titled, embodies the multiculturalist ethic of UNESCO. Its iconography cites arts from around the world, including illustrations of the Buddhas of Tun-Huang, the Nahua deity Quetzalcoatl, and Leonardo's Vitruvian man.[43] [Figure 1.13] Gabus attempted to arrange for Erni to make paintings for the *Musée Dynamique*, raving to the Dakar-based Festival committee that the artist "perfectly understood" how to lend the exhibition of African art "an enlargement of humanism."[44]

This suggestion was rejected. Englebert Mveng, a Cameroonian member of the committee formed to organize the exhibition *l'Art Nègre*, wrote back, "The idea is interesting, but if we must have panels, it could only be those inspired by the African panels of Benin or Foumban showing African life."[45] Mveng's words reveal the possible tensions inherent in Senghor's mission to identify Senegal's celebration of negritude as an expression of shared black identity and also of universal humanistic values. Given the investment of the Festival in African ancestry, and more directly, the terms of Erni's dismissal in Dakar, it is not unreasonable to imagine that the differences between the Neuchâtel and Dakar museums would involve the incorporation of architectural and design motifs derived from the African continent—or, perhaps, that the building would adopt the flat façade of Neuchâtel but replace its frescos with murals by

[43] Ibid., 22.

[44] The paintings that Gabus proposed were going to be panels that could be moved between the Paris and Dakar exhibitions; he does not indicate an interest in painting the entire exterior of the Dakar museum. But the availability and rejection of Erni nonetheless indicate a difference between the ideals of the Dakar Museum and those that would be represented in the artist's works. "Jean Gabus to Monsieur Valentin, April 22," 1963; UNESCO Archives: Box 7 (=96) A 066 (663) « 66 ».

[45] Engelbert Mveng. "P. Engelbert Mveng to Jean Gabus, November 28, 1964," Archives of the Neuchâtel Museum of Ethnography: Box 1435.1438.

one of Senegal's rising stars among the *École de Dakar* painters.[46] After all, many buildings in present-day Senegal adhere to decorative guidelines enforced under Senghor's leadership by the 1968 *Loi Decorative*, which required that one percent of the cost of public buildings be devoted to their beautification "based on negro-African aesthetics."[47]

The sleek exterior that prevailed makes no direct reference to the art of Senegal or Africa. Its stylistic traits do, however, cohere with the look of other construction projects led by Senghor in the 1960s. [Figure 1.14] In preparation for the Festival, the Museum's architects, Chesneau and Verola, had also been hired to build the *Théâtre Daniel Sorano* (1965), a 1,500 seat venue that would be a hub for performances. A modern new wing had also been added to Dakar's airport in the lead-up to the 1966 event. These architectural preparations for the festival contributed to a larger building boom following independence in Dakar.[48] The architectural transformation of the capital city following decolonization was framed, in a photo-essay written by Senghor's French-born press secretary Charles Guy Etcheverry, as an earmark of a new era and a "national task":[49]

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[46] On the École de Dakar, see Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow : Art, Politics, and the Avant-Garde in Senegal, 1960-1995*; "The Ecole De Dakar: Pan-Africanism in Paint and Textile."

[47] Snipe, 58.

[48]Even earlier, a proliferation of construction projects completed in the 1950s under the supervision of French President Charles de Gaulle (1890-1970) erected examples of twentieth-century architectural modernism throughout the city. Wright describes the implementation of various colonial urban plans. Gwendolyn Wright, "The Ambiguous Modernisms of African Cities," in *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa*, ed. Okwui Enwezor (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 2001).

[49] Charles Guy Etcheverry, "Le Sénégal," in *World Festival of Negro Arts / Festival Mondial Des Arts Negres: Dakar 1/24 Avril 1966* (Paris: Impressions André Rousseau, 1966), 35.

> At a wave of the magic wand of those magicians armed with trowels, gauging-rods, and pneumatic drills, thanks to those builders – architects, engineers, and work-men—Dakar has been transformed into an enormous building-yard, feverishly throwing off her old mantle of an imperial city in order to adorn herself with the magnificent toga of the large capital of a modern independent state.[50]

In Etcheverry's portrayal, construction projects performed a kind of sorcery, transfiguring the colonial city into an independent capital.

Indeed, the construction of the *Musée Dynamique* and the broader architectural program into which it fit might be understood with respect to Senghor's strategic and ideological objectives as a head-of-state managing the politics of independence. Prior literature on post-colonial architecture has examined the function of state-sponsored building during decolonization in proclaiming the status and legitimacy of a new regime.[51] Vale argues that post-colonial architecture most often avoids making specific regional references when taking on these tasks:

> New states are rarely, if ever, culturally homogenous and national identity is rarely directed at the liberation of a single, clearly bonded cultural group to which all citizens claim membership. Rather, much of twentieth-century state-making involves mediation among factions; many potential nations may be forced to coexist, peacefully or otherwise, within the bounds of a single state.[52]

Art Historian Janet Hess has applied Vale's theory in the context of West Africa, arguing for the historical role of architectural modernism in consolidating national identity. She asks

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[50] Ibid., 29.

[51] Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 10.

[52] Janet Berry Hess, *Art and Architecture in Postcolonial Africa* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2006), 10.

rhetorically, “Is modernism here then imposed, destructive and unnatural, or is it a means to freedom, economic opportunity and social equality?”[53] The *Musée Dynamique* might be best understood according to the latter set of goals. In its columned simplicity, the architectural façade evades reference to the aesthetic of any given ethnic group, of which there are about twenty in Senegal.

Vale and Hess provide useful rubrics for considering the relationship of the *Musée Dynamique* to a domestic audience. In strictly spatial terms, the museum was well-positioned to accommodate a broad swath of Dakarois society. Rather than being placed in the city’s downtown business district (called *Plateau*), it was built at the convergence of two residential areas: the Medina, a popular working-class quarter, and Fann Hock, the upscale waterfront wing to the University of Dakar (now Cheikh Anta Diop University). A desire to accommodate both the professor and the peanut-seller would align with Senghor’s avowed optimism about the range of Senegalese people who the festival would serve, a population including, he believed, “even the least cultivated. [Because] even the shepherd who keeps his animals deep in the bush follows it on his transistor radio and takes away a source of confidence in his dignity as a Negro, in the worth of negritude.”[54] To adorn a building serving a Senegalese public in the long-term, the unifying aesthetic that Hess discusses would have been a logical and timely choice. Although Senegal was less affected than its African neighbors by the coup d’états following independence, it was not entirely exempt. A 1962 insurrection by Mamadou Dia led Senghor to condemn

[53] Ibid.

[54] Translation mine. A.P.S, ""Une Cité Des Arts Va Être Prochainement Batie a Dakar" Annonce Le Président Léopold Senghor," *Dakar-Matin*, April 18, 1966.

infighting in his country and call for a single-party system, asking his citizens repeatedly for the "unity of their hearts and souls."[55]

But museum-going Senegalese were accompanied and almost certainly greatly outnumbered by an international crowd, at least in the institution's earliest days.[56] One Swiss journalist remarked that only elite Senegalese attended the exhibition at the *Musée Dynamique*, since "the poor people of Dakar have other cats to herd."[57] A French journalist contrasted the low Senegalese attendance at the museum to the high attendance at an independence-day pirogue race.[58] If the appearance of locals at the Museum upon opening seemed sparse, however, the international attention that it received was not. The morning after its opening, an article in the *Dakar-Matin* declared the museum to be "true center" of the Festival, and photos of the museum and stories about the exhibition appeared in scores of African, European, and American media outlets.[59] Looking back upon the museum's creation, Senegalese art historian Ousmane Sow Huchard, who was the *Musée Dynamique*'s curator-in-chief from 1983-1988, emphasized its role on the international stage, writing that the Museum was an "invitation to a cultural dialogue

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[55] Léopold Sédar Senghor, "Message De Nouvel an, 31 Décembre 1962," *Sénégal actualités: reflet hebdomadaire de l'actualité politique, économique, sociale et culturelle du Sénegal.* 1963.

[56] My personal interactions with Festival attendees reinforced this likelihood. Among the Dakarois with whom I spoke while researching the Festival, nearly none could describe the exhibition or the museum, whereas other features (particularly the stadium-play *Les Derniers Jours de Lat Dior*) were consistently recalled by most.

[57] Tripet.

[58] Maurice Tassart, "À Dakar, Le Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres (Opération Déficitaire... Mais Payant)," *Carrefour* (1966).

[59] Translation mine. unknown, "En Presence De M. André Malraux, Le President De La République a Inauguré Le *Musée Dynamique*," *Dakar-Matin*, April 1, 1966; "Magnifique Succès Du *Musée Dynamique*: 20,000 Visiteurs Enregistrés Depuis Le 20 Avril," ibid., April 22.

aimed at all nations of the world on the morning of our independence."[60] The diplomatic function of the *Musée Dynamique* fits into the broader landscape of cultural politics discussed by art historian Joshua Cohen, who argues that the work of the *École de Dakar* painters, so often discussed as a nationalist tool, played a role beyond the borders of Senegal in foreign relations.[61] As he points out, by 1962, artistic projects were managed by the Ministry of Education *as well as* the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which had its own "Division of Cultural and Social Relations."[62]

Prior literature on state-sponsored independence-era architecture in Africa has not rigorously considered the international functions of such building projects. Architect Manuel Herz has initiated an effort to theorize broad claims, discussing independence-era modern architecture with respect to the international by characterizing it as "a way of meeting other nations at eye level," showcasing the level of a country's infrastructural and economic development in order to command respect and appeal to tourism.[63] But if the international-facing motivations underlying the *Musée Dynamique* included defending against stereotypes and attracting Euro-American tourism, its international engagements surely exceeded such a singular and hazily-defined West/Non-West axis. Architectural historian Jane C. Loeffler's work on mid-century American embassies provides a model for considering the ways architecture can function simultaneously on multiple vectors of exchange, carefully communicating an identity that is

[60] Translation mine. Huchard, 54.

[61] Cohen.

[62] Ibid., 20.

[63] Manuel Herz, "The New Domain: Architecture at the Time of Liberation," in *African Modernism: The Architecture of Independence*, ed. Manuel Herz (Zurich: Park Books 2015), 9.

national but not insulated, and conveying international involvement without trumpeting partisan relationships. She writes of the careful balancing act required by such efforts:

> Given the chance to serve a diplomatic role, could architects establish a language of discourse through which American architecture might speak to the world of American hopes and American strength? Could they create a dialogue of mutual trust and respect with people of different cultures and sensibilities? Or would they simply make grand or empty gestures incomprehensible to all but their own peers in the United States and abroad—statements resented like the intrusions of missionaries, flamboyant like the work of fanatics, or dull like the timid efforts of legal experts whose ultimate aim is compromise?[64]

The *Musée Dynamique* was implicated in efforts to quash intra-national forms of identity in favor of the national, as well as in postwar efforts to advance a universalizing humanism. Its resulting ideological cohabitation is signaled not only by the simultaneous refusal of Erni's frescos and African iconography, but also by the particularly Greek character of the design that prevailed.

Ancient Greece and Negritude

Time and time again, discussions of the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* metaphorized Africa and the arts of the continent through references to Mediterranean antiquity. This tendency characterized the words of both the festival's strongest advocates—Gabus aimed to "evoke the great figures of Socrates, Plato, and Homer,"—and its opponents, such as Beninese writer Paulin Joachim, who called for the repatriation of the exhibition's objects to Africa so that the continent may reclaim "some of the pride of Greece, mother of the arts, herself also despoiled

[64] Jane C. Loeffler, "The Architecture of Diplomacy: Heyday of the United States Embassy-Building Program, 1954-1960," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 49, no. 3 (1990): 251.

like us."[65] When the *Musée Dynamique* officially opened its doors for the first time on March 31, 1966, Senghor used his inaugural address to outline the relationship between Africa and the Mediterranean, arguing that the Greeks admired Egyptian civilization, which in turn drew upon the writing, art and religion of Nubia (or, per Senghor: "*la Nubie des Nègres*.")[66] One year after the festival, an article in the *Dakar Matin* continued to compare Dakar's touristic potential to that of Greece, writing of the "strong chance of attracting innumerable art lovers who will come to take in the "first sources" as they would do a pilgrimage on the acropolis of Athens."[67]

The rhetoric surrounding the Dakar Museum can be understood as part of a broader international conversation enacting comparisons or positing historical exchange between ancient histories of the Mediterranean and sub-Saharan Africa. Art historian Richard Powell has discussed the influence of this dynamic across the Atlantic, as in the United States, Hale Woodruff's murals titled *The Art of The Negro* (1950-1951) brought to life interactions between the ancient Greeks, Egyptians, and Nubians in murals applied to the walls of the Trevor Arnett Library at Atlanta University.[68] [Figure 1.15] In the 1940s, Frank M. Snowden Jr., a Professor of Classics at Howard University, had begun to publish scholarship theorizing the lived

[65] Gabus, "Voyage J. Gabus À Dakar."; Paulin Joachim, "Rendez-Nous L'art Negre," *Bingo* (1965).

[66] Senghor, "The Function and Meaning of the First World Festival of Negro Arts," 4.

[67] Translation Mine. R.E., "M. Salif Diop Directeur Du Musée Dynamique Prépare Plusieurs Prochaines Expositions," *Dakar-Matin*, June 5, 1967.

[68] Powell discusses the ways in which ancient Greek philosophy was explored by black artists after World War II and in response to "Black Orpheus" by J. P. Sartre; he invokes the work of Richard Hunt, James Wells, Romare Bearden, and Ralph Ellison as examples. Richard J Powell, *Black Art and Culture in the 20th Century* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1997).

experiences of black people in Ancient Greece, arguing that "the Greeks show no trace of color-prejudice and […] the Greek society had no color line."[69]

The changes enacted between the Neuchâtel and Dakar exteriors are productively understood among these conceptualizations of the ancient Mediterranean's race relations. [Figure 1.16] The Dakar façade was lightened to a stony off-white, and its walls were offset by an imposing peristyle, modifications that heighten the Dakar building's association with the temples of ancient Greece.[70] Senghor's biography provides other clues that might explain the Museum's invocation of classical antiquity; in the 1930s, he was immersed in the study and instruction of the classics at the University of Paris.[71]

Still, the Grecian character of the Museum is difficult to reconcile with the dialectic reading of negritude that has, until recent decades, dominated historical interpretations of Senghor. Jean-Paul Sartre famously discussed negritude through the lens of Hegelian dialecticism. As an attack on colonialism that appropriated and weaponized the ontological logic of colonial racism, negritude is framed, by Sartre, as an antithesis to white supremacy.[72] Frantz Fanon similarly explained negritude to be based in ontological binarism, describing it as

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[69] Frank M. Snowden, "The Negro in Ancient Greece," *American Anthropologist* 50, no. 1 (1948): 37.

[70] See Snipe, 48; Huchard, 57.

[71] Vaillant.

[72] This understanding thus considers negritude to be a poetic invention that could only be ephemeral, a tool in destabilizing the thesis that it countered rather than an enduring worldview. He explains this outlook in an essay that itself invokes Greek mythology in its title, "Black Orpheus" (1948), printed as an introduction to an anthology of works by negritude poets that Senghor edited. Sartre and Senghor.

juxtaposing "old Europe versus young Africa, dull reason versus poetry, and stifling logic versus exuberant nature; on the one side stood rigidity, ceremony, protocol and skepticism, and on the other, naïveté, petulance, freedom, and, indeed, luxuriance."[73] A dialectical understanding of negritude also underpins some works of art-historical literature discussing 1960s Senegalese art. Art historian Ima Ebong, for example, writes that Senghor's investment in negritude limited the aesthetics of the state-sponsored arts of Senegal, as it demanded the incorporation of references to "ancestral art forms" as well as the visualization of abstract concepts "imagined as inherently African—values such as intuition, emotion, rhythm, and vital force."[74] She writes that, as a consequence, artists working in the service of negritude had to adhere to a "tightly prescribed formal and ideological zone."[75]

The style of the *Musée Dynamique*, sober and minimal, does not appear to fulfill such a prescription. And one of the most well-known (and most condemned) quotes used to support dialectical interpretations of negritude might initially make the Mediterranean character of the Museum appear even further mismatched with negritude philosophy: Senghor's claim in 1939 that "Emotion is Negro, as reason is Hellenic."[76] These words, which appear to position the African and the Greek in fundamental contrast to one another, have since circulated widely. They are useful to both Senghor's most vehement critics, who use them to summarize the essentializing binarisms for which they rebuked negritude, as well as some of his advocates, who

[73] Frantz Fanon, "On National Culture," in *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 153.

[74] Ebong, 132.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Liberté I, Négritude Et Humanisme (1938)* (Paris: Seuil, 1964), 288.

defend their political utility. A dialectical reading of negritude might understand Greece to represent a European culture to which negritude's formulation of blackness stood as a foil. Juxtaposed, then, with Senghor's remarks from 1939, the *Musée Dynamique's* formal character appears antithetical to the ideology in whose name it was founded.

But this seeming bind relies upon a pair of assumptions that are useful to re-evaluate: first, the notion that Senghor's 1960s conceptualization of negritude should be interpreted according to its articulation two decades earlier, and second, that Greece would have been understood as a signifier of European culture at the moment of the *Musée Dynamique*'s construction. Rather than contradicting Senghorian ideology, the Mediterranean look of the *Musée Dynamique*, I argue, underscores the importance of using a historically-specific, dialogical interpretation of negritude when considering the relationship between Senghor's thinking and the artistic programming of Independence.

In the 1960s, Senghor foregrounded that negritude was not only directed towards the well-being of African-descended people, but in fact towards the benefit of the world: a project that he called the "Civilization of the Universal." Senghor cites UNESCO as an influence shaping the ways his thinking about race and ethnicity had changed, claiming that the organization had:

> …started to show that the concept of race is a false myth; that each civilization is a complex of material, technical, cultural and spiritual values, the fruits of geography, history and a mingling of ethnic characteristics; that the great civilizations of Antiquity-Egypt, Sumeria, India, China, Greece-were born at the meeting points of the world's roads, and the world's races."[77]

[77] "Negritude and African Socialism (1961)," 447.

To be clear, my point in presenting Senghor's denial of race is not to reject that Senghorian negritude posited and perpetuated an essentializing notion of blackness, even into the 1960s. Senghor's words do demonstrate, however, that the precise significance and agenda that he attributed to negritude changed over time. It is important to remember the radically different circumstances characterizing the movement's founding. Senegal was still colonized by France, a reality that Senghor confronted through literary expression as a student living in Paris. Three decades later, Senegal was officially politically independent and Senghor assumed head-of-state in a nation confronted with every practical consideration imaginable. Given this transformation of negritude's terrain, it should come as no surprise that Senghor's ideological framework underwent renovations.

Still, the version of negritude that Senghor articulated before independence is often transposed upon his later career, a fate that philosophy scholar Souleyman Bachir Diagne blames upon the influence of Sartre's "Black Orpheus," upon popular understandings of negritude.[78] In Diagne's view, Sartre's dialectical approach assumes that Senghor's conceptualization of blackness employs the kind of racial binary theorized by Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1857-1939), the French philosopher-ethnologist who hypothesized a racist distinction between human beings with "modern" mindsets and others who were incapable of exercising logic due to their "primitive" dispositions. For Diagne, as well as for literary scholar Donna Jones, the portrayal of negritude as an inverted reproduction of the Lévy-Bruhlian model is the central misinterpretation perpetuated by "Black Orpheus."[79] Diagne and Jones argue that the quality of the essentialism

[78] Diagne, 11. See also: "Négritude," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2018), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/negritude/.

[79] Donna V. Jones, *The Racial Discourses of Life Philosophy : Négritude, Vitalism, and Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

advanced by Senghor is better understood in relation to the work of philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941). Bergson assumes intuition not to be rationalism's opposite or absence, but its analogue; the two, he posits, are different expressions of the same underlying consciousness.[80] In these terms, the essences that Senghor identifies as African or European would not be locked into a dialectic, but seen as comparable expressions of a shared underlying humanity.

A dialogical interpretation of 1960s negritude makes it possible to imagine circumstances wherein negritude and Greek antiquity could be interpreted not only as compatible sources of understanding about one's heritage, but as conflated ones. The frequent references to Greece surrounding the Festival emerged alongside a broader proliferation of comparable invocations by African politicians and intellectuals, who gestured towards the ancient Mediterranean as they discussed the development of their own nations.

Many of the continent's social elites and heads of state had been educated in Europe, where a mastery of classics generally remained an important element of one's intellectual formation. In the same year as the festival, political scientist Ali Al Mazrui (1933-2014), raised in Kenya and holding a professorship in Uganda, attributed the exaltation of Greco-Roman civilization by African political leaders to the demands posed by racism and the urgencies of postcolonial nation-building. In Mazrui's observation, because a comprehension of the classics was understood as a marker of humanity to colonialists and white supremacists, mastering ancient languages and literature was a method for defying racist claims of Africans' inferiority.[81]

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[80] Henri Bergson, *L'évolution Créatrice (1907)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2016).

[81] An example of the racist use of classics as a measure of humanity, Mazrui discusses how John C. Calhoun once said that his support for enslaved labor might have been shaken if he met an enslaved person who could master Greek syntax. Ali A. Mazrui, *Ancient Greece in African*

"In order to establish her intellectual equality with the West," Mazrui urged, "Africa has to master Western versions of intellectual skills. Africa has to establish that she can be as "Greek" as the next person."[82]

In addition to defending against stereotypes, gesturing to the classical Mediterranean in articulations of African identity was understood to be politically advantageous in the establishment of postcolonial continental alliances. By identifying with Greco-Roman antiquity, Africans could frame the relationship between the European and African continents through historical interactions other than colonialism, and in turn, could identify Africa's shared cultural ground with Europe somewhere other than in France or England. The linguistic and cultural divide between nations that had formerly been colonized by either of the two was understood, by some, to threaten pan-African unity and to limit the ability to coordinate alliances on the continent. Though Senghor was a known Francophile, he appears to have taken care to avoid inciting Anglo-Franco rivalry at the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*, where speeches and publications consistently appeared in both languages. Perhaps to balance the Festival's francophone location, Senghor had designated anglophone Nigeria as the "Star Country," of the Festival, devoting a special display to the country in Dakar's town hall.[83] Indeed, creating cooperative bonds between African nations, regardless of their past colonial affiliation, was a professed goal of Senghor, who wrote:

Political Thought: An Inaugural Address Delivered on 25th August 1966 at Makerere University College, Short Stories and Reprint Series (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967).

[82] Ibid., 11.

[83] "Nigeria Star Country Digest." 1966; National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Negres: Box 19.

> Human progress is not possible in Africa if we remain divided. African unity will be thus, for us, a permanent ideal. Our sovereignties, weak, dispersed, will no longer be a great weight, but united they can be a lot.[84]

In contrast to the cultural divide separating Africa's francophone and anglophone countries, classical languages and history had the advantage of being divorced from the continent's colonial history, and of being known by social elites throughout the continent. Testifying to the perception that ancient Mediterranean culture might provide a basis for intra-African unity and post-colonial identity, Mazrui even argues that classical languages should be used in place of colonial languages throughout the continent:

> In their war against the deadly encroachment of English and French, the African languages must therefore seek the alliance of Latin and Greek. For some African languages such alliance might indeed be a matter of life and death."[85]

Understood as a representation of the unifying cultural source of the ancient Mediterranean, the Greek architectural traits of the *Musée Dynamique* could have performed a similar mediation between francophone and anglophone nations to the kind that Hess theorized Modern architecture might perform between a given nation's ethnic groups.

Efforts to establish Africa's Greekness were accompanied by attempts to demonstrate Greece's Africanity. This is the maneuver to which Senghor devoted his opening remarks at the *Musée Dynamique* when he traced a lineage from Mediterranean antiquity to Nubia. The political power of Senghor's remarks is clarified when viewed with respect to Mazrui's discussion of

[84] He continues, specifying that he wishes for each nation to remain distinct. "Cultural identity, the postcolonial situation, underdevelopment. The difficulties of realizing this unity are known, at least if, by unity, one means the fusion of all components."

[85] Mazrui, 32.

Ghanian head-of-state Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972), who, in a speech on constitutional reform, referred to Aristotle as "The Master." Mazrui writes of the agency underpinning this remark,

> Such an acknowledgement was not a submission, but a conquest, not a retreat into subservience but a move to transcend. As Nkrumah said "Aristotle, the Master," the whole edifice of Europe's monopoly of the Graeco-Roman heritage began to shake. […] In simple terms, and with confidence, an African was claiming his share of the Hellenic heritage of man."[86]

The *Musée Dynamique*'s allusions to Greece might be understood similarly, as a way of making Africa's claim upon a cultural crossroads.

The discourse surrounding Mediterranean antiquity in 1960s Africa, then, positioned Greek achievement not as a symbol of European values, but as the result of an intercontinental juncture in which Africa as a whole held a stake. This conceptualization would align with the ways in which Senghor spoke of Greece years after the festival, when he called it "Eur-Africaine."[87] Rather than understanding Greece to be a symbol of European rationalism, for Senghor, Greece came to represent the coming-together of African and European contributions, an approximation of the possible human achievements unlocked when each culture contributed its competencies towards the betterment of mankind: a step towards the "civilization of the Universal" to which he aspired.

[86] Ali Al Mazrui, "Ancient Greece in African Thought," in *African Thought in Comparative Perspective* (2014 (originally 1966)), 163.

[87] Léopold Sédar Senghor, "Le Sénégal, Le Latin Et Les Humanités Classiques (1973)," *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé*, no. 1 (1974).

Dialogue and Dynamism

In comparison to other midcentury architectural works inspired by the ancient Mediterranean, like, for example, the Pantheon-inspired Jefferson Memorial (1943), the *Musée Dynamique* plays its classical character with limited conviction. [Figure 1.18] Caught in dialogue with the modern, the Dakar museum excludes a pediment in favor of a flat, Corbusian roof, and its columns are slim and rectangular, conspicuously devoid of capitals that might link them to a particular historical moment.

Linked to both an ancient past and a modern present, the *Musée Dynamique*'s temporal liminality mirrors the nature of the display that had, at first, been planned to debut within it. In 1966, the Festival's two art exhibitions took place in separate buildings. Whereas historical materials from Africa appeared at the *Musée Dynamique*, contemporary works from around the world were displayed far across town, in Dakar's *Palais de Justice*, under the title *Tendences et Confrontations* (Trends and Confrontations). But originally, all of Festival's works were to be displayed in the same exhibition, with *Tendences et Confrontations* presented as a sub-section of *l'Art Nègre*.[88] The use of two buildings and the separation that it implies were a result of spatial demands more than conceptual intentions; at the moment of its planning, the *Musée Dynamique* would have needed to provide for both the continent's very newest and very oldest arts.

But the museum's capacity to espouse two concepts at once extends beyond its straddling of a temporal divide. This chapter has dwelled upon identifying the building's simultaneous engagement with two models of intercultural exchange: the networked essentialism of Senghor's post-war negritude, and the universalizing claims of UNESCO's cosmopolitanism. Crucially, as

[88] Gabus, "Voyage J. Gabus À Dakar."

the building takes on nationalist and internationalist objectives, and as it expresses multiculturalist and universalist visions, the museum seeks neither to plant itself somewhere on a spectrum nor to eliminate either pole in its resolution of a dialectic. Instead, the *Musée Dynamique* cohabitates multiple categories simultaneously, demonstrating that their mutual recognition can take place without demanding their mutual exclusivity. This aligns with Senghor's expressive preferences in a broader sense; he once declared that revolutionary literature is that which "breaks sterile oppositions […] to transcend false dilemmas."[89]

There are parallels to this worldview in Senghor's foreign policy, which the head-of-state once pithily claimed that he could summarize in two words: "non-alignment and dialogue."[90] Senghor's "non-alignment and dialogue" are different from, for example, Swiss neutrality; they signal not perpetual withdrawal, but perpetual liminality.[91] Amid the tensions of the Cold War, tasked to create a government that might approximate either Western Democracy or Eastern Socialism, Senghor refused their mutual opposition, at least in theory. In 1964, he discussed how his governing philosophy, which he called African Socialism, sought to develop the vocal and empowered public sphere associated with democracy without relying upon competition as

[89] Léopold Sédar Senghor, "Discours D'ouverture Du Colloque Sur La Littérature Africaine D'expression Française, Le 26 Mars 1963," *Sénégal actualités: reflet hebdomadaire de l'actualité politique, économique, sociale et culturelle du Sénegal*, 14.

[90] "Discours De Présentation Du Premier Gouvernement Senghor Le Mercredi 19 Décembre 1962, Devant L'assemblée Nationale," *Sénégal actualités: reflet hebdomadaire de l'actualité politique, économique, sociale et culturelle du Sénegal*1963, 3.

[91] Senghor declared that he was not a neutralist, and that a "positive neutralism" was impossible. Bonn.

the engine for progress.[92] For all of his admiration of ancient Greece, he laments the centrality of *agon*, or competition, to its early civilizations in 1962:

> Terrible logic, which wants everything to be bad or good, true or false, friend or enemy, where the me and the you are, necessarily, antagonists. To the contrary, the negro-african spirit is of union: of communion. Here one also distinguishes good from bad, true from false, friend from enemy, and me from you. But these are complimentary realities which unite in a dialogue.[93]

Senghor spoke of a politics that inhabited elements of Socialism and Democracy simultaneously, refusing to withdraw from the labels completely or to perpetuate their perceived incompatibility. He places the terms in dialogue, rather than in dialectic, with one another. His words reveal more than the head of state's criticism of *agon* (and its implied legacy in capitalism.) They grant access to a philosophical worldview that posits inherent differences while rejecting inherent dichotomies.

The story of the creation of the *Musée Dynamique* reveals its emergence from a variety of exchanges linking Senghor, UNESCO, Jean Gabus, and other influences that informed the building's planning more abstractly. The resulting museum acts on multiple registers at once– functioning on the scale of the local, the national, the continental, and the global. Its architecture, and the negotiations underlying it, not only destabilize understandings of negritude aesthetics according to an insulating nationalist rubric, but also refine the ways in which ideas of identity-within and identity-across can be understood to relate to one another. The Museum's origin story and the visual languages it deploys require those studying them to revise definitions of internationalism as "nationalism's opposite," based on the idea that "internationalism is merely

[92] Senghor, "Negritude Et Civilisation Greco-Latine Ou Democratie Et Socialisme."

[93] Ibid., 13.

relations between nations, whereas nationalism is the seeking of group identity."[94] Instead, the relationship of the Museum to nationalist and internationalist agendas might be imagined in view of a tourism brochure distributed during the Festival. [Figure 1.19] Captioned "Senegal: the Crossroads of the World and Door to Black Africa," the accompanying image shows lines radiating outward from Dakar to The United States, Brazil, Russia, France, Madagascar, and elsewhere. Each of the many cities to which the Senegalese capital is linked appear roughly equidistant, a trick achieved by manipulating the scales of the oceans and continents portrayed. The brochure promotes Senegal by claiming its centrality to networks of global exchange, conveying Senegal's national identity through the degree to which it is internationally engaged.

Though the tourism brochure is not a direct promotion of the Museum, it reveals the kinds of global exchange that the *Musée Dynamique* aspired to facilitate, as well as the ideals that it represented: a space where both blocs, and where former colonizers and the formerly colonized, might meet in conversation. Functionally, the museum was intended to be always in-transition, as exhibitions passed through it, and as a meeting place that brought together objects and people from around the world. Straddling the ever-shifting shoreline that separates Dakar, Senegal, and Africa from elsewhere, it is not only by virtue of its location upon the Corniche that the *Musée Dynamique* inhabits the in-between.

[94] Mark Crinson, "The Building without a Shadow: National Identity and the International Style," in *Nationalism and Architecture*, ed. Raymond Quek; Darren Deane; Sarah Butler (Surrey, England and Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2012), 117.

Chapter Two

The Matter of Families: The Multiple Affiliations of *l'Art Nègre: Sources, Évolution, Expansion*

On an April morning in 1965, in his Palace office, Emperor Haile Selassie the First of Ethiopia reassured the Cameroonian Father Engelbert Mveng of his support for the following year's arts festival in Dakar.[95] "It is a matter of family," the emperor said of the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*, according to the priest's retelling of the meeting, before the two posed for a photo together and parted ways. "There's a reason we talk about African unity."[96]

Mveng had spent the previous seven weeks ricocheting across the cultural and governmental institutions of Central and Eastern Africa on a reconnaissance tour from Brazzaville to Addis Ababa. [Figure 2.1] His task was to identify and encourage potential object loans to Dakar for *l'Art Nègre: Sources, Évolution, Expansion* (Negro Art: Sources, Evolution, Expansion), the exhibition of the arts of Africa that would inaugurate the newly-constructed *Musée Dynamique* (Dynamic Museum) and become the centerpiece of the 1966 Festival.[97] Over

[95] Both men would later attend the Festival. Selassie's presence at the Festival is confirmed by a report from Swiss journalist Claude Vallon and in a photograph that appeared in *Ebony*. See: Claude Vallon, "Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres À Dakar: L'amérique Noire N'est Pas L'afrique, La Suisse N'epouse Pas Son Temps," *Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne*, April 21, 1966., "World Festival of Negro Arts," *Ebony*, July 1966.

[96] Translation mine. The meeting is dated April 20, 1965 at 11:00 AM. Engelbert Mveng. "Mission En Afrique Centrale Et Orientale Pour La Préparation Du Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres," 1965; Archives of the Neuchâtel Museum of Ethnography: Box 1301.

[97] On a secondary level, Mveng was also finding and encouraging experts working in African universities to give presentations at the scholarly colloquium on African Art organized to accompany the exhibition. See conference proceedings: *Colloquium: Function and Significance of African Negro Art in the Life of the People and for the People (March 30-April 8, 1966)*, (Paris: Editions Présence Africaine, 1968). Art historian Cedric Vincent has discussed the ways in which *l'Art Nègre* was marketed and understood as the festival's central component. Vincent.

the preceding month-and-a-half, this goal led him to museums, state and private collections, royal residencies, workshops, and marketplaces. Mveng had no formal training or professional experience related to art or material culture, but as a poet, a professor and a devout practitioner of Catholicism and negritude, he was in many ways an apt surrogate for the festival's prime mover, Senegalese President Léopold Sédar Senghor.[98] Indeed, all along his eastward path, Mveng scattered seeds of goodwill towards the Festival and the President who led it, rubbing elbows and exchanging pleasantries with ministers and even heads-of-state from the other side of the continent.[99] Beyond the office walls of political elites, he also gave public lectures and discussed the Festival in interviews on local radio stations.[100] In Mveng's view, the journey not only allowed for him to survey the art objects that might be available for the exhibition, but also to cultivate "precious contacts."[101] Beyond providing logistical preparation for *l'Art Nègre*, his cross-continental trek was thus an exercise in diplomacy and public relations. On a more abstract level, these preparatory missions nurtured different conceptualizations of the communities—or,

[98] Some of Mveng's poetry has been published in: Engelbert Mveng, *Balafon* (Yaoundé: Éditions CLE, 1972).

[99] On this mission to central and Eastern Africa, these included Selassie I, Ugandan President Edward Frederick William David Walugembe Mutebi Luwangula Mutesa II and President of Congo-Brazzaville Alphonse Massamba-Débat, all three of whom, Mveng reported indicated that they looked forward to contributing to the event and to attending it the following year. Throughout the course of the trip, Mveng met with governmental ministers, artists, royal authorities and UNESCO representatives in Congo-Brazzaville (present-day Republic of Congo), Congo-Léopoldville (present-day Democratic Republic of the Congo), Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, and Ethiopia. Mveng, 1965.

[100] According to his mission report, he appeared on a station in Bujumbura on March 31, 1965 and appeared on Voice of Kenya on April 13, 1965. He also held public conferences at multiple universities in Congo-Léopoldville. Ibid.

[101] Translation mine. Ibid., 43.

per Selassie I, families—in which people and nations participated, a question of elevated importance amid the uncertain geopolitical landscape of decolonization and the Cold War.

Headquartered from Dakar, the tentacles of the lending network to *l'Art Nègre* reached throughout much of Africa, and also to Western and Eastern Europe and the United States. [Figure 2.2] Missions similar to Mveng's took festival organizers to the Parisian *Musée de l'Homme*, the Bamum royal treasury and the White House; it led them to the Vatican Museum, to artisanal workshops in Léopoldville, and to collections on both sides of the iron curtain.[102] The wide-ranging origins of the objects that would become the purview of *l'Art Nègre* reflected the various and coinciding roles of African Art—as tool, treasure, and trinket; as artwork and artifact, and as symbol, conveying political cooperation or shared identity.

In the end, 516 objects loaned from nineteen countries appeared in *l'Art Nègre*, according to its catalogue.[103] The exhibition was accompanied by a major scholarly colloquium, held in

[102] The other two individuals responsible for performing these missions were Jean Gabus and Pierre Meauzé, a French member of the exhibition's joint committee. Meauzé completed most of the work in the United States and Europe, while Mveng completed most of the African trips; Gabus completed one West-African trip. Ibid.; Pierre Meauze. "Rapport De Mission: Recherches Dans Les Musées D'europe Et Les Collections Privées," 1965; Archives of the Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel: Box 1301; P. Englebert Mveng. "Mission D'etude Dans L'oeust-Africain," 1964; Archives of the Neuchâtel Museum of Ethnography: Box 1301; Alioune Diop. "Compte-Rendu De La Mission Pour La Preparation Du Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Negres: Juin-Juillet 1964," June-July 1964, 1964; Archives of the Musée de l'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel: Box Archives 1139.1440; Jean Gabus. "Rapport De Mission: Inventaire Des Musées Africains De L'oeust (Gulf De Guinée)," October 29, 1964; National Archives of France: Box 19890127-23.

[103] These countries are: Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, France, the United States of America, Belgium, Italy, Chad, the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, Nigeria, the United Kingdom (England), Ethiopia, Czechoslovakia, the Netherlands, Benin, Cameroon, Switzerland, the United Arab Republic, and Sierra Leone. *L'art Nègre: Sources, Évolution, Expansion*, (Paris: Ministère des Affaires Culturelles, 1966).

Dakar's National Assembly from March 30 to April 8, 1966, during which time experts from three continents delivered talks on the arts of Africa. Like the colloquium talks, the exhibition led its audience to consider the arts of the continent through different interpretive lenses: to recognize their formal artistic value, their long historical development, their usefulness in daily life, their philosophical engagements, and their inscription in international networks of exchange. In addition to invoking varying frameworks, the display also challenged contemporary museological conventions dictating what, exactly, the title "*l'Art Nègre"* could mean. Otherwise composed of objects made in Africa, the exhibition included a small number of works by European Primitivists, like a painting by Pablo Picasso and a sculpture by Amedeo Modigliani. Elsewhere, viewers could find implements of chiefdom from the Cameroon Grasslands that were returned to their royal function at the end of the exhibition's run. What values and politics shaped an exhibition that, unlike any preceding it, included both sorts of objects under the rubrics of "Negro" and "Art"?

To approach this question, the chapter that follows draws upon archival photographs and documents to reconstruct elements of *l'Art Nègre* and the organizational effort that preceded it.[104] The narratives that emerge from these materials reveal the multiple stakes attached to the continent's arts, defying disciplinary boundaries argued to structure the field's early historiography by, for example, anthropological scholar James Clifford, who famously argued that "since 1900, non-Western objects have generally been classified as either primitive art *or*

[104] Important archaeological and narrative work on *l'Art Nègre* is introduced in the prior work of Maureen Murphy, Cedric Vincent, and Éloi Fiquet and Lorraine Gallimardet. Gallimardet; Vincent; Maureen Murphy, *De L'imaginaire Au Musée : Les Arts D'afrique À Paris Et a New York (1931-2006)* (Dijon: Les Presses du réel, 2009).

ethnographic specimens."[105] Against the backdrop of high colonialism, Clifford describes, the understanding of objects formerly viewed as curiosities or collectibles from colonized lands was transformed by the growth of cultural anthropology and the appropriation of so-called "tribal art" by Picasso and fellow European modernists. Beyond identifying two approaches—one understanding objects as art, the other understanding them as culture—Clifford was emphatic about the impossibility for them to be applied simultaneously:

> The two domains have excluded and confirmed each other, inventively disputing the right to contextualize, to represent these objects. As we shall see, the aesthetic-anthropological opposition is systemic, presupposing an underlying set of attitudes towards the "tribal." Both discourses assume a primitive world in need of preservation, redemption, and representation. The concrete, inventive existence of tribal cultures and artists is suppressed in the process of either constituting authentic, "traditional" worlds or appreciating these products in the timeless category of "art."[106]

Clifford's model usefully identifies the legacy of colonial history in museums and universities, and rightly underscores the role of primitivizing fictions in sustaining ethnographic and art-historical discourse. But as a display of African art taking place on the African continent, *l'Art Nègre* provides an especially obvious example of the limitations to the two-part, art/ethnography historiographical model, a paradigm difficult to wedge into the handshake shared by a Cameroonian Priest and Ethiopian Emperor, or to blanket over the art exhibition that their

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[105] Emphasis in original. Clifford, 198.

[106] Ibid., 200. Clifford is not alone in this bifurcated conceptualization of the historical treatment of objects from Africa. Companion historiographies by art historian Monni Adams and Paula Ben-Amos have identified "double heritage" of African art studies, which they describe as being rooted in "art-historical" and "social" approaches. Adams; Paula Ben-Amos, "African Visual Arts from a Social Perspective," ibid. The exhibition *Art/Artifact* explored the role that institutional contexts play in shaping public understandings of objects from Africa. Susan Mullin Vogel, *Art/Artifact : African Art in Anthropology Collections* (New York: Prestel Verlag, 1989).

collaboration would benefit.[107] Clifford's paradigm relies upon the tacit assumption, among viewers and curators, that the makers of objects are fundamentally different from the audiences who encounter them. *L'Art Nègre* was not immune to the othering effects of the museum, but, as this chapter will show, it was also affected by midcentury political and social histories—like Senghor's "revised negritude" and UNESCO's cosmopolitanism—that sought to use museum display as a method for emphasizing the inscription of the people of Africa within a broader humanity.[108] This chapter illuminates the intertwined motivations underlying a single display of African art and identifies the multiple models of inter- and intra-national affiliation it implicated.

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[107] To be fair, Clifford's art-culture system was, by all indications, never intended to breach contexts outside of the United States and Europe. Rather, Clifford's work rightly calls attention to ways that Euro-American institutions have systemically denied agency to the people whose lives conditioned the material creations on display. It is nonetheless important to recognize that in Clifford's narrative, the people of Africa are not thought of as visitors or curators within the museum, nor as research professionals, nor as subjects whose observation of objects sometimes took place at a certain historical or philosophical remove. Leaving absent any mention of the twentieth-century proliferation of museums and universities throughout formerly colonized regions, the art-culture system described by Clifford, and the reverberation of his ideas into the present, risks re-consigning the people of Africa to the same imagined isolation and timelessness he decries. What, one is left to wonder, were all of those so-called "non-Westerners" themselves doing in the many museums and academic departments firmly established on the African continent by the time of Clifford's writing?

[108] While a growing body of art-historical literature discusses the role of political and philosophical thought in the creation and circulation of midcentury African artworks understood as "modern" or "contemporary," less attention has been paid to the ways that the kind of objects that appeared in *l'Art Nègre* – discussed as "traditional" or "classical" by organizers—took on additional significance during the early years of independence in step with conversations taking place outside of the academy or museum. This chapter adds to the small but growing body of scholarship, including works by Van Beurden and Wofford, that considers the historical arts of Africa as agents and instruments in social and political movements of the 1960s. Van Beurden's text on the role of African art under the leadership of Mobutu provides a useful illustration of the ways in which historical objects from the continent played a role in contemporary politics. Wofford discusses the ways in which American artists used the arts of Africa in their conceptualizations of black identity. Van Beurden; Tobias Wofford, "Africa as Muse : The Visualization of Diaspora in African American Art, 1950-1980" (2011). The greatest effort to establish the links between Senghor's political and philosophical views and the "traditional" arts of Africa has taken place outside of the discipline of art history, in the work of philosophical

Enacting Partnership

A Corbusian Parthenon set against the ocean horizon, the newly-constructed *Musée Dynamique* would not yet have weathered even a single rainy season in 1966, leaving the unbroken sunshine of a Dakar April to devour its granite façade. Conceived with *l'Art Nègre* in mind, the building oozed prestige, its architectural referents simultaneously framing the museum's contents within a thoroughly modern present and a long, dignified past. [Figure 2.3] Passing through double-doors crowned with the word *MUSÉE*, visitors would arrive in a small foyer to the relief of air-conditioning and a gentle stereo soundtrack of African music "in instrumental and vocal form, both tribal and feudal."[109] [Figure 2.4]

The Swiss ethnographer Jean Gabus, who had conceptualized the museum's layout on behalf of UNESCO, believed that a small introductory room of this kind helped to prepare a visitor psychologically for the exhibition they were soon to experience.[110] This entry area was delineated by the only true interior wall dividing the otherwise yawning space of the museum's open plan, creating the sole moment wherein a viewer's gaze and movement were tightly prescribed. There, immediately upon entry, capital letters spelled out a poetic preface to the

scholar Souleymane Bachir Diagne. Diagne, *African Art as Philosophy: Senghor, Bergson and the Idea of Negritude*. With respect to modernist and contemporary art in Senegal, Elizabeth Harney's work has usefully illuminated the relationship between national politics and modern and contemporary arts. Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow : Art, Politics, and the Avant-Garde in Senegal, 1960-1995*.

[109] The music is mentioned in informational packets made in advance of the exhibition, but I cannot confirm that it was actually implemented. "Exhibition of Traditional Art "Negro Art" [Informational Booklet]." Archives of the Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel: Box 1139.1439.

[110] Gabus, "Principes Esthétiques Et Préparation Des Expositions Didactiques," 20.

exhibition in French. This introduction prompted audiences to the conjoined pillars of Senghor's philosophical outlook, negritude and universal humanism:

> ONLY MAN CAN DREAM AND EXPRESS HIS DREAM
> IN THE WORKS THAT ARE GREATER THAN HIM
> AND IN THIS DOMAIN THE NEGRO IS KING
> WHICH GIVES THE NEGRO-AFRICAN CIVILIZATION ITS VALUE
> AND THE NEED TO DECIPHER IT
> TO USE IT AS A BASE ON WHICH TO BUILD A NEW HUMANISM
> L.S. SENGHOR[111] [Figure 2.5]

Senghor's words assigned interlocking functions to the objects on view. He frames the arts of Africa as evidence of the sophistication and brilliance of the continent's people, and also as signs of their underlying kinship. The arts, his description adds, are also expressions of a message that could improve the fate of mankind, and as such, offerings towards the peaceful ideal of a "new humanism" sought amid what Senghor called the "great conflicts" of his contemporary moment: decolonization and the Cold War.[112] Senghor's words are underpinned by the values of the "revised negritude" he proposed in 1961, which he defined as a form of humanism devoted to the pursuit of the Civilization of the Universal.[113] For the poet-president, the Civilization of the Universal represented an interconnected world in which people from across the planet contributed what he viewed to be culturally-originating competencies to one another, resulting in a future that benefitted from the shared intellectual and expressive contributions of various origins. Speaking to a British audience, he argued that culture was created through a combination of inherent qualities and intercultural exchange:

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[111]Translation from Vincent, 58.

[112] Léopold Sédar Senghor, "Lecture Given by H.E. The President of the Republic of Senegal at St. Anthony's College, Oxford University, 26 October 1961," (1961): 18.

[113] Ibid., 22.

> We Negro-Africans and you Europeans thus have a common interest in fostering our specifically native values, whilst remaining open to the values of the *Others*. Do we not agree, then, that Culture, far from rooting us in materially determining factors- geography, ethnology and history- is in the end a means of transcending them?[114]

Especially when viewed in relation to Senghor's broader philosophy of the 1960s, the introductory text to *l'Art Nègre* suggests implicitly that a celebration of independent identity and a devotion to international—or indeed, postcolonial—reconciliation were dual rather than dueling objectives.

In addition to being philosophical ideals, these were, to an extent, the twin engines that fueled the growth and realization of *l'Art Nègre* on a logistical level. The exhibition had once been envisioned as a much humbler enterprise. Originally, the pre-existing *Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire* (IFAN), a research institute and museum in Dakar, was to host an exhibition of its in-house collection: an effort that would have demanded no international loans, no new construction, and a lot less cash.[115] Much changed, obviously, before April 1966, when *l'Art Nègre* would be declared "a paragon in the artistic world," and marketed as an event that "you'll never see again."[116] Indeed, though *l'Art Nègre* was not, with respect to quantity, the largest exhibition of African art to date—the Museum of Modern Art's *African Negro Art* (1935), for example, included almost 100 more objects—it could be considered the farthest-reaching with

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[114] Emphasis in original. Translation by el-Malik in Shiera S. el-Malik, "Reading Imaginative Futures across Historical Moments; or Speaking Surreptitiously in Imperial Centres," *cint Contexto Internacional* 38, no. 3 (2016). Original text in Senghor, "Lecture Given by H.E. The President of the Republic of Senegal at St. Anthony's College, Oxford University, 26 October 1961," 8.

[115] Vincent, 50.

[116] Translation mine. André Terrisse, "L'exposition Du *Musée Dynamique*: Une Perfection Dans Le Monde Artistique," *Dakar-Matin*, April 1, 1966.

respect to the geographical breadth of its lending collections, and it was certainly the first exhibition of its scale to take place on the continent.[117] But in the effort to achieve this distinction, organizers partnered with a controversial collaborator: the French government. Indeed, the scope and ambition of the project expanded in step with two developments: the enlistment of UNESCO's assistance in creating the state-of-the-art *Musée Dynamique* to host the display (see Chapter 1), and the acquisition of a second destination in Paris. After completing its month-long run in Dakar, *l'Art Nègre*, it was announced, would travel to inaugurate a new building in the *Grand Palais*.[118]

To facilitate this collaboration, an organizational board of seven individuals was formed to plan the exhibition. Its membership consisted of three African experts and three French experts, as well as Gabus, who acted on behalf of UNESCO.[119] Referred to as the "joint committee" or "*commission mixte,"* the council's name reflects the deliberate composition of its constituents, designed to balance decision-making power between Africa and France. To this end, the committee was co-chaired by a representative from each geographic category, both of

[117] According to its checklist, this exhibition included 603 objects. James Johnson Sweeney, *African Negro Art* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1935), 58.

[118] While cultural critics in Paris tended to admire the objects on view at the Grand Palais version of *l'Art Nègre*, they often lamented the design of the display itself, criticizing its division of space and lighting. For example, see: Claire-Eliane Engel, "L'art Nègre D'âge En Âge," *Tribune de Geneve*, July 4, 1966.

[119] The members of the Joint Committee are as follows. From France: Georges-Henri Rivière (Curator-in-chief of the National Museum of Popular Arts and Traditions in Paris), Pierre Meauzé (Curator in the Museum of African and Oceanic Art in Paris), and Jacqueline Delange (Curator in the Department of Black Africa at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris.) From Africa: Alexander Adandé (Minister of Justice in Dahomey, present day Republic of Benin), Father Engelbert Mveng, and Salif Diop (Curator-in-training at the *Musée Dynamique*). From UNESCO: Jean Gabus (Director of the Museum of Ethnography at the Museum of Ethnology of Neuchâtel).

whom had gained prior leadership experience exhibiting objects from the continent. Alexandre Adandé, the Minister of Justice of Dahomey (present day Republic of Benin), had been the head of the department of Ethnography at IFAN in Dakar.[120] The other chair, Georges-Henri Rivière, was the inaugural director of the UN-affiliated International Council of Museums (ICOM); he had been also been the vice-director involved in renovating the Parisian Musée de Trocodero for its re-opening as the Musée de l'Homme in 1938.[121] Together, this committee made most of the major decisions concerning the exhibition's scope, content, and goals—although it appears that many design-oriented or last-minute decisions were managed by individuals working on the ground in Dakar in the months leading to the opening. Gabus and his intern, Salif Diop, a recent graduate of the University of Dakar (now Cheikh Anta Diop University) in training to become the *Musée Dynamique*'s first director, oversaw the exhibition's installation along with its interior designer, Walter Hugentobler of Switzerland.[122]

French financial contributions to the exhibition included the costs of moving the show from Dakar to Paris: insurance fees, packaging and transportation costs, and installation expenses at the Grand-Palais.[123] The degree to which French finances benefited the Dakar leg of the

[120] Adandé wrote about the importance of the future of museums in Africa and particularly in Dakar, which he called a "global crossroads." Alexandre Adandé, "L'impérieuse Nécessité Des Musées Africains," in *L'art Nègre* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1951), 196.

[121] Raymond de la Rocha Mille, *Museums without Walls : The Museology of Georges Henri Riviere* (City University, London: Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, 2011). Other members of the committee included Engelbert Mveng, Salif Diop, Jacqueline Delange, and Pierre Meauzé. "Exhibition of Traditional Art "Negro Art" [Informational Booklet]."

[122] Unfortunately, few records remain pertaining to Salif Diop in the archives that I have studied. On Hugentobler, see Knodel.

[123] The financial team estimated that insurance fees would be between 15 and 30 million CFA, and that the presentation would cost 10 million, making the sum of travel expenses paid by

exhibition is unknown. At a minimum, however, partnership with France would have allowed *l'Art Nègre* to acquire the strong collections, lending network and reputation of the national association of French museums, the *Réunion des Musées Nationaux.* Alioune Diop, the Senegalese founder of the journal *Présence Africaine* and the president of the Association for the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres,* explained to his colleague and countryman Mamadou M'Baye, secretary-general of the *Fonds Culturel Africain* (African Cultural Collection), that the French were understood to provide resources and professional networks rather than creative direction:

> The exhibition is not Franco-Senegalese, nor even Senegalese, but Negro-African in thought and sensibility: this is what makes it prized and original. France doesn't need us to present to the world a marvelous French vision of Negro art. That's not the expectation of the countries to whom we announced the festival. The role of France here is double: to make us better and more efficiently benefit from that which the USA, Germany, or England cannot offer – an extraordinary wealth of experience in the organization of a festival – and to accord us more material and financial aid, all the more appreciable because the Senegalese organizers are of French culture.[124]

In addition to citing the advantage of France's potential offerings, Diop mentions that another factor working in favor of the partnership would be the "French culture" of Senegalese organizers. Given Diop's lifelong devotion to supporting the development of postcolonial

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France 35 million CFA. "Séance De La Commission Juridique Et Financière." October 21 1964, National Archives of France: Box 19890127-23.

[124] Translation mine. Diop was writing to Mamadou M'Baye, Secretary-General of the *Fonds Culturel Africain,* the fundraising organization created to support the Festival. Alioune Diop. "A. Diop to M. M'baye," October 21, 1964, National Archives of France: Box 19890127-23.

African cultural identity, his casual remark suggests an established mutual understanding with M'Baye that African and French cultural identity could co-exist.[125]

Behind the official gloss of productive cooperation, anxieties gnawed at all sides of the Senegalese-French collaboration. The addition of French involvement raised questions about the exhibition's integrity, and whether it made sense for Senegal's recently unseated colonizer to play such a major role in a display devoted to negritude and, implicitly, African independence. Gabus felt reservations towards this organizational change, explaining to Rivière, "Personally and for long-term politics, I had truly preferred that Senegal could have done its exhibition alone. That seemed fairer to me and closer to what Africans could expect."[126] Some of the contacts that Mveng established on his missions throughout Africa expressed similar misgivings. He reported, "Suspicions exist regarding the festival's intentions and its true content. Many are wondering if it is really African and why it is being organized from Paris."[127] The addition of French involvement also reinforced criticisms launched by the governments of Guinea and Algeria, nations that declined to participate in an event that they condemned as the product of a neo-colonial relationship between Senegal and France.[128] At the same time, members of the exhibition's Legal and Financial Committee in Paris suspected that festival representatives

[125] One of the most well-known biographies of Senghor, *Black, French and African*, is named after the ways in which these identities coexisted for the President. See Vaillant.

[126] Jean Gabus. "J. Gabus to G.H. Rivière, November 2, 1963," Archives of the Neuchâtel Ethnography Museum Box 1435.1438.

[127] Translation from Vincent, 52.

[128] Guinée-Conkary and Algeria would pose a rebuttal to the 1966 Festival by co-organizing the 1969 Panafrican Festival of Algiers, guided by an investment in revolutionary culture. Fiquet and Gallimardet discuss the abstention of these two countries. Gallimardet, 140.

meeting in Dakar were dishonestly attempting to extract money from France by exaggerating the transportation and insurance fees required to travel *l'Art Nègre,* leading the director of the *Reunion des Musées Nationaux,* Jean Chatelain, to reportedly express that he would "sooner give up the Paris exhibition entirely than create easements for the Africans."[129]

The exhibition, conceived as a declaration of black African achievement in the wake of independence, thus would become accompanied by official remarks that compromised the African organizer's initial vision. Rivière, for example, described the functions of *l'Art Nègre* as two-fold: to present African art for the appreciation of Africans, and then to display it a second time in "a capital city, a great cultural center, where Negro art first came to be appreciated and its influence felt." [130] Rivière's description of Paris condescends towards the exhibition's African public doubly, at once implying that people of the continent were incapable of aesthetic appreciation and suggesting the relative cultural insignificance of Dakar. Ultimately, the exhibition's catalog credited *l'Art Nègre* to the "high patronage" of two individuals: one of these was Senghor, but listed even before him was French President Charles de Gaulle.[131]

The exhibition's reframing as a co-production of France and Senegal added complexity to the ways it was perceived. As *l'Art Nègre* took on the philosophical intentions of negritude and universal humanism, and as it espoused the ideals of African independence in harmony with global interconnection, the massive presentation also sent more concrete suggestions about Senegalese politics. It could be interpreted as evidence of the herculean administrative

[129] Translation mine. "Séance De La Commission Juridique Et Financière."

[130] Rivière, XXXVIII.

[131] *L'art Nègre: Sources, Évolution, Expansion*, vi.

competency of the young, highly-connected West-African state, but also as a sign of the ongoing agency of France in Senegal and thus the limitations or compromises underpinning independence.[132]

Art and Peace

If the organizational structure behind *l'Art Nègre* framed the exhibition as a product of post-colonial reconciliation, its overall visual and spatial design might be understood to aspire to a broader cosmopolitanism, a goal that led the exhibition to break from aesthetic precedents set by earlier exhibitions of African art. Exiting the foyer, visitors were released into the museum's open plan, a space divided only by a staircase, an overlooking mezzanine gallery, and the columns required to uphold it. [Figure 2.6] Without internal walls to guide their path, viewers were free to choose their own route through the items on view. In theory, the exhibition was divided into six sections, outlined in the catalogue—but because of the museum's open plan, the precise delineation of each group's boundaries was hazily-defined.[133] [Figure 2.7] Still, the categories described in planning documents and the catalogue reveal that varying criteria influenced curatorial decision-making. The first section, a "Prelude," was meant to engage viewers immediately by introducing a selection of eye-catching objects from various regions of the continent. The second category, called the "Historical Dimension," brought together a variety

[132] In hindsight, the same kind of duality surrounds memories of *l'Art Nègre* at the time of this writing. The exhibition is discussed with pride by many, as in several of the talks delivered at the fiftieth anniversary colloquium of the First World Festival of Negro Arts in 2016. But the collaboration of France has also been understood in more sinister terms, as a predecessor to the exploitative politics of *francafrique* initiated by De Gaulle. Murphy, 22.

[133] I arrived at this conclusion by viewing installation photos of *l'Art Nègre,* especially the large number taken by Maya Bracher. Many of Bracher's photographs are reproduced in the "figures" section of this dissertation, and many more are available in the archives of the Neuchâtel Ethnography Museum.

of ancient objects to illustrate the long history of African civilizations. The third, most populated category, called the "Geographical Dimension," testified to the diversity of the arts of Africa by presenting works region-by-region. The fourth, "Aspects of Life," highlighted the useful role of African objects by foregrounding their function in political, military, social and economic affairs. The fifth section, "The Message of Negro Art," underscored the spiritual and moral underpinnings of the continent's arts. The finale, "Dialogue with the World," demonstrated ways the arts of Africa were connected to areas beyond the continent.

The section titles guided viewers to recognize the multiple kinds of significance that an object might hold. But organizers conveyed a conflicting set of curatorial priorities to potential lenders, according to a booklet distributed to them on behalf of the joint committee. *L'Art Nègre*, they clarified, would be unambiguous in its portrayal of the objects on view as artworks. According to six "fundamentals" listed in the booklet, which had been established by committee in earlier meetings, objects would be selected for display on the basis of their beauty and their capacity to grant access to some intuitively African quality. The fundamentals take for granted a Cliffordian mutual exclusivity distinguishing ethnographic from artistic treatments of objects, and commit *l'Art Nègre* firmly to the latter approach:

> 1. The exhibitions in Dakar and in Paris will be set out in the same way. The possible difference in the respective surface areas will only be of minor consequence to the disposition in the museums.
>
> 2. The exhibition will be large but not gigantic. An estimated 800 exhibits.
>
> 3. It is not ethnological. Nor fundamentally is it designed to reflect aspects of economic, technical, social, religious, or cultural life.
>
> 4. It is not didactic. Interpretations will be kept to a small number of key documents discreetly displayed. Photography will play its part to explain and to enliven, although in a very limited way, due to the high artistic quality required from photographs; the essential feature will remain the exhibit itself, and its signification will be elucidated by selection and grouping.

> 5. The exhibition is of art. Each object should be chosen with this criterion in mind. Only objects of beauty will be displayed in the exhibition.
>
> 6. The exhibition is of African art. On view in Dakar, it should help the African visitor to imagine an art which embodies his actions and his life. On view in Paris, its mission is to reveal the essence of African art to the Western visitor. Both in Dakar and in Paris, its role is to focus a spotlight on the part played by African art in the framework of universal art.[134]

Prior accounts have taken the Fundamentals reproduced in this promotional booklet at their word, understanding them to be the guiding principles of the exhibition. Citing them, art historian Cedric Vincent writes that *l'Art Nègre* "was envisioned as an exhibition of 'masterpieces' that would gather together an exceptional African heritage scattered across the globe," and that the travel missions preceding the exhibition were motivated by a desire to find objects of exceptional quality—an exercise he calls "panning for gold."[135]

But other considerations appear to have held equal or greater weight in determining which objects were displayed and how they were shown. A visual analysis of *l'Art Nègre* suggests that the Fundamentals functioned less as organizational guidelines and more as promotional language, possibly intended to flatter potential lenders and to signal the discerning tastes of the Dakar exhibition. The design of *l'Art Nègre* rejects many of the conventions used in prior shows that had privileged a strictly artistic comprehension of objects from Africa. When viewed in comparison to *African Negro Art* (Museum of Modern Art in New York, 1935) or the Brooklyn Museum's *Masterpieces of African Art* (1954), for example, the lack of space granted to individual objects in *l'Art Nègre* is striking. [Figure 2.8] Preceding African Art exhibitions often situated their contents amid the trappings of European and American modernism,

[134] "Exhibition of Traditional Art "Negro Art" [Informational Booklet]."

[135] Vincent, 45,51.

displaying objects upon a white ground that emphasized their silhouettes. [Figure 2.9] Each work in these exhibitions was typically granted exclusive occupancy of a vertical shaft of space, and objects were arranged with attention to scale and style but generally without a consideration of geographical or thematic concerns.

In the *Musée Dynamique*, by contrast, enormous image reproductions dwarfed exhibited works, attracting the gaze to materials that served the didactic and contextualizing ends so handily dismissed by the so-called "Fundamentals." On the museum's long, exposed wall, five close-up black-and-white photographs of exhibited sculptures, sixteen feet in height and taken by the Swiss photographer Maya Bracher, straddled the museum's two stories. [Figure 2.10] At the base of these photographs, a quote attributed to a sacred text of the Chokwe people of Katanga (in southern-central Africa) read: "We. Men of today. We have not initiated these things. That dates to bygone days."[136] A towering map of the continent filled its shorter wall. The map was marked with call-outs to the cultural groups responsible for creating the objects on view, conveying the geographic purview of the exhibition. Together, the photos and quote encouraged viewers to imagine objects' users and creators.

Rather than upon walls or pedestals, the vast majority of works appeared in vitrines.[137] The interior siding of each of these units, all equipped with self-contained lighting, varied in color, punctuating the greyscale infrastructure of the museum with occasional splashes of yellow

[136] Translation mine, from "Nous. Hommes d'aujourd'jui. Nous n'avons pas commencé ces choses. Ceci date d'antan."

[137] Other exhibition styles, though not mentioned in the body text of this chapter, were used in the exhibition. At one moment, a number of objects appeared crowded upon a low, broad pedestal, their spatial interactions with one another calling to mind more immediately the space of a diorama than an art gallery. [Figure 2.11]

and orange. The widespread use of vitrines rather than walls allowed for the elimination of visual and spatial impediments, enabling viewers looking across the long gallery to perceive the scale of *l'Art Nègre* in its near entirety. The overlooking view provided by the mezzanine similarly invited visitors to take in the exhibition's breadth. Rather than narrowing a viewer's focus upon a given object, *l'Art Nègre* and the *Musée Dynamique* encouraged their audience to appreciate the exhibition as a whole. The press routinely remarked upon the size of the display; some marveled at what they inaccurately declared to be the largest exhibition of African art in history, while others incorrectly cited that "over 1000" objects were on display.[138]

In addition to moving the exhibition's emphasis from its individual offerings towards its collective impact, the two standard vitrine types—vertical and tabletop—used in *l'Art Nègre* differentiated it from preceding exhibitions of African art through the kind of relationship they encouraged between viewer and object.[Figure 2.12] The use of vitrines was not in itself unusual, but the units used in earlier exhibitions were typically wall-mounted, with their contents appearing upright against a static background. [Figure 2.13] The vertical vitrines used in *l'Art Nègre,* by contrast, were free-standing and two-sided. Rather than sealing their contents against a monochrome plane, these vitrines folded objects into the visitor's space, allowing for them to be seen amid the movement and variety of the surrounding room. The table-top vitrines reinforced a similarly familiar relationship between viewers and objects. Their contents were often shown resting upon a horizontal surface; a visitor looking upon them assumed a similar posture to the

[138] Charles Sanders, "Spectacular Negro Arts Festival Opens in Dakar," *Jet*, April 21 1966, 46. Povey also remarked upon the "thousand" works on display in Dakar. John Povey, "Dakar: An African Rendez-Vous," *Africa Today* 13, no. 5 (1966). This impression persists in secondary literature as well. Huchard, for example, named *l'Art Nègre* the largest exhibition of "black classical art to date." Huchard.

one she would take if, say, slipping a tenth-century bronze bracelet onto her own wrist or turning the page of a medieval Ethiopian manuscript. [Figure 2.14] In both vitrine styles, objects were displayed at the height of a viewer's hands rather than at eye level. In short, these units encouraged their audience to enter spatial relationships with objects that recalled use as powerfully as artistic display.

The intention for the objects exhibited in *l'Art Nègre* to do more than foster visual appreciation is apparent, interloping even in the same promotional booklet that assured lenders of its non-didactic, non-ethnographic, squarely artistic framework; the text later defends the incorporation of music and poetry because such "arts are too closely knit to the plastic arts in in African civilization for it to be possible not to take them into account."[139] Indeed, the curation and design of *l'Art Nègre* drew not upon the example of art museums, but rather from the precedent of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel* (Neuchâtel Ethnography Museum), which Gabus directed. As Chapter 1 explains, a recently-constructed wing of this Swiss museum had provided the namesake and architectural prototype for the Senegalese *Musée Dynamique*.[140] The two vitrine models used in Dakar were also custom commissions that Gabus had had designed years before for the Swiss gallery.[141] [Figure 2.15] And a series of enlarged photographic facial portraits, similar to Bracher's, had been deployed in Gabus's 1962 exhibition *Arts Précolombiens.* [Figure 2.16]

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[139] "Exhibition of Traditional Art "Negro Art" [Informational Booklet]."

[140] See Chapter 1.

[141] The vitrines, movable and internally lit, were designed to be easily reconfigured according to the needs of the many changing temporary exhibitions intended to take place in the Dakar and Neuchâtel *Musées Dynamique*.

The relationship that the vitrines and photographs fostered between objects and viewers can be understood in line with Gabus's career-long effort to curate according to cosmopolitan values. Gabus despised the aura of solemnity and elitism that he perceived to loom over many of the museums of his time, writing

> Why are our visits to exhibition halls—which are about art, history or ethnography—done on tiptoes? Why this conformity, and maybe over-politeness, or fear of being oneself? Why this silence?[142]

Disenchanted by the status quo, Gabus called for a revision in the museum's workings. He decried museums that sought to be little more than mausoleums for perceived high-culture, aiming instead for his projects to provide comfortable meeting places between, on one hand, viewers and, on the other, objects that testified to the realities of life in cultural contexts abroad.[143] He called the works that he placed on view in the museum "object-witnesses" – thereby defining them foremost as conduits between societies, prioritizing their ability to communicate with viewers before all else. Gabus believed that the "only true justification of the museum's activities" was to create "human contacts" and to allow viewers to recognize a "common humanity" with the makers of the objects on view.[144] In these convictions, his

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[142] Gabus, *L'objet Témoin: Les Références D'une Civilisatoin Par L'objet*, 8.

[143] Gabus's curatorial philosophy and career history is discussed in Knodel.

[144] Gabus, "Principes Esthétiques Et Préparation Des Expositions Didactiques," 16. Gabus disliked exhibitions that used too much text, and preferred to use careful curation and visual aids whenever possible. In his own summary of the goals underlying the exhibition, he outlined the four goals that he viewed as central to the exhibition: (1) To demonstrate the "classicism of high African culture" through the display of ancient works, (2) To show the value of the objects in everyday life, (3) to reunite the "major works" from European and American museums with those in African museums and societies so that, "for the first time, Africans will be able to reunite masterpieces of her culture and of course publish them," and (4) show the influence of African art on western contemporary art. *L'objet Témoin: Les Références D'une Civilisatoin Par L'objet*, 36.

priorities align with those of UNESCO, whose literature on museums described their most important competency to be the mission of "spreading knowledge and promoting international understanding as a positive contribution to peace."[145] Gabus's stated belief in the role that intercultural appreciation would play in creating a more peaceful world also reveals the substantial ground that his philosophy shared with Senghor's Civilization of the Universal.

The vitrine's inscription in the visitor's space can thus be understood as a philosophically-engaged maneuver, encouraging a familiar disposition towards the works on view because such an orientation might, in turn, foster an empathetic attitude towards the people and circumstances that the objects represented. Gabus's philosophical investments might also explain the exhibition's five enlarged photographs, which, like the earlier portraits that Gabus used in *Arts Précolumbiens*, prompt a comparison of artistic styles by isolating a shared iconography: the human face. The morphological comparison that they set up links them not only to one another, but also to portrayals of the face in arts made elsewhere. In so doing, they recall Gabus's later sketches, in which the ethnographer-director juxtaposed various figural African sculptures with Leonardo's Vitruvian Man, measuring the works' proportions against the latter symbol of renaissance humanism. [Figure 2.17] The photographs, like Gabus's sketches, highlighted the inscription and distinction of the arts of Africa among other portrayals of the human form, and more broadly, to the universal conditions underlying humanity.

The investment in the unique capacity for the arts to promote empathy in *l'Art Nègre* reveals that the exhibition was understood by many of its organizers to be more than a

[145] "Museum and Museums." See also Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

compilation of the Greatest Hits of African Art. In an essay titled "Art and Peace," printed in the exhibition's *Livre d'Or,* Alioune Diop proclaims the geopolitical stake of the cultural:

> The peace of diplomatists is not the only peace; spectacular and necessary, it does not necessarily last. Real peace must spring from the heart of the people. When feelings are in harmony, then you have real peace. […] Nations can be condemned for their beliefs or their customs, but never in the name of their art.[146]

Indeed, the curatorial design strategies used in *l'Art Nègre* sought to do more than encourage formal contemplation or enrich historical awareness; they enlisted the museum in the ambitious project of world peace as it was espoused by Senghor, Gabus, and UNESCO.

Literal and Symbolic Returns

In addition to guiding design decisions, political and philosophical approaches to the continent's arts also affected which objects were chosen for display. Mveng described the twenty-eight objects selected to appear in the exhibition's "prelude," placed immediately outside of the foyer, as "objects of very great beauty" that represented the "major styles of tropical Africa."[147] The prelude did introduce a number of large, visually commanding works, such as a Serpent Headdress (Baga, 19th-20th c.) loaned from the Museum of Primitive Art in New York (now at the Met) and a stone Ibo ancestral sculpture loaned by the state of Nigeria.[Figure 2.18, Figure 2.19] But perhaps because of its paired duty to represent a geographical variety of objects, many of the works included in the prelude were modest in function, size, and form: among them, a bronze anklet and an ivory comb. [Figure 2.20] The prelude's paired directives guiding object

[146] Alioune Diop, "L'art Et La Paix / Art and Peace," in *Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres: Dakar, 1/24 Avril 1966* (Paris: Atelier Bernard Gaulin, 1966), 16-17.

[147] Engelbert Mveng, "Introduction," in *L'art Nègre: Sources, Évolution, Expansion* (Paris: Ministère des Affaires Culturelles 1966), xxiv.

selection—to choose examples that were visually striking and to recognize various regions of the continent—can be extended, to a degree, to explain the broader logic governing the content of *l'Art Nègre*. But the section's contents suggest the quieter working of a third factor: in addition to nodding to diverse artistic traditions from around the continent, the selection of works also granted priority of place to objects from all three lending continents, foregrounding works on loan from Dakar, Abidjan, Fort-Lamy (now N'Djamena), New York, Philadelphia, Paris, Tervuren, Rome and Berlin.[148] Reporting back from a reconnaissance trip to the Fon Kingdom and Cameroon in 1964, Gabus wrote explicitly that a substantial participation by African lenders should be prioritized over the display of so-called masterpieces:

> We note, in a general way, aside from some exceptions, that the quality of objects in the different African museums that we have visited is very inferior to that of the public and private collections in Europe and America. It will be necessary, for reasons of a psychological order, to present 50% material coming from African collections, but the choice will not be easy.[149]

In the end, about 40% of the objects on display in *l'Art Nègre* were loaned from African individuals, institutions, governments, or communities.[150] Lending policies sought, at some moments, to underscore the life of the arts of Africa in the present moment by highlighting their ongoing use. This implication was reinforced by the staging of an artisanal market on the same bay as the Museum, where artists from various places sculpted and sold their work. The lending

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[148] According to the exhibition catalogue, *L'art Nègre: Sources, Évolution, Expansion,* 5-14.

[149] Translation mine. Gabus, "Rapport De Mission: Inventaire Des Musées Africains De L'oeust (Gulf De Guinée)," 21.

[150] This percentage is based upon the number of objects appearing in the catalogue (516) and how many of those came from collections in Africa (214). Concerns regarding the "psychological" effects of a strong representation of African contributors could only have become more important amidst the suspicions surrounding French collaboration.

of objects from Europe or the Americas, by contrast, held a trans-historical significance for some, who framed their arrival in Dakar as a long-awaited homecoming.

Sprawling across the mezzanine level, an array of works from the Cameroon Grasslands testifies to the former tendency. [Figure 2.21] By the point at which a visitor arrived at them, the delineation of the exhibition's categories appears to have been muddled. Aside from two individual vitrines labeled "Aspects of Life" and "Message of African Art," the divisions between these categories and the "Geographical Dimension"—the category into which two-thirds of the objects in the catalogue fell—were no longer easily identifiable, installation photographs suggest. [Figure 2.22, Figure 2.23] Still, the Grassfields objects could have identified their relationship to one another through their visual distinctiveness alone—many were large, intricately beaded and boldly colorful, catching the gaze amid a sea of varnished wood and cast metal. [Figure 2.24, Figure 2.25] These objects were set apart from the majority in a less obvious way, as well; most were on loan from the chiefdoms in which they were created and used.[151]

Gabus and Mveng went to Cameroon on separate visits to assess local collections and negotiate loans. Mveng's identity and personal networks in his home country may well have assisted in making these arrangements; in the end, more loans came from Cameroon than any other African country.[152] On their visits, Gabus and Mveng both met with the then-Sultan of

[151] One newspaper article suggests that the Cameroonian objects were part of the Aspects of Life section. MAK, "Reflets Du Festival De Dakar," *Journal de Moudon*, May 18, 1966.

[152] According to the exhibition's catalogue, 56 objects in *l'Art Nègre* were loaned by Cameroon. *L'art Nègre: Sources, Évolution, Expansion*. The number of objects loaned by Cameroon may also be a result of the country's cultural infrastructure. The Bamum palace already had a small internal museum; for this reason, movement between the museum and use would likely be well-precedented for Bamum leaders.

Bamum, Hadj Seidou Njimoluh Njoya, who, they wrote, expressed enthusiasm towards the festival and voiced his intention to attend.[153] After looking through the Sultan's royal treasury with Njoya himself, Gabus wrote that the inclusion of objects from the Cameroonian chiefdoms was capitally important because they were "functional, in a way that none of the objects in public or private collections of African museums, as in European and American collections, would be able to provide."[154] Gabus, who had committed his career to a belief in the capacity for the museum to do more than publicly lay objects to rest, believed the inclusion of works with an ongoing social and spiritual role was "very exactly that which seems … essential for the exhibition: to make familiar these African objects taken directly from their traditional patrimony, keeping their function."[155] He describes how the objects would be ritually prepared for exhibition and ritually re-initiated to use upon their later return:

> In the principal chieftancies of Cameroon, these treasures participate in public events. They are presented to their legitimate owners, which is to say the community, on the occasion of official ceremonies. These objects do not only signify a form, a color, a volume, a certain capitalistic value, but rather a historical reference, a "power-force," the accumulation of such a real, vital energy that certain objects, when they leave the chiefdom, are publicly presented to dignitaries for approval, then the "force" is presented, for example, to a stick, itself deposited somewhere in the ground to store the vital energy for its

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[153] Mveng; Gabus, "Rapport De Mission: Inventaire Des Musées Africains De L'oeust (Gulf De Guinée)."; "Rapport De La Mission Jean Gabus, 21 Mars Au 11 Avril," 1964; National Archives of France: Box 19890127-23.

[154] Translation mine. "Rapport De La Mission Jean Gabus, 21 Mars Au 11 Avril," 1.

[155] Translation mine. Diop, "A. Diop to M. M'baye," 2. On this visit, among other possible royal lenders in West Africa, Gabus listed: "Sultan Seidou, Deputy of Bamum at Foumban; Chef Thomas Nembot, Superior Chief of Baleng (Bamileke) at Bafoussam; Chief Joseph Kamga, Maire de Bandjoun (Bamileke) of chef Ashanti Kyeremaien at Kumasi; the king of Ife or Oni, His Royal Highness Sir Adesoji Aderemi; the King of Benin City or Oba His Royal Highness Oba Akenzoua II." (Translation mine.) Gabus, "Rapport De Mission: Inventaire Des Musées Africains De L'oeust (Gulf De Guinée)," 21.

> retransmission to a mask, for example, upon its return. The object, secularized during its absence, regains its function and ritual power.[156]

In addition to objects from Cameroon, similar loans were made from Fon kingdoms in the Republic of Benin and appear to have been preceded by comparable consultations. Prince Agoli Agbo and Chief Justin Aho Glegle, both of the Fon Kingdom, loaned objects to the exhibition after dignitaries of their kingdoms met with Mveng. Together, representatives of the festival and the kingdoms discussed exhibition logistics but also visited ceremonial graves and watched ritual performances that involved the use of spiritually-engaged objects (though there is no indication that these were the same objects that would later be loaned.)[157] Through dialogue with an object's community of users, the arrangement of consensual and temporary loans, and the location of the exhibition on the African continent, *l'Art Nègre* created the conditions in which an object's museum display need not permanently revoke its ability to be useful. The eventual return of these objects to the communities in which they functioned set *l'Art Nègre* apart from prior exhibitions, while the active role of African collections in the exhibition's facilitation more generally nurtured alliances, if only temporary, within the continent.

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[156] Translation mine. Diop, "A. Diop to M. M'baye," 2. It also, in his eyes, gave the exhibition greater scholarly value, because it would include objects that had not appeared in any prior exhibitions or publications. Ibid. : 2. Among the possible lendors among Kingdoms, Gabus listed: "Sultan Seidou, Deputy of Bamum at Foumban, of Chef Thomas Nembot, Superior Chief of Baleng (Bamileke) at Bafoussam, of Chief Joseph Kamga, Maire de Bandjoun (Bamileke) of chef Ashanti Kyeremaien at Kumasi, of the king of Ife or Oni, His Royal Highness Sir Adesoji Aderemi, of the King of Benin City or Oba His Royal Highness Oba Akenzoua II." (Translation mine.) Gabus, "Rapport De Mission: Inventaire Des Musées Africains De L'oeust (Gulf De Guinée)," 21.

[157] Mveng.

The idea of African unity held a more symbolic significance with respect to the lending of objects from Euro-American collections. Their arrival on the African continent represented, to some, a long-awaited homecoming. Many of the objects loaned from these institutions had been taken under conditions of colonial force and economic inequality. For Mveng, the return of African art to the continent was essential to enriching African-descended people's self-understanding and pride. In the scholarly colloquium accompanying *l'Art Nègre*, he poetically pleaded to the loaned objects: "let me find my own beauty in the mirror of your eyes; for how can I speak of my own beauty when I have never seen myself from a distance?"[158] The sense of reunion underlying Mveng's words are perceptible in a photograph of the festival taken by Swiss photographer Tony Saulnier for the magazine *Paris Match.* [Figure 2.26] In this image, an ancient bronze Ife head is reflected in the mirror lenses of the most sixties shades imaginable, worn by an African-descended viewer whose lapels peek out from the image's bottom right corner. The compositional symmetry between the viewer and object suggest an interaction between peoples past and present, and proposes a kinship between the two.

If *l'Art Nègre* evoked the pathos of reunion, however, its organizers pointedly did not negotiate permanent repatriation or reciprocity agreements. A vitrine of bronze objects created in the kingdom of Benin provides a foothold for examining the righteous symbolic homecoming's isolation from any legal changes related to the possession and display of the objects on view.[159]

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[158] Engelbert Mveng, "The Function and Significance of Negro Art in the Life of the Peoples of Black Africa," in *Colloquium: Function and Significance of African Negro Art in the Life of the People and for the People (March 30-April 8, 1966)* (Paris: Éditions Présence Africaine, 1968), 12.

[159] The exhibition's "historic dimension" section would have appeared after the Prelude for a visitor moving in the direction of the large wall-map. Among other objects, this section devoted to the continent's most ancient arts included prehistoric rock paintings of Tassili loaned from the

Shown along the museum's front wall, beneath the Chokwe quote linking the arts to a long past, this case of objects borrowed from the British Museum appeared in the exhibition's "historic dimension" section. [Figure 2.27, Figure 2.28]

Two figural bronze sculptures occupy its center: the lending institution of one, a cavalier, is misidentified in the catalogue as the state museums of Nigeria. [Figure 2.29, Figure 2.30]. [160] The catalogue explains that the other object, a standing bronze figure, "forms a pair with an identical character currently in the Nigerian Museum in Lagos." [Figure 2.31]. [161] Flanking these figures, two bronze plaques are installed on the sides of the vitrine, perpendicular to a viewer's gaze. Hung this way, the plaques are more difficult to view head-on, but their installation prioritizes an allusion to their original context. They bracket the royal figurines as they might have when decorating the palace walls where they once hung. Hundreds of similar plaques, created as early as the 13th century, were infamously torn from the walls of the palace of the Royal Kingdom of Benin by British soldiers during a punitive expedition in Nigeria in 1897 that killed thousands of the kingdom's people and left their historic city in ashes. The plaques, the largest number of which are stored in the British Museum, became internationally known for their mastery of the lost-wax process, their early historical origins, and their violent route to collections in Europe and the United States.

The unusual efforts of the catalogue to frame the figural objects from the British Museum as Nigerian loans or their equivalent might signal the exhibition's ambition to precariously sew

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Musée de l'Homme in Paris, Axumite money from the Institute of Ethiopian Studies in Addis-Abéba, and Sao Terra Cottas from the National Chadian Museum in Fort-Lamy.

[160] *L'art Nègre: Sources, Évolution, Expansion*, 28.

[161] Ibid.

shut the wounds of colonialism by restaging royal treasures between the vestiges of the royal walls– an approximation of repatriation made more significant by surrounding dialogue on the issue. Calls for the repatriation of Benin bronzes to Nigeria are long-standing and, at the time of this writing, ongoing. Beginning in the 1950s, the Nigerian government made an effort to reclaim the bronzes by purchasing them when they were sold by European sources.[162] The desire, among some African cultural critics, to repatriate objects to the continent was well-established by 1966. As the festival's date drew near, the Beninese writer Paulin Joachim called for such a return in the Senegalese magazine *Bingo*:

> Isn't this the moment to request from these countries, at the end of the festival when they will be overcome by their eclecticism and their flair, to have the greatness of soul not to pack up, but to give Caesar what is Caesar's, to release the black divinities who never knew how to play their role in the glazed universe of the white world where they were imprisoned?[163]

Archival records indicate that Joachim's article led festival organizers to reassure lending nations that their objects would be duly returned at the exhibition's end.[164] The promotional booklet distributed to lenders tried to allay their fears of repatriation:

> Certain countries or certain persons liable to loan works of art have raised the objection of the risk of attempts by certain African countries to reclaim the

[162] Only as of November 2018 has the British Museum agreed to let a selection of bronze objects travel to Nigeria on loan. Charlotta Dohlvik, "Museums and Their Voices: A Contemporary Study of the Benin Bronzes" (Master's Thesis, Göteborg University, 2006). Kieron Monks, "British Museum to Return Benin Bronzes to Nigeria," *CNN* (2018), https://www.cnn.com/2018/11/26/africa/africa-uk-benin-bronze-return-intl/index.html.

[163] Joachim, 7.

[164] "Note Pour Monsieur Le Minsitre: Difficultés Rencontrées Auprès Des Prêteurs Pour L'organisation De L'exposition D'art Nègre." June 3, 1965, National Archives of France: Box 19890127-23.

> objects on view in Dakar. The President of the Republic of Senegal has given, on various occasions, formal assurance that such attempts would not be tolerated.[165]

Kenneth Murray, Nigeria's Director of Antiquities and founder of the Nigerian Museum in Lagos, had long encountered similar hesitation on the part of European countries who refused to loan objects to the museum that he led. He viewed their unwillingness as fundamentally unjust—not only because of the historical violence that allowed for such withholding, but also due to unequal institutional reciprocity, as his museum had loaned objects to Europe but was perpetually denied the same courtesy. For these reasons, Murray initially refused to allow Nigerian objects to travel to Paris when the second leg of *l'Art Nègre* was announced.[166] Though Murray would eventually concede, the requirement to travel objects to Paris may have resulted in a decreased number of loans from Nigeria.[167] An earlier contract between festival organizers and the Nigerian government proposed that the latter would contribute "a minimum of 100 and if possible 200" works of traditional art for *l'Art Nègre*," as part of an agreement allowing Nigeria to be identified as the festival's "star country," a title that was accompanied with several special

[165] "Exhibition of Traditional Art "Negro Art" [Informational Booklet]," 34. The U.S. Committee to the Festival appears to have been similarly aware of the possibility of repatriation, as it was discussed in a meeting on December 15, 1965. "Although insurance may be obtained to protect the African art against seizure by Senegal […], no insurance can be issued to protect against confiscation by other countries attending the Festival. Therefore, the committee will rely upon the assurances of President Senghor that no such claims will be made. […] It was noted that such claims seem highly unlikely as they would jeoprodize [sic] any future festivals in Africa." "Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors and Development Committee." December 15, 1965, Archives of the Neuchâtel Museum of Ethnography: Box 1139.1439.

[166] "Exposition D'art Nègre: Seances Du 24 Et Du 28 Janvier." January 24-28, 1966; National Archives of France: Box 19890127-23.

[167] The changing circumstances related to the Nigerian participation are also likely to be due, at least in part, to the nation's political upheaval throughout 1966.

honors.[168] While Nigeria maintained the title of "star country," only 35 objects from the nation appeared in *l'Art Nègre*.

The politics that surrounded object loans call attention to the multiple ways in which the interrelationship of African peoples was conceived – on one hand, as spiritual, but on the other, as political, an outcome of political alliances or logistical agreements between nations and/or kingdoms. But still, we might wonder, what configuration of African community would count Picasso among its members?

A Demoiselle in Dakar

The painting by Picasso that appeared in *l'Art Nègre*, called *Tête de femme, dite aussi une demoiselle d'Avignon* (Woman's Head, also known as *Demoiselle d'Avignon*, 1907) was one of many preparatory studies created for the artist's famous *Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907). [Figure 2.32] The work appeared in the final category proposed in the exhibition's catalogue,

[168] The "star country" agreement was described in this contract as a way to "further strengthen and reinforce the friendly cooperation existing between the two countries." These special privileges included the following: at all of the festival event locations, the Nigerian flag was to fly at the same height as that of Senegal. An informational exhibition on Nigeria, called "Prestige du Nigeria" was set up in the city hall, and a Nigerian representative was to take part in the festival's directorial committee in addition to the ten Nigerian individuals who would be added to the festival's "committee of honor." A "Star Country" digest was printed and circulated at the festival, and included a page of facts about Nigeria and short essays declaring Nigeria's commitment to African unity. Senghor also delivered a speech at the festival on the exceptional history and quality of Nigerian art. "Convention Entre L'association Du Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres Et Le Comité Nigerien D'organisation Du Festival." February 18, 1965, 1965; National Archives of Senegal: Box Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres 39; "Nigeria Star Country Digest."; Léopold Sédar Senghor, "Nigerian Art (Address at the Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres, 1966)," in *Seven Stories About Modern Art in Africa*, ed. Clémentine Deliss (London: Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1995).

"Communication with the World." This section was one of the most clearly-defined in the space of the museum. Its objects were exhibited on the mezzanine, near the wall farthest from the staircase, and were thus likely to be the last ones encountered on a visitor's journey through the exhibition.

The works in "Dialogue with the World" demonstrated the inscription of the arts of Africa in international networks. One vitrine in this section featured objects from Angola and the Republic of the Congo that were labeled "Afro-Portuguese." [Figure 2.33] Several of these works included cruciform imagery that testified to the influence of Roman Catholicism. Another was devoted to objects from the United Arab Republic (U.A.R., a short-lived confederation between Egypt and Syria). This vitrine included only objects from "Ancient Nubia," thereby excluding the works of pharaonic Egypt that Senghor's political opponent, Egyptologist Cheikh Anta Diop, argued were culturally and ethnically black-African.[169] [Figure 2.34] Objects from

[169] Cheikh Anta Diop, *Nations Nègres Et Culture* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1955). In November 1965, Alioune Diop informed Riviere that Senghor had accepted a request from the United Arab Republic (U.A.R.) to participate in the festival and contribute objects to *l'Art Nègre*. This development was met with outrage in France, where organizers complained that the Republic's inclusion undermined the "scientific validity" of the exhibition and that they felt "reduced to prepare drawers for the countries to come fill themselves." The contributions of the U.A.R. appeared inconsistent with criteria determining which countries could and could not loan objects. Earlier in the same year, Jean Mazel, the liaison between *l'Art Nègre* and the broader festival, recommended that the art of Morocco should be excluded from the festival, a decision that would be borne out in the lack of Moroccan objects in the exhibition despite an expedition to Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia by festival representatives. Mazel described the double-bind introduced by the eagerness of Morocco to participate, which raised "the problem of racial discrimination, firstly […] and if this discrimination is not made, we risk not respecting the criteria at the basis of the festival, which the promoters unanimously proclaimed is only about negro humanism and what comes from it." Understanding that North African countries would not be included in the exhibition, the sudden addition of contributions from the U.A.R. at Senghor's request was condemned as politically-motivated by the committee in France, who viewed that, "If [the addition of the U.A.R.] doesn't introduce a politicization of the exhibition, it at least reveals political intentions in the organization of the exhibition." "Exposition D'art Nègre: 3 Décembre, 1965." Archives Nationales de la France: Box 19890127-23.

Madagascar were encased nearby, coming from the island nation that Mveng frames in the catalogue as the crossroads of the Asian and African continents, and thus as evidence of "one of the most successful symbioses of all time: a spontaneous non-violent communion without the desire to replace one culture by another."[170] As a whole, "Communication with the World" could be understood to illustrate the creative possibilities unlocked in the march towards Senghor's envisioned Civilization of the Universal, or by UNESCO's idealized cultural exchange.

Into this framework, then, entered Picasso's *Demoiselle,* and four other works by European Primitivists. The European works appearing in *l'Art Nègre* included the aforementioned painting by Picasso, a painting by Jean Atlan, sculptures by Amedeo Modigliani and Ossip Zadkine, and a tapestry designed by Fernand Léger.[171] The works selected all appear to have been influenced by African sculpture, and two masks (from Benin and Cote d'Ivoire) appeared among the European works to emphasize this formal relationship.

For example, the twelve-foot long tapestry *La Création du Monde* (designed 1923, produced 1963) hung alongside an eighteenth-century Guli Mask associated with the Baule people of Côte d'Ivoire. [Figure 2.35, Figure 2.36, Figure 2.37] In Leger's work, executed in earth tones, three figures are roughly legible amid an amalgam of flat planes of color against a mountain-scape capped by clouds, stars, and a full moon. The head of the figure farthest to the viewer's right shares the silhouette of the juxtaposed Baule mask, encouraging viewers to recognize its role in the European artist's design.

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[170] Mveng, "Introduction," xxix.

[171] Iba N'Diaye, Senegalese artist and curator of *Tendances et Confrontations*, the exhibition of contemporary art at the Festival, apprenticed in the studio of Ossip Zadkine. Harney, "The Densities of Modernism," 476.

In addition to illustrating the incorporation of African sculptural silhouettes, the tapestry further testified to inter-cultural exchange through the circumstances underlying its creation. It was produced by a French manufacturer after the artist's death, based on a sketch of a set design that the artist had created decades earlier to accompany the ballet *La Création du Monde,* which appeared at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées in Paris in 1923.[172] The production to which it contributed, conceived of as a *gesamtkunstwerk,* was based upon the recounting of legends of the Fang society of Central Africa in *Antologie Nègre* (1921) by the French novelist and poet Blaise Cendrar (1887-1961).[173] The three figures shown in the tapestry are intended to portray Fang deities—Nazme, Medere and N'kvawho—who preside over the creation of the universe. This genesis was performed over the course of the ballet, as various forms of life sprung forth from a central void. The tapestry might be interpreted to formally enact this story, as its lively geometry proliferates from a pool of black thread in the middle of the composition. Due to their geometric abstraction, the three bodies that appear in the tapestry can be re-constellated in a viewer's mind to register as skyscrapers or smokestacks. When exhibited in Dakar, the work's intertwining of urban condition and spiritual tradition might have brought to mind the multiple factors informing African identity in the independence era.

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[172] Mikel Bilbao Salsidua, "The Creation of the World: A Tapestry by Fernand Léger at the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum," *Buletina=Boletín=Bulletin.* 8 (2014). Tapestries like the one shown in Dakar were often created after the artist's death with the permission of his widow, Nadia Léger (1904-1983). The tapestry is, according to Mikel Salsidua, based on a Goache and was likely made into a tapestry as part of an effort led by gallerist Denise Majorel to revive the use of tapestry in contemporary art. Ibid.

[173] Brender has described how the ballet "resulted in using the Africans in order to further the [Ballet Suédois's] utopian socialist aspirations rather than to shed much light on Africa. Once again, "Africa" was created in the image of the European avant-garde's hopes." Richard Brender, "Reinventing Africa in Their Own Image: The Ballets Suédois' "Ballet Nègre," "La Création Du Monde"," *Dance Chronicle* 9, no. 1 (1986): 120.

A Swiss journalist remarked that Léger's tapestry, among the other European works, attracted the most attention from locals, writing "Several Senegalese youths looked at the craftsmanship of the tapestry, in which they liked the rhythm as well as the meaning. The vibrant world of Fernand Léger was closer to them than that of Picasso or Atlan."[174] While the journalist's judgment might be taken with a grain of salt, his words nonetheless draw attention to the ways in which the tapestry could have acquired a particular resonance in Dakar. If, indeed, a number of Senegalese youths expressed more interest in it than other works, it is unlikely to have been because they were seduced by its lively colors—Atlan's *La Kahena* (1958) used nearly an identical palate. [Figure 2.38] As a tapestry, however, its media may have attracted special attention. Tapestry was, along with painting, the most robustly state-supported art form in Senegal after independence, with a national workshop devoted to its production in the city of Thiès. Tapestries were often given on behalf of Senegal as diplomatic gifts and they provided backdrops for political speeches.[175] [Figure 2.39] Hanging in the *Musée Dynamique*, Léger's tapestry shows how the formal influence of African art had traveled to Europe, but also how art-making in Europe was received by Senegalese artists.

The Senegalese artists working under state support in the era of independence were popularly referred to as the *École de Dakar*, and a 1972 speech by Senghor suggests that they took cues from another of the exhibited Europeans.[176] "The *École de Dakar* regards Picasso as a

[174] Tripet.

[175] Cohen discusses the role of tapestries in diplomacy. Cohen.

[176] On the École de Dakar, see: ibid., Sylla, *L'esthétique De Senghor Et L'école De Dakar: Essai*; Harney, "The Ecole De Dakar: Pan-Africanism in Paint and Textile.", Ebong; Grabski and Harney.

model," he said, "whose kinship serves as a firm promise and whose differentness serves as a powerful encouragement."[177] This comment appeared within a speech titled "*Picasso en Nigritie*," which was the inaugural address opening an exhibition of works by the artist at the *Musée Dynamique*. Picasso and Senghor's relationship was long-standing, as the two had spent time together in Paris in the 1930s. Picasso even offered his support to the festival by donating a painting that was raffled in a fundraising tombola.[178]

Senghor's understanding of his "kinship" with Picasso further contextualizes the inclusion of Primitivist artists in *l'Art Nègre*. The quality that Senghor most admired in the works of Picasso was the artist's rejection of the concept of art as imitation, beginning, in the President's view, with *Les Demoiselles D'Avignon*, in favor of art as invention. This difference was, for Senghor, the defining quality of "Negro Art."[179] Picasso's most important inheritance from African art was thus, in the President's eyes, not his importation of the continent's shapes and styles, but rather his reconceptualization of the act and definition of art as something that consisted not of "aesthetics, of pleasing forms and colors, but of *magic* – a set of procedures, here visual, to tap the cosmic forces and trap them, using analogical but rhythmical images."[180]

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[177] Senghor, "Picasso En Nigritie (Inaugural Address, Picasso Exhibition, 1972)."

[178] On April 24, a tombola drawing was performed, awarding the painting titled *Tête d'Homme Barbu* (Head of a Bearded Man) to Michel Bertola, the manager of a Dakar restaurant called *Le Colisée* on Avenue Lamine Gueye. The Tombola, managed by the Chamber of Commerce of Agriculture and Industry, included other prizes and raised 4,200,000 francs towards the festival from corporate and individual participants. Souleymane Sidibe. "Attestation," May 11, 1966, 1966; National Archives of Senegal: Box Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres 044.8; "H. C. Gallenca to L.S. Senghor, May 11, 1966." National Archives of Senegal: Box 44.

[179] Senghor, "Picasso En Nigritie (Inaugural Address, Picasso Exhibition, 1972)."

[180] Ibid., 229.

Senghor argued that the artist's approach demonstrates that his Iberian ancestry "obtruded on him," and that this heritage was itself indebted to African contributions:[181]

> As has been stressed, pre- and proto-historic Iberian sculpture had led him to other Mediterranean sculptures dating from around the same period: Etruscan, Aegean and Egyptian. The point is that these pre-Indo-European sculptures had their origin in the same feeling for magic and poetry, and employed the same vocabulary, the same syntax, even the same style. And since black blood had nourished Saharan art, from which early Egyptian art derived, it should come as no surprise that when he discovered negro art, Picasso found in it a strong confirmation of his Mediterranean research, particularly as many Spanish historians believe that the prehistoric art of the Levant has African origins.[182]

Beyond positing a lineage to Africa through Picasso's ancestry, Senghor emphasizes the value of the interaction, in the artist's works, of the traits he believes to be essentially African with those from other parts of the world. As such, the artist's works, per Senghor, exemplify the potential outcomes of the Civilization of the Universal:

> Picasso began by going back to his racial roots, the mix that comes from the Mediterranean, the crossroads of all routes and races and consequently the home of civilization. The Andalusian artist teaches us- Arab-Berbers and black Africans- that there is naturally no such thing as art without the active assimilation of foreign contributions and, above all, no such thing as original genius which is not rooted in a native land, which is not loyal to its ethnicity. I do not mean its 'race', but its national culture.[183]

In total, the appearance of European Primitivists in *l'Art Nègre* can be explained according to several criteria. Particularly when understood in view of the exhibition's second appearance in France, their incorporation could suggest the role of European modernism in defining the Arts of Africa as such. Their appearance might also be interpreted as one example of the impact of the

[181] Ibid.

[182] Ibid.

[183] Ibid., 230.

arts of Africa upon the broader world, and thus, as a creative outcome—if one that all too sunnily overlooks the role of colonial history in bringing African objects to Europe—of the cultural exchange prized by UNESCO. But Senghor's later writing provides a rubric by which the works of European Primitivists were not only examples of the influence of *l'Art Nègre*, but, for the President, works of *l'Art Nègre* themselves.

The Exhibition as Rendez-Vous

In his introduction to the exhibition, Mveng wrote, "In this century whose language is that of struggle, conflict and rivalry between blocs, Negro Art invites the people of the world to the rendez-vous of friendship."[184] Defining the exhibition through the warmth of the relationships it fostered, the Priest's words echo the evocation of family that Selassie I had articulated to him one year before; the latter's remarks, however, had been made with respect to African solidarity. Indeed, as this chapter has shown, *l'Art Nègre* simultaneously implicated multiple levels of community. Politically and symbolically, it nurtured Senegal-France relations while also proclaiming African unity in the independence era.[185] It portrayed the human family to be joined by both the networked essentialism of negritude and the universalizing humanism of UNESCO. Harmonizing these views, the objects in *l'Art Nègre* cohabitated multiple forms of significance, naturalizing the reality that sculptural form, useful implement, identity symbol, and historical artifact were methods for understanding the objects on view rather than reflective of

[184] Mveng, "Introduction," XXXI.

[185] This cohabitation was not universally accepted. During the Festival, radio-stations in Guinée (Conakry) blasted the festival after suspicions arose that Senegal had collaborated with France in equipping a militia opposed to the country's president, Sékou Touré. Guinean officials reportedly called the festival's organizing committee the "Common Organization of Lying Africans." Simon Kiba, "Rupture De Coopération Entre Le Sénégal Et La Guinée," *La Liberté*, August 10, 1966.

their ontological status. The inscription of the objects in multiple narratives at once allowed for them to participate in plural visions of how the peoples of the world related to one another, and to a broader humanity, at a time of uncertain global geopolitics.

Chapter Three

Exhibition as Mediator: On Nation and Rivalry in *Tendances et Confrontations*

> *Whereas in the Musée Dynamique, an extraordinary impression was emerging, that of the fundamental unity of traditional art – here, on the contrary, was diversity and even sometimes incoherence. There, a marvelous uniformity in quality; here, a heterogeneous abundance, where the mediocre mixed with the talent.*[1]
>
> *Vivante Afrique,* on *Tendances et Confrontations* (1966)

An unfettered variety of media and subject matter characterized *Tendances et Confrontations*, the exhibition of contemporary art from Africa and its diaspora held in Dakar's *Palais de Justice* (built 1958) for the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*. [Figure 3.1, Figure 3.2] Unlike the thematically-organized *l'Art Nègre*, where works had been hand-selected over years of travel, the objects appearing in *Tendances et Confrontations* represented the largely unfiltered contributions of twenty-one national delegations.[2] Critics who navigated its maze of art-studded panels, organized by country, complained that "oils jostled with pictures made of sea

[1] "Au Festival De Dakar: Tendances Et Confrontations," *Vivante Afrique: revue générale des missions d'Afrique* 246 (1966): 2.

[2] The exhibition catalogue identifies delegations from Brazil, Congo-Brazzaville, Congo-Léopoldville, Cote d'Ivoire, The United States of America, Ethiopia, France, Gabon, The Gambia, Haiti, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, the United Arab Republic, the Central African Republic, the United Kingdom, Senegal, and Togo. I have neither been able to verify nor to disprove, through installation photos or other documentation, that all of the countries listed in the catalogue actually participated. *Tendances Et Confrontations: Catalogue De L'exposition*, (Dakar: Grand Imprimerie Africain, 1966).

shells and pairs of decorated leather shoes" and that participating nations "jammed their stands with whatever they could lay their hands upon."[3]

In a display that so many writers characterized as uncritically inclusive, the objects that were excluded from view provide clues regarding the underlying values and motivations animating *Tendances et Confrontations*. Take, for example, the sinewy bronze sculptures of Agustín Cardenas or the expressive abstract paintings of Guido Llinàs, both barred from entry. [Figure 3.3, Figure 3.4] Senegal's Secretary-General Abdou Diouf swiftly rejected the works of the two Afro-Cuban artists, which had been proposed by the administration of Fidel Castro. This decision, Diouf explained, was handed down directly from the highest Senegalese authority, President Léopold Sédar Senghor himself.[4] As though pieces on an intercontinental chessboard, the ways that artworks could move and the spaces that they could occupy were conditioned by matters of political strategy, as Diouf's justification makes clear:

> Since our independence, we have had friendly relations with the Republic of Cuba that we wanted to found on non-interference and the respect for the principle of sovereignty. We had even begun to establish commercial relations with the Republic of Cuba.
>
> Unfortunately, the Republic of Cuba did not have the same conception as us of the principles that we understood as the basis of our cooperation. This is how it trained, in its territory, Senegalese members of subversive movements who afterwards returned to "bring revolution to the country." This is therefore about an unfriendly attitude and a disregard for our sovereignty. It is no longer in the question to seek political, economic, or cultural relations with this country. I authorize you to give this explanation to the embassy of Cuba in Paris, to emphasize that our attitude is not dictated by any great power (and certainly not

[3] The former comments were made by American critic John Povey and the latter were mounted by Nigerian critic Onoura Nzekwu. Povey, 5; Nzekwu, 87.

[4] Abdou Diouf became, in 1970, the Prime Minister of Senegal. Eventually, he served as Senegal's second president, leading the country from 1981-2000.

> by the United States) but only in the interest of preserving our dignity and to create better respect for our sovereignty.[5]

Beyond conveying a curatorial decision, this rejection letter puts Cuba on notice, declaring that Castro's activities disqualified the country from a cooperative relationship with Senegal on any scale. Only four months earlier, in September of 1965, twenty-seven people were arrested in Dakar for sedition after reportedly attending an eight-month camp in Cuba where they received instruction in combat and the trafficking of small arms.[6] On trial, one defector among the accused claimed that while overseas, they had been directed to overtake police stations throughout Senegal upon their return to lay the groundwork for a coup d'état.[7] Senegalese authorities were predisposed to consider these allegations credible threats to national sovereignty, given Cuba's prior support for military uprisings in Africa against western-sympathizing governments. The Cuban attempt to be represented in *Tendances et Confrontations* thus provided an occasion for Senegal to respond to the recent events from the position of cultural gatekeeper, a dignified perch from which to formally discontinue Senegal-Cuban relations.

Diouf's rejection of Cuban participation alludes to the differences distinguishing the respective methods through which the arts advanced political agendas at the Festival's two

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[5] Translation mine. Abdou Diouf. "A. Diouf to D. Dione, January 21, 1966," National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 34.

[6] The training had been led by leaders from Nationalist China, with which Senegal had formally broken relations in August of 1965 after its government had expressed support for one of Senghor's political opponents. Dan Kurzman, "Cuba Is Reportedly Busy Exporting Its Subversion Techniques to Africa," *The Washington Post*, September 3, 1965; Drew Pearson, "Chinese Drive in Africa: Communist Effort Centers on Senegal, Mali, Mauritania and Involves Cuba," ibid., September 19.

[7] Pearson.

exhibitions. Whereas *l'Art Nègre* had used the arts to posit the transnational unity of black, pan-African, or humanist identity, the arts of *Tendances et Confrontations* often exploited or manipulated the international tensions that the former's spiritual rhetoric had attempted to transcend—or, more cynically, mask. Constellated between the wills of various participants, Senegalese powers advanced their own agendas while aptly playing to both sides of the cold war rivalry and to various African interests.

Press coverage of the Festival repeatedly sought to identify Senegal's relationship to the dynamics of the Cold War, and government representatives normally fielded related questions by professing their devotion to national sovereignty above all alliances, and by describing African Socialism, Senghor's distinct form of "socialism founded and entrenched on African values: animism and spiritualism."[8] Senghor discussed African Socialism as a liberal and democratic form of government.[9] His framework combined certain elements of democracy, like the importance of free speech and electoral representation, while rejecting capitalism's basis in competition. Competition, for Senghor, was incompatible with the commitment to mutual community uplift that the President believed was inherent to African subjectivity.[10] Though Senghor valued the communitarian spirit of socialism, he found Marxist theory to have only limited applicability to the situation of Africa, which he considered to be "primarily a continent of farmers. The question of an industrial proletariat has hardly posed a problem so far."[11]

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[8] Translation mine. This is how the Senegalese ambassador to Brazil, Henri Senghor, explained the Senegalese president's conceptualization of African socialism in: Carmen Abalos, "Primer Festival Mundial De Las Artes Negras," *El Mercurio,* October 3, 1965. See also: Bonn.

[9] Senghor, "Negritude Et Civilisation Greco-Latine Ou Democratie Et Socialisme."

[10] Ibid.

[11] Translation by Anita Kolettu. Bonn.

Restricting the extent to which Senegal identified with Socialist theories also allowed for Senghor to maintain good relations with the Western bloc. Indeed, while upholding some of the underlying values implemented by governments of the Eastern Bloc, Senghor also maintained a close friendship with French President Charles de Gaulle and supported ongoing French involvement in the Senegalese economy and infrastructural development.

Senghor's foreign policy sought to maintain fruitful relationships with any nations that could help Senegal achieve its greatest potential. The President argued that it was not only "a humanitarian obligation but smart politics" for countries to supply aid to recently-founded African nations.[12] In an interview with a Chilean reporter that was ostensibly about the festival—but devoted mostly to clarifying the Senegalese position on socialism—the Senegalese ambassador to Brazil described this outlook.

> We need the help of everyone, whether capitalist countries such as the United States, or socio-Marxist countries such as the Soviet Union.
>
> *[Interviewer:] And you do not see in this a contradictory attitude?*
>
> Why? It is our policy of understanding. We can ask for and need both the East and the West, but this is not an entitlement allowing any power--due to the fact of an economic connection--to feel empowered to intrude into ours or our policy.[13]

In maintaining relations with rivaling countries, Senghor's Cold War non-alignment can thus be differentiated from the "positive neutralist" approach of countries like neighboring Guinea, which sought to actively reduce the influence of former colonial powers on the continent. Seeking neither to commit allegiance to one side nor to withdraw from interaction with the eastern and western blocs, Senegal engaged in dialogue with both.

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[12] Ibid.

[13] Translation mine. Abalos.

Taking Senegal's position into account, the pages that follow reveal the ways in which such nationalist politics and Cold War-era rivalries affected, and were affected by, *Tendances et Confrontations*: the second ever group show devoted to contemporary African art, following the 1962 International Congress of African Culture organized by Frank McEwen at the National Gallery in Salisbury, Rhodesia (now Harare, Zimbabwe).[14] After providing an introduction to the exhibition's structure and development, this chapter examines its relationship to the conceptualizations of national identity emerging in rapidly-transforming political contexts: amid, for example, regime change in Brazil and ongoing independence struggles in Cape Verde. The chapter proceeds to consider the influence of the U.S.S.R. on the contemporary arts of Africa and the Festival as a whole. Finally, it describes the political underpinnings of the United States' contributions to the exhibition. These sections are united in the chapter's broader argument that developing nationalisms and East-West tensions were central to the content, exclusions, and effects of *Tendances et Confrontations* and the Festival more broadly, and that among embattled wills Senegal positioned itself as a mediator. The era's geopolitical concerns influenced Senegalese organizers and were also leveraged by them to incentivize international support.

Creation and Concept

In its earliest conceptualizations, *Tendances et Confrontations* was imagined as a component of a broader, two-part exhibition called *l'Art Nègre.*[15] One half of this early

[14] Vincent.

[15] Gabus, "Voyage J. Gabus À Dakar." Early documentation also suggests that organizers considered having an exhibition of photography as a part of the festival, as well as an exhibition of drawings by children. Papa Ibra Tall. "Commission Arts Contemporains: Recommendations," 1964?; National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 19.

imagining of *l'Art Nègre*, called *Sources de l'Art Africain* (Sources of African Art), was to be devoted to showing the greatest existing achievements of "classical" African art. *Tendances et Confrontations*, by contrast, would have illustrated the global influence of those *Sources* through a display of modern and contemporary art from around the world. Both halves were ultimately redefined and separated from one another into two exhibitions, shown in buildings set apart by more than three miles. Whereas *l'Art Nègre* was displayed in the newly-constructed *Musée Dynamique*, *Tendances et Confrontations* appeared on the ground-floor of the brutalist *Palais de Justice*, a complex of courthouses with an expansive lobby that wrapped around an open-air courtyard. [Figure 3.5]

To manage the artworks that would be displayed on panels erected throughout this modern, columned space, the Senegalese artist Papa Ibra Tall was appointed as curator.[16] Upon independence, Tall had been selected by Senghor to lead the *Section de Recherches en Arts Plastiques Nègres* (Section for Research in Black Plastic Arts), a division of Senegal's *École des Arts.*[17] Tall's division was intended to guide its students to express a fundamentally black aesthetic in their work. As its leader, Tall was wary of Western traditions of artistic training, fearing that learning technical approaches originally developed in Europe could inhibit an artist's ability to tap into a creative intuition that he understood to be fundamentally African.

[16] The first individual suggested to curate the exhibition was André Terrisse (1911-1971), a French scholar of African art and literature, though he declined the position and suggested Tall in his place. Tall was unanimously approved by the organizational committee. "Procès-Verbal De La Réunion De La Commision Des Arts Contemporains." November 12, 1964; National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 19.

[17] Tall's artistic philosophy and role in the Senegalese *École des Arts* are described in Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow : Art, Politics, and the Avant-Garde in Senegal, 1960-1995*, 56.

Instead of drawing upon the examples of European or American artists, he encouraged students to incorporate iconography from African masks and figural sculpture in their work.[18]

Tall's investment in identifying African aesthetics may underlie the list of rules that he composed in 1965 or earlier in relation to the exhibition. Tall declared that the "*Salon Confrontation,"* as he then referred to it, "must reflect the unity and profound originality of the current black world across its most representative artistic worlds."[19] At the same time that he declared the importance of a unifying theme or aesthetic, he also relinquished the responsibility of locating exemplary works. Instead, he explained, each participating nation would be responsible for selecting and transporting its own submissions.[20] As the Cuban case reveals, the committee working on *Tendances et Confrontations* barred certain nations from participating, but there is no evidence to suggest that individual works were rejected on any basis, despite the requirement for interested nations to send photographs of proposed artworks and artists' curricula vitae in advance of the exhibition.[21] [Figure 3.6]

Rather, the limitations placed upon a nation's participation were spatial in nature. Tall specified that countries would each be allotted 32 square meters (344 square feet) of exhibition space, and that objects could be as tall as 3.5 meters (11.5 feet) in height.[22] Nations with more

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Papa Ibra Tall. "Reglement," 1964?; National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 19.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Many of these photographs remain in the National Archives of Senegal today, in dossier 19 of the *Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*.

[22] Tall, "Reglement."

than 15 million African- or African-descended residents—a category that included only the United States, Brazil, and Nigeria—were to be allotted twice the amount of space.[23] In setting these standards and distributing invitations, Senegalese organizers tacitly assigned themselves the task of defining the contours of the African diaspora. The nations that were invited to participate were all either located on the African continent, or in regions with a diasporic population that Senegalese organizers found to be sufficient in size, but there was no explicitly-stated demographic requirement regarding, for example, the minimum number of African-descended citizens required to merit a country's inclusion. This allowed the committee to portray the geographic purview of the black world on the basis of unstated and seemingly arbitrary criteria.

In addition to these tacit adjudications regarding African and diasporic art, more explicit arbitrations took place. An international jury, Tall's rules decree, would award prizes to the artists considered to have made the best showings in the categories of painting, sculpture, printmaking, applied arts, tapestry design, drawing, and best overall. In addition, one award particularly aligned with Tall's artistic philosophy was intended to recognize "artistic research," a category created to laud the artist who, by "taking deep roots in the black world, attains the highest artistic and human expression."[24] The jury that was assembled to judge the works on view did not include any Senegalese individuals. But the various geographical and professional backgrounds of the ten individuals selected to be jury members reveal the multiple spheres in which contemporary artworks from Africa and the Diaspora were understood to possess agency.

[23] Ibid., 1-2.

[24] Ibid., 2.

Aimé Césaire, for example, may have represented the interests of negritude on the jury, as he was one of the cofounders of the movement with Senghor and Léon Damas. The director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA), Alfred Barr, was also included. Under his directorship in 1965, MoMA purchased its first works of African art; he also supervised an exhibition of works by the artist Ibrahim El Salahi in 1965, one of the first solo shows to feature the works of a contemporary African artist. From Nigeria, the jury included the editor-in-chief of *Nigeria Magazine*, Onouru Nzekwu, and Ulli Beier, a German scholar from the University of Ibadan.[25] Cameroonian Priest Engelbert Mveng had met two of the jury members on his preparatory missions related to *l'Art Nègre*: a "M. Nounow" from the Accra National Museum, and Bernard Dadie, a novelist and minister in the Department of Education of *Cote d'Ivoire*.[26] Finally, in addition to a Sierra Leonean professor referred to as "M. M. C. Crowder," the jury included three French cultural critics: Pierre Spir from the journal *Connaissance des Arts*, Georges Boudaille of *Lettres Francaises*, and Michel Cohil Lacoste of *Le Monde*.[27] With individuals whose interest in contemporary African art arrived by way of black consciousness, artistic modernism, African history, high society, and more, the adjudicated artworks were subject to the simultaneous judgement of multiple rubrics regarding their significance.[28]

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[25] Soon after the festival, Beier authored one of the first books devoted to Contemporary African Art. Ulli Beier, *Contemporary Art in Africa* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1968).

[26] Mveng.

[27] The jury members are identified in: Ousmane Sow Huchard, "The First International Festival of Black Arts, Dakar, 1966," in *An Anthology of African Art: The Twentieth Century*, ed. N'Goné Fall and Jean Loup Pivin (New York Distributed Art Publishers, 2002).

[28] The grand prize overall went to Christian Lattier (1925-1978), an Ivoirian artist trained in France, whose sculptures created from wire and twine often drew formally upon Dan traditions of sculpture. [Figure 3.28] The grand prize in sculpture was awarded posthumously to Dos Santos of Brazil. The category of drawing resulted in a draw between Sola Mahomey of the

In addition to awarding prizes to exemplary works, Tall also recommended that funds be set aside by the Senegalese government to purchase the exhibition's finest objects, so that they could be displayed in a future "Museum of Modern Negro Art" in Dakar.[29] But Tall's plan for a national collection was apparently never implemented, perhaps because leadership of the exhibition changed hands in 1965. That year, Tall began working regularly in the city of Thies, about 40 miles from Dakar, to prepare for its opening of a new national school of tapestry, the *Manufacture Sénégalaise des Arts Décoratifs* (Senegalese Workshop of Decorative Arts). Citing his new workload and physical displacement from Dakar, he resigned from his curatorial post.[30] In his place, the head of the *Section des Arts Plastiques* (Fine Arts Division) of Senegal's *École des Arts,* Iba N'Diaye, took on the newly vacant role.

As an artist and an instructor, N'Diaye's approach varied greatly from Tall's.[31] N'Diaye focused upon teaching the techniques that he had learned as a student at the *Écoles des Beaux Arts* in Montpellier and Paris. He was more skeptical than Tall about the existence of an innately African aesthetic, and would have been less invested than Tall in using the exhibition to illustrate a formal kinship among the works of African and diasporic artists. When reflecting upon the exhibition four years after its closure, N'Diaye stated that the initial

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Gambia and Ouassa from Congo-Brazzaville (Republic of the Congo). The grand prize for painting went to the British painter Frank Bowling. [Figure 3.29] The prize for applied arts went to the "basket makers" of Burundi. Majors was awarded first prize in printmaking. Ibou Diouf, who also designed the festival's logo, earned first prize in tapestry design.

[29] This would not be done and no such museum was ever built. Tall, "Commission Arts Contemporains: Recommendations."

[30] "P.I. Tall to Secretary General, September 16, 1965," National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres Box 19.

[31] The differences in the approaches of the two artists is outlined in: Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow : Art, Politics, and the Avant-Garde in Senegal, 1960-1995*.

intent to demonstrate an aesthetic "unity" in *Tendances et Confrontations* was "overly ambitious," because "in reality, Dakar's exhibition was characterized by a great heterogeneity."[32]

Despite the divergent artistic philosophies of the past and incoming curators, the general conceptualization of *Tendances et Confrontations* stayed in place throughout the transition in leadership. The duties associated with the curatorial role remained largely managerial, devoted to organizing the allotment of space granted to various countries and to handling logistical concerns.[33] When the exhibition was ultimately realized, works from each of the participating countries appeared on beige panels, preceded by a sign revealing the national origin of each section's arts.[34] [Figure 3.7] Photographs indicate, however, that works from multiple nations interacted in at least one location: the building's landscaped central courtyard, where sculptures, like the rope-and-iron figural works of Ivoirian artist Christian Lattier, appeared directly on the earth or mounted upon logs, bathed in natural light beneath an open sky. [Figure 3.8, Figure 3.9]

Citing the heterogeneity of the objects that appeared in *Tendances et Confrontations* and the critical condemnation that the exhibition provoked, recent scholarship on the display has framed it as either a failure to execute a cohesive curatorial vision, a successful slate for

[32] Iba N'Diaye, "La Jeune Peinture En Afrique Noire: Quelques Réflexions D'un Artiste Africain," in *Africaines Nouvelles* (Paris: Musée de l'Homme, 1970).

[33] The degree to which N'Diaye played a role in arranging the objects within each national section is unclear.

[34] Few installation photos of the resulting exhibition are extant, so this conclusion relies upon the assumption that the intentions laid out in planning documents were executed in real space.

experimentation, or both. For example, art historian Cedric Vincent notes that the exhibition, in its variety, provided a "laboratory in which one could question, defy, debate and explore" but that the display "did not result in a monolithic affirmation of negritude as a unifying black identity" and thus "did not fulfill its mission."[35] Art historian Joseph Underwood has commented that though the show's "effectiveness was limited" it nonetheless provided a "space for exploring modern African subjectivities."[36] By emphasizing the guiding role of nationalist politics in *Tendances et Confrontations*, this chapter provides an alternative to existing portrayals of the event, which might lead one to believe that the exhibition was an inadequately expressed curatorial thesis that collapsed into an unregulated brainstorm.

Rather, from the first expression of its rules, the exhibition was defined by its compartmentalization. It was intended to be a series of displays wherein a delegation's contributions might internally cohere around a given thesis, but the relationship between national sections was left to chance. [37] These mechanics are productively considered in relation to the explanation given by the Senegalese Ambassador in Brazil, Henri Senghor (no known relation to the President), who remarked when describing *Tendances et Confrontations* in 1965, "It will have the character of a biennial."[38] The Biennial was a natural touchstone for the ambassador. As he spoke, the eighth iteration of the São Paulo Biennial, founded in 1951, was underway in

[35] Vincent, 101.

[36] Joseph L. Underwood, "Tendances Et Confrontations: An Experimental Space for Defining Art from Africa," *World Art* 9, no. 1 (2019): 43.

[37] Twa usefully approached the United States' contribution to *Tendances et Confrontations* as an "exhibition within an exhibition." Lindsay J. Twa, "Revealing the 'Trends and Confrontations' of Contemporary African-American Art through the First World Festival," ibid.

[38] Abalos.

the country where he was stationed. The Biennial's mission was, in the words of art historian Margarete Garlake, "a reassertion of [Brazil's] historical identity and a metaphor for political power" that also symbolized "Brazil's party with the international community."[39]

São Paulo and other biennials appear to have been formative precedents to *Tendances et Confrontations*. Participation in São Paolo, as in Dakar, was managed through national delegations, as Brazil extended invitations to foreign diplomats who in turn submitted works on their countries' behalves. At the time, the role of governments in selecting artworks distinguished biennials from other international exhibition formats. Vogel explains,

> In the past, museums and art associations usually invited artists, and salons would have a jury vet the works submitted by artists. By contrast, the organization of the first international biennials initially only took place via diplomatic channels. For the biennials in Venice, São Paulo, New Delhi and Cairo, invitations to participate were sent to the political representatives of befriended nations, who then appointed national commissioners to select the artists.[40]

Until 1980, artworks in the Brazilian biennial, like in the Senegalese exhibition, were shown in partitioned sections according to their country of origin.[41] The practice of exhibiting by nation in São Paolo and Dakar is indebted to the Venice Biennial. There, from 1907 on, countries erected

[39] Margarete Garlake, "The São Paulo Biennial," in *Britain and the São Paulo Biennial 1951-1991* (London: The British Council, 1991), 13, 18. On the political underpinnings of the Sao Paulo biennial, see also: Michael Asbury, "The Bienal De São Paulo: Between Nationalism and Internationalism," in *Espaco Alberto / Espaco Fechado: Sites for Sculpture in Modern Brazil* (Leeds: The Henry Moore Institute, 2006).

[40] Sabine B. Vogel, *Biennials: Art on a Global Scale* (New York: Springer Verlag, 2010), 7.

[41] Ibid., 40.

permanent pavilions in which to display the arts of their country, mounting a performance of national culture akin to the representations of nation staged at World's Fairs.[42]

Invoking the biennial when considering *Tendances et Confrontations* is useful because it foregrounds the central role that national identity played in the display's composition and effects. At mid-century biennials, Vogel argues, art played "the role of an ambassador. One major function of biennial art exhibitions has been to create and assert a cultural identity at home and to convey the political alliances of the host country to the outside world."[43] The assumption that the exhibition's arts symbolized diplomatic ties underlies a complaint voiced by a representative of Congo-Léopoldville, who was offended when his nation failed to receive the recognition of the exhibition's jury:

> My government, who followed day by day the development of the festival, notes that on the eve of its closure no prize nor mention had been awarded to Congo Léopoldville. To this end, they have charged me to express to you their most marked discontent for the manner in which these prizes and mentions were attributed, especially to countries that had not been aligned with the Congo, to people who hadn't set foot in Senegal or to works of which the finesse and quality came nowhere close to those presented by my country.[44]

The Congolese spokesperson overstates the degree to which the awarding of prizes reflected Senegal's national preferences, as the duty of adjudicating works was deliberately assigned to an external group. But his remarks are nonetheless revealing, as they underscore that the exhibition was perceived to reflect international allegiances.

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[42] Vogel argues that the first Venice Biennial was influenced by both World's Fairs and the Olympic games, as all three sought "to strengthen national identity in the context of international competition." Ibid., 17.
[43] Ibid., 8.

[44] P. Ileka. ""Prix Festival," P. Ileka to D. Thiam, April 22, 1966," National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 45.

Nationhood as Criteria

Though none of its representatives sat on the exhibition's jury, structural differences allowed for the Senegalese government to play a more direct role in the organization of *Tendances et Confrontations* than in *l'Art Nègre*. Whereas *Tendances et Confrontations* was centrally organized by a Senegalese committee, *l'Art Nègre* was co-produced by the Senegalese government, the French government, and UNESCO. UNESCO also sponsored an international scholarly colloquium held in Senegal's National Assembly to accompany the exhibition.[45] Officially affiliated with the United Nations, *l'Art Nègre* and the colloquium were beholden to the international organization's more inclusive standards.

Alioune Diop, the president of the Association for the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*, sought to take advantage of this distinction by inviting a Cuban artist, Wifredo Lam, to participate as a colloquium speaker. Lam would have been diplomatically barred from participation in *Tendances et Confrontations* according to the correspondence cited earlier in this chapter, but Diop viewed the colloquium as a route through which to outmaneuver the Senegalese boycott on Cuba. He wrote to UNESCO,

> Governments have their own imperatives for action. But at the colloquium we choose, as you well know, our guests only on the basis of their skill and talent, which is why we would be grateful if you would not spare your efforts […] to bring Mr. Vilfredo [sic] LAM, the very great Cuban painter; his absence would be strongly deplored by the Cultural Direction of the Festival.[46]

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[45] *Colloquium: Function and Significance of African Negro Art in the Life of the People and for the People (March 30-April 8, 1966).*

[46] Alioune Diop. "A. Diop to Bammate, March 26, 1966," UNESCO Archives: Box 7 (=96)A066(663)"66" Folder CA 2/203.

Lam, in the end, did not appear in the colloquium. A representative of Cuba declared that the nation refused to settle for "partial" participation in the Festival, and called upon UNESCO to overrule Senegal's ban on Cuban artists from *Tendances et Confrontations* as a condition of Lam's participation in the colloquium.[47] UNESCO clarified that its involvement in the Festival was related only to *l'Art Nègre* and the colloquium, and expressed its inability to overrule decisions related the contemporary art display, over which the Senegalese government held full authority.[48]

In addition to the exhibition being supervised by one nation, the criteria of nationhood played a major role in determining which objects appeared on view. Inclusion in the display was limited to submissions that represented recognized states, a requirement that further distinguished the exhibition from *l'Art Nègre*, whose objects drew not only from public organizations, but also from private collections and extra-national administrative bodies such as the Bamum kingdom within Cameroon.

In at least one instance, the policy to include only those works which were submitted on behalf of a nation prevented a region's contemporary art from appearing at all. In response to a letter soliciting their participation in *Tendances et Confrontations*, a representative of the national History and Culture Council of British Guyana, still a colony of the United Kingdom, replied brusquely that the country "was not an African

[47] "J. David to R. Maheu, March 24, 1966." UNESCO Archives: Box 7, (=96)A066(663)"66", Folder CA 2/203.

[48] "N. Bammate to J.O. Diaz-Lewis, May 13, 1966." UNESCO Archives: Box 7(=96)A066(663)"66" CA 2/203.

state and as such there is no Negro art in the true sense of the word."[49] One year later, a long letter from the Afro-Asian-American society of British Guyana pleaded for permission to submit works by contemporary artists in the country; their message outlined the region's historical inscription in the trafficking of enslaved people, from whom 40% of the population of Guyana were descended, as part of their persuasive effort.[50] A representative of the Senegalese committee in Dakar replied explaining that the art that they hoped to provide could not be accepted. "In fact, participation is national," he wrote, before encouraging the organization to "intervene in the government of Guyana so that you can be present at this rendez-vous of Negro culture."[51]

For Cape Verde, the distinction of statehood was particularly fraught. As the African continent rapidly decolonized, the archipelago was, by contrast, still claimed as an overseas province of Portugal. A growing nationalist movement led by Amilcar Cabral increasingly challenged the Portuguese claim laid on the both Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau, a struggle that came to a head during the Guinea-Bissau War of Independence (1963-1974). The Liberation Front of Cape Verde, the political party seeking independence from Portuguese rule in the islands, submitted a formal request to participate in *Tendances et Confrontations.* A representative specifically requested 32 square meters of exhibition space, the standard offered to

[49] Djibril Dione. "J. Young to General Secretary of World Festival of Negro Art, June 11, 1964," 1964; National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres`: Box 34.

[50]"General Secretary of the Afro Asian American Society to Festival Committee in Dakar." October 28, 1965; National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 34.

[51] "D. Dione to Afro Asian American Association," November 11, 1965; National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres`: Box 34.

national delegations, where the Front planned to exhibit five works of contemporary art.[52] They framed the opportunity to exhibit such works as a "serious and deserving opportunity to reaffirm the voice and presence of the Cape Verdean people," indicating the political weight and international exposure understood to accompany representation in the Dakar festival.[53] There is no archival record to suggest if or how the Senegalese committee replied to this request, but the absence of Cape Verde and the Liberation Front from *Tendances et Confrontations* suggests their rejection. Their exclusion aligns with the exhibition's general policy to accept only contributions made on behalf of recognized nations. It reveals, furthermore, that this requirement was upheld even when its logic reified the authority of European imperial powers over colonized peoples, a seeming hypocrisy at a festival devoted in part to celebrating African independence. But, if Senegalese support for Cape Verde's independence movement was somewhat compromised, this uneasiness could be explained by multiple factors, as independence fighters in the Guinea-Bissau War of Independence were supported by Cuban military forces.

While the requirement for artworks to be submitted on behalf of nations led to the exclusion of Cape Verdean and Guyanese works, it also, predictably, affected which works were included. Selected by official delegations, the objects placed on view offer insight into the conceptualizations of national culture that were sanctioned by a given government. The artworks presented from diasporic nations, especially, reveal the ways that national authorities hoped to portray race relations and the experience of African-descended people living within their borders.

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[52] "F. De Mello E Castro to A. Diop." September 26, 1965; National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 33.

[53] Ibid.

Consider, for example, the works submitted on behalf of Brazil, which art historian Abigail Dardashti has argued promoted *Democracia racial* (Racial Democracy), the theory of Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre that denied the existence of racism in Brazilian culture.[54] At *Tendances et Confrontations*, Brazil was represented by the works of three artists: the sculptor Agnaldo Marcel dos Santos, and two painters, Heitor do Prazeres and Valentim Rubem. Dos Santos created works of wooden sculpture portraying faces or figures. Their size, scale and material formally recall the sculpture of West and Central Africa. [Figure 3.10] Ten paintings from the self-taught do Prazeres, a musician who founded a Samba School, drew upon the social environments he frequented. Groups of figures danced across his colorful canvases, often shown against the backdrop of residential Rio de Janiero neighborhoods.[55] [Figure 3.11] The works of Valentim Rubem, by contrast, were abstractions influenced by the Concrete movement founded in Switzerland.[56] Their geometric compositions drew upon shapes, like the double-headed axe of Shango, found in the art of the Yoruba people: a cultural group that originated in Nigeria and arrived in Brazil through the nineteenth-century trafficking of enslaved people. [Figure 3.12] The works of the three artists could have been used to advance the impression that Brazil nurtured harmonious relationships between citizens of various ethnic backgrounds, whether in the portrayals of inter-racial socialization in do Prazere's canvases, or in the simultaneous artistic espousal of artistic traditions that originated in Europe and Africa by South American artists.

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[54] Abigail Lapin Dardashti, "Negotiating Afro-Brazilian Abstraction: Rubem Valentim in Rio, Rome and Dakar," in *New Geographies of Abstract Art in Postwar Latin America*, ed. Mariola V. Alvarez and Ana M. Franco (New York: Routledge, 2019).

[55] Responding to such works, a Swiss critic recalled being surprised by the "naïve panoply that the Brazilians had sent, a kind of mapping of folklore in particularly bright colors." "Brésil: Une Préférence Pour L'art Primtif," *Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne*, June 18, 1966.

[56] On the stylistic influences affecting Valentim, see Dardashti.

An open letter critiquing the Brazilian selection committee suggested that idealizing the country's race relations was prerequisite to an artist or performer's inclusion. The founder of Brazil's Rio de Janiero Experimental Black Theatre, Abdias do Nascimento, wrote to *Présence Africaine* to lament his troupe's exclusion from the Dakar Festival. He believed that his theatre was rejected due to their refusal to convey *Democracia racial* in favor of acknowledging the violent history of enslavement in Brazil and the ongoing inequality faced by black Brazilians.[57] He was not alone in alleging that Brazilian contributions to the festival were unhealthily biased. The Senegalese ambassador to the country wrote, with worry, of the politicized criteria determining the composition of the Brazilian selection committee:

> It is to be feared, unfortunately, that the criteria for the selection of the members of this subcommittee are such as to permit the departure of men of culture who are deeply interested in this Festival but whose ideas are not in favor of the present Government.[58]

The ambassador's warning that the Brazilian government cast off dissenters can be understood amid a growing authoritarianism in the country, a reality obscured by the peacefulness and open-spiritness conveyed by works chosen for *Tendances et Confrontations*. A military dictatorship had seized control of Brazil in 1964 after a coup d'état. The revolt was supported by the U.S. State department, as it ousted President João Goulart, suspected to harbor communist sympathies. The follow section reveals how, like the cultural exports of Brazil, *Tendances et Confrontations* and the surrounding Festival were at once agents and instruments of Cold-War era battles for territory and influence.

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[57] Abdias do Nascimento, "Lettre Ouverte Au Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres," *Présence Africaine* 58, no. 2 (1966).

[58] Henri Senghor. "H. Senghor to D. Thiam, May 28, 1965," National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 34.

The Festival and the U.S.S.R.

"What does a festival bring, in general, to a country?"[59] In July 1964, Senegalese ambassadors stationed throughout Europe convened in Paris, where Jean Mazel pitched this hypothetical question. Mazel, a French scholar, had been appointed on behalf of his nation to act as an artistic advisor to Senegalese President Léopold Sédar Senghor in preparation for the Festival. The ambassadors had been called together in an effort to enlist their assistance in enriching the *Fonds Culturel Africain* (African Cultural Fund), the event's official fundraising organization. Ambassadors were asked to identify and approach potential contributors—whether they be individuals, corporations, or governments—in the countries where they served.

Any surplus funds raised would be forwarded to the development of the festival's future iterations in other locations, allowing the *Fonds* to be framed as a pan-African cause. But in the company of the Senegalese ambassadors, Mazel appears to have been comfortable revealing the particularly national benefits of the mega-event they financed. He recounted the skyrocketing levels of visitors who thought to schedule their holidays in Scotland following the exposure the country gained during the 1947 Edinburgh International Festival. Even beyond the increase in tourism, however, he argued that such events created "a quota of people who, having come for the festival, been seduced by its spectacles, and made aware of its events, keep an idealized memory and after that, are ready for actions, returns, investments—eventually they become propagandists."[60] Mazel's words made explicit some of the ways that the festival was expected

[59] Translation mine. "Procès-Verbal De La Réunion Des Ambassadeurs Du Sénégal, July 2, 1964." National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 32.
[60] Ibid., 10.

to benefit Senegal, objectives that were usually eclipsed by the transnational rhetoric of negritude and Universal Humanism. The anticipated economic benefits of the festival were accompanied, he suggested, by a perceived political benefit, in encouraging a positive disposition towards the country before an international audience.

Indeed, Senegalese authorities appear to have made deliberate efforts to create a positive impression upon the thousands of international visitors whom the festival attracted. A new, state-of-the-art theatre, art museum, and stadium were constructed to host its events, and the airport was substantially renovated from a small wooden structure into an international hub equipped with the most current technology.[61] Metal and woven fiber sheets were reportedly run along the perimeter of Dakar's most economically under-privileged quarter, the Medina, to hide the neighborhood from a visitor's view.[62] In the city's newspaper, Senghor asked the residents of Dakar to make a positive impression upon visitors from abroad, writing "Senegalese honor is in play. […] Avoid spitting on the ground, throwing trash in the street, jostling the peasants, turning away when someone asks you for information, or being angry or asking for pay when someone photographs you."[63] Throughout the Festival, the arts of Senegal were showcased in each of its venues; at *Tendances et Confrontations*, the artists who had trained in the state-sponsored arts

[61] Povey, 4.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Dakar-Matin*, March 19, 1966. Relatedly, Senegal's Director of Tourism allegedly instructed residents of Dakar to "greet visitors with a smile, let them photograph you; clean your beach, plant trees, organize dances and fêtes." Phyllis Meras, "April Deadline for Senegal: Dakar Is Racing to Construct a New Tourist Plant in Time for Next Spring's First World Festival of Negro Arts," *The New York Times*, October 16, 1965.

academies led by N'Diaye and Tall debuted their work before thousands.[64] And the devotion of a prize category to tapestry design all but guaranteed that at least one of the exhibition's awardees would be from Senegal, where the elsewhere obscure media was a burgeoning national tradition.[65] These efforts to frame the country in a flattering light appear to have paid off, with foreign journalists finding Senegal's infrastructure impressive and its people to be "friendly, helpful, and uncommonly patient with bad French."[66]

The Festival's international visibility not only provided an opportunity to convey a strategic and positive representation of Senegal, but also served as a major point of leverage in generating support for the event. At the aforementioned Parisian fundraising meeting, this tactic came to light when the Ambassador of Senegal in Moscow, Seyni Loum, asked how to incentivize the support of countries "where the public and private sectors co-exist" since "in socialist countries, given the political pyramid, everything relies on the government."[67] The National Commissioner of the Festival, Djibril Dione, responded that such countries could be motivated to participate by framing the festival as an opportunity to impress an African audience:

> Even in these countries, there is an argument to support. Like in the United States, we have presented the operation as a profitable thing for the United States themselves… we are simply giving them an opportunity to roll out a certain renown among the countries of Africa in bringing together the blacks of the African and American continents.[68]

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[64] André Malraux purportedly introduced the name by which they have since been referred, the "*École de Dakar*," in the exhibition's opening remarks. Cohen.

[65] See Elizabeth Harney, "The Ecole De Dakar: Pan-Africanism in Paint and Textile," ibid.35 (2002).

[66] Flather.

[67] "Procès-Verbal De La Réunion Des Ambassadeurs Du Sénégal, July 2, 1964," 16.

[68] Ibid.

Equating the incentives that could attract Russian support with those that motivated the United States, Dione's response reveals that Senegalese organizers knew and took advantage of the blocs' rivaling desires to court the goodwill of newly independent African nations.

By all indications, this tactic succeeded; one journalist described the Festival as a "Cold War battle for prestige" between the U.S.S.R. and the United States.[69] In the years leading up to the festival, representatives of the Soviet Union contacted Senegalese organizers on multiple occasions, seeking to ingratiate themselves through the arts. A Russian ambassador, for example, met with the festival's cultural committee to let them know about a past exhibition of "*Art Nègre*" that had taken place in Moscow, organized by the local Association for Africa and the Institute for African Studies.[70] Representatives of the Senegalese and Russian governments also coordinated their agendas to create a documentary film on the Festival. Realized by the Soviet Central Studio for Documentary Film, the final project was called *African Rhythms* (1966). The film was produced in conjunction with the Senegalese Ministry of Information under the condition that Russia would act "on account of Senegal" in its creation.[71] It portrays a collegial relationship between the two nations; its narrator proudly points out when Senghor waves at the Soviet film crew, and a series of shots show Russian dignitaries meeting with the Senegalese President. [Figure 3.13] As a whole, the film celebrates the creativity of the African continent and diaspora, and foregrounds the modern architecture and pleasant climate of the city of Dakar.

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[69] Lloyd Garrison, "Yevtushenko, in Dakar, Extols Soviet Wine, Women and Poetry," *The New York Times*, April 20, 1966.

[70] "Visite Du Conseiller Culturel De L'ambassade De Russie." March 8, 1966; National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 32.

[71] Djibril Dione. " D. Dione to M. Sarré," February 3, 1966; National Archives of Senegal: Box 11.

[Figure 3.14] Senegal is shown to possess well-developed infrastructure primed for international commerce and beautiful terrain worthy of touristic appreciation. *African Rhythms* was shot in color, relatively rare and expensive technology; its quality is especially obvious when compared to the greyscale Festival documentary created by American filmmaker William Greaves. [Figure 3.15] So superior was the equipment of the Soviet crew that Greaves allegedly tried take advantage of the lighting setups that the Soviets had assembled, capturing footage from the areas they had already illuminated.[72] The creation of a flattering, high-quality documentation of the Festival could have symbolized the good-will of Russia towards Senegal, and the desire to maintain positive diplomatic relations.

Other Russian efforts to become involved in the festival were less directly successful. The Russian ambassador also requested permission to exhibit works by artists from his country during the Festival, proposing a display of 60 to 70 paintings portraying "African scenes and subjects."[73] This request was denied. The U.S.S.R., deemed by Senegalese organizers to lack a sufficient population of African-descended residents, was not invited to submit art or performers to the official program of the Festival's 24-day run.[74] But many journalists noted that a palpable Soviet presence nonetheless characterized the event. A Parisian newspaper estimated that three-hundred tourists and twenty journalists from the U.S.S.R. attended.[75]

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[72] Bouna N'Diaye, interview by Lauren Taylor, April 30, 2018; Greaves.

[73] "Visite Du Conseiller Culturel De L'ambassade De Russie."

[74] Djibril Dione writes that the paintings would be allowed to be exhibited only after the official conclusion of the Festival. Dione.

[75] André Blanchet, "Le Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres Fut Un Rendez-Vous D'une Évidente Portée Politique," *Le Monde Diplomatique* (1966).

Excluded from the official festival program but eager to take advantage of the international audience gathered in Dakar, two Soviet poets, Yevgeny Yevtushenko and Yevgeny Dolmatovsky, booked a performance in Dakar's Grand-Theatre three days after the Festival's official conclusion. Their desire to perform while festival crowds were still in town, and the reception that their work provoked from the western media, further illuminates the pervasive sense of competition that loomed over the city. A scathing *New York Times* review of the event criticized everything from the stage lighting to the poets' receding hairlines, and suggested that they "had been urgently summoned from Moscow to do for Soviet propaganda what Duke Ellington had done for the Americans," alluding to the Jazz legend's well-received stadium performance during the festival. At the poetry reading's conclusion, a Senegalese actor ceremoniously passed a flaming torch, intended to represent Senegalese/Soviet friendship, to Dolmatovsky. "The Russian fumbled and dropped it," the Times writer claimed, alleging that the two had "no choice but to stamp out the flame with their feet."[76]

But the most noticeable Soviet contribution to the festival, for many, was docked upon Dakar's shoreline. Three months before the festival, a Russian ocean liner was sent from overseas to provide emergency accommodations when it became clear to organizers that the city was unequipped to provide accommodations for the 12,000 visitors expected to soon arrive.[77] [Figure 3.16] Beyond providing sleeping space, the boat became a social scene, its Victorian-style bar and restaurant hosting live music and nightly entertainment.[78] One journalist described

[76] Lloyd Garrison, "Soviet Poet Fails to Impress Dakar," *The New York Times*, April 30, 1966.

[77] According to one report, Dakar was home to only about 500 hotel rooms. Tassart; Donald H. Louchheim, "Negro Art Festival Opens in Dakar," *The Washington Post*, March 31, 1966.

[78] "Pre-War Russian Luxury Liner Pulls Crowds to Dakar's Festival of Arts," *The Washington Post*, April 5, 1966.

its ambiance, remarking "As guests sip their vodka on the main deck, they are also treated to an exhibit extolling Russian-Negro brotherhood. Several display boards highlight the fact that the Russians never engaged in the slave trade while guess-who did."[79] This propagandistic exhibition, a different article suggests, was composed of Soviet paintings portraying "African scenes."[80] The similarity of this description to that of the Russian paintings rejected from the Festival's official program suggests that the ship might have provided a workaround enabling the display of Russian art in Dakar during the festival, albeit outside of *Tendances et Confrontations*.

Though its artists were not included in the *Palais de Justice* exhibition, the U.S.S.R. made efforts to convey its proximity to the contemporary African artists who were. In the months surrounding the festival, the Embassy of the Soviet Union in Dakar distributed a series of booklets titled *Nouvelles Sovietique*. [Figure 3.17] Between pages denouncing South African apartheid and American involvement in Vietnam, the newsletters sometimes discussed contemporary African art.[81] In one issue, the Togolese painter Damien Gbégnion contributed a short essay on the art of his country.[82] In another, the Malian artist Somé Mamadou Coulibaly was profiled. Informing audiences that the artist's works could be seen in *Tendances et Confrontations,* the article also reveals that Coulibaly received formal training in the U.S.S.R.:

> Unfortunately, before independence in his country, there was not the possibility of giving himself fully to his favorite art. His studies at school finished, he became a teacher and, without the proclamation of the Republic, Somé Mamadou would

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[79] Lloyd Garrison, "Reds, Yanks in 'Yacht' Feud at African Fest," *Philadelphia Tribune* April 26, 1966.

[80] Louchheim, "Pre-War Russian Luxury Liner Pulls Crowds to Dakar's Festival of Arts."

[81] *Nouvelles Sovietique*, vol. 12 (Embassy of the U.S.S.R. in Dakar, 1966).

[82] Damien Gbégnion, "Les Artisans Habiles Du Togo," *Nouvelles Sovietique*, March 1966.

> have doubtlessly been unable to accomplish his richest dream: to learn to paint in oils. He went to faraway Russia.[83]

The socialist party leading Mali at the moment of its independence, The Union Soudanaise–Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (US–RDA), had sent Coulibaly to study at the Vasily Surikov Moscow State Academy Art Institute with nationalist goals in mind. He was trained as an art instructor with the intention that, upon his return, his artistic leadership would contribute to the development of a postcolonial cultural identity in his country.[84] The article's reference to Coulibaly's Russian training thus implies not only Soviet support for an African artist and the comparative lack of artistic opportunities under French colonialism, but more implicitly, casts the U.S.S.R. as racially progressive and trumpets its ostensible contribution to African independence.

The Participation of the United States

Whereas the U.S.S.R. found indirect routes through which to exercise its influence at the Festival, the United States was an invited contributor to *Tendances et Confrontations*—and offered room to spare, it seemed. Matched only by Nigeria and Brazil in the expanded 64 square meters allocated for the nation's works, the United States appeared poised to provide a major showing of works by African-American artists. Plans were initiated to tour the American section of *Tendances et Confrontations* in the States when the Festival came to a close, with the Smithsonian Institution, the IBM World Trade Center, and the American Federation of the Arts

[83] Translation mine. "Somé Mamadou Koulibali, Peintre Malien," ibid., April, 8.

[84] Paul R. Davis, "'Coulibaly' Cosmopolitanism in Moscow: Mamadou Somé Coulibaly and the Surikov Academy Paintings, 1960s–1970s," in *Africa in Europe: Studies in Transnational Practice in the Long Twentieth Century*, ed. Eve Rosenhaft and Robbie Aitken (Liverpool University Press, 2013).

on its itinerary.[85]

A hierarchical organizational structure determined which artworks appeared in the display. A National Committee led by a white New York City philanthropist named Virginia Innes-Brown oversaw American participation in the Festival as a whole. Innes-Brown's appointment as the organization's president was controversial, leading African-American pianist Robert Pritchard to organize a protest against the State Department for "stepping in and choosing a non-Negro."[86] She was joined by an honorary chair from the White House, the first lady Claudia "Lady Bird" Johnson. The National Committee's Vice-President, John A. Davis, was the editor of *African Forum*, a publication of the American Society of African Culture (AMSAC). The National Committee delegated the responsibility of organizing American contributions to *Tendances et Confrontations* to a subcommittee, the eight-person "Visual Arts Committee," (VAC). The VAC was facilitated by three chairs: William S. Lieberman, the curator of Prints and Drawings at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA); philanthropist Elizabeth Copley Thaw; and its only African-American chair, Hale Woodruff, artist and Professor of Art at New York University.[87]

Originally, the American committee conceived of its contribution as a historical survey of

[85] Twa, 10.

[86] Theodore Strongin, "Senegal to Hold Negro Arts Fête: International Event to Begin in Dakar in December, '65," *The New York Times*, June 19, 1964.

[87] Other members of the committee included: Roy Moyer (Director of the American Federation of the Arts), Henry Geldzahler (Associate Curator of American Painting and Sculpture at the Metropolitan Museum of Art), James A. Porter (Painter, Art Historian, University Gallery Director and Department Chair at Howard University in Washington, D.C.), Charles Alston (Artist and instructor at City College of New York), and Charles White (Instructor at Otis Art Institute of Los Angeles). For reflections upon the committee's dynamics, see Twa.

African-American art, similar to the one that Howard University Professor and artist James A. Porter, a member of the VAC, had narrated in his book *Modern Negro Art* (1943).[88] In 1964, however, the committee decided instead to devote its section to showing 75-85 works by 40 living artists.[89] Woodruff laid out criteria to guide the committee's picks, suggesting that they prioritize exhibiting the diversity of African American creative achievements.[90] To this end, he recommended that the included works represent artists who lived in various regions and who inhabited various points in their career. For Woodruff, works by established and emerging artists each had a role to play in filling the allotted space.[91] In laying out these priorities, Woodruff also cautioned against choosing works on the basis of "stereotypical notions about 'Negro' quality, sentimentality and romanticized clichés," a warning that could have been elicited, in part, by the festival's relationship to Senghorian negritude.[92]

In 1965, the committee learned that it would be allotted much less space than had been initially suggested, given "less than thirty running meters," with which to work; these new limitations would allow for a selection of only 35 objects.[93] In the end, just sixteen artists were chosen: Charles Alston, Romare Bearden, Barbara Chase (now Chase-Riboud), Emilio Cruz,

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[88] Twa has narrated the planning of the Visual Arts Committee in her study of related archival materials. Ibid.

[89] Ibid., 9.

[90] Ibid., 10.

[91] To identify the latter, the VAC solicited names and transparency images from galleries and schools; as Twa points out, this talent-scouting method had been used by the Ford Foundation when awarding grants throughout early 1960s. Ibid., 12.

[92] Ibid., 11.

[93] "Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors and Development Committee."

Sam Gilliam, Richard Hunt, Jacob Lawrence, Norman Lewis, William Majors, Richard Mayhew, Norma Morgan, Robert Dennis Reid, Raymond Saunders, Charles White, Todd Williams, and Hale Woodruff. The styles of selected artists varied greatly, from White's figural drawing, *Birmingham Totem* (1964), to the hard-edged painting *Tempo* (1965) by Gilliam. [Figure 3.18, Figure 3.19]

One month before the festival, the number of included artists decreased by more than half after artists boycotted the exhibition to protest its American organizers. All of the artists on the American committee with the exception of six—Chase, Cruz, Gilliam, Hunt, Morgan and Williams—withdraw their works from participation.[94] In telegraphs sent to the Visual Arts committee, Senghor and First Lady Johnson, the seceding artists (Alston, Bearden, Lawrence, Lewis, Majors, Mayhew, Reid, Saunders, White and Woodruff) explained their decision as a response to several factors. Frustrations had mounted over time due to the insufficient representation of African Americans on the organizing committee, the massive reduction in the space that artists were granted in the exhibition, and with the news that entry to *Tendances et Confrontations* would require its visitors to pay admission fees, limiting its accessibility.[95] The last straw of the artists' patience was likely broken when an extreme, last-minute reduction to their payment was announced; they had recently learned that the $16,000 honoraria originally

[94] Though Woodruff withdrew his work from the exhibition, he continued his work as the American Visual Arts Committee's co-chair, and attended the festival in Dakar.

[95] Richard F. Shepard, "10 Painters Quit Negro Festival in Dispute with U.S. Committee," *The New York Times*, March 10, 1966; Charles Alston et al. "Traduction (Telegram, March 10, 1966)," 1966; National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 37. As Twa notes, six of the artists who withdrew (Alston, Bearden, Lewis, Majors, Mahew and Woodruff) were part of the African-American artists' group Spiral. Twa, 17.

budgeted to be shared between them would be decreased by $7,500.

The amount of money raised by the American Committee is unknown, but it was reported in March 1966 to have fallen significantly short of its $450,000 fundraising goal, due in part to major donors, such as the Ford Foundation, reneging on their contributions.[96] The deficit raised concerns, as the Philadelphia Tribune reported, that performing beneath expected standards in Dakar could have negative diplomatic fallout for the United States:

> A disturbing thought heard in connection with the funds-raising letdown is that the U.S. may either (a) look bad or, alternately, (b) flunk a great chance to make an impression with the new Black Republics of Africa, 36 of which will be represented in Dakar. […] A fumbling of the opportunity could recoil, it is suggested, at the United Nations.[97]

As curator Jody Blake has explained, American participation in the Festival was important on the international stage as an opportunity to convey a commitment to "civil rights at home and to emerging democracies in Africa."[98] For the American Ambassador to Senegal, Mercer Cook, demonstrating the former was prerequisite to winning favor among the latter; he wrote that "undoubtedly the greatest cause of our unfavorable 'image' in Africa is the racial situation [in the U.S.]."[99] The festival was also understood as an occasion for the U.S. to create friendlier relationships with francophone countries. Though NATO allies, America's relationship with France had been strained over the previous decade by disagreements on French nuclearization,

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[96] "Has 'Uncle' Goofed on Dakar Negro Arts Festival? ," *Philadelphia Tribune,* March 8, 1966.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Blake, 50.

[99] Ibid., 51.

British admission to the European Economic Community, and the Vietnam War. The Festival was understood by the United States as a meeting point between parties on both sides of the "Camembert Curtain," the nickname for the political division limiting American influence in the French and Francophone world.[100]

Thus, for the United States, the political advantages of participating in the Festival were several. The event was an opportunity build networks in the Francophone world, to demonstrate a commitment to Civil Rights, to express support for African independence, and to advocate for the values of the Western bloc amid an increasing Soviet presence on the continent. To support these ends, the United States Information Agency and the Agency for International Development reportedly contributed $150,000 towards the Festival.[101] African-American writer Hoyt Fuller, who attended the Festival as a reporter for *Negro Digest*, alleged that the political motives of the State Department affected American participation in the most sinister of ways—not only advancing American foreign policy, but also undermining African-American activism towards social change.

> One of these days, the full, awful story of the American secret service's role in the First World Festival of Negro Arts at Dakar in 1966 will be told, stripping of honor certain esteemed Black Americans who lent their prestige to the effort to hold to the barest minimum the political impact of that unprecedented event. As it was, the American Society of African Culture's relationship with the CIA was revealed following the Festival, throwing into full relief the role of AMSAC and its white 'friends' in planning American participation in the Festival. It was a sorry affair."[102]

[100] Ibid., 50.

[101] Shepard.

[102] Hoyt Fuller, *Journey to Africa* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1971), 92.

AMSAC, an organization for African-American writers, scholars and artists, not only had representatives like Davis on the Festival's National Committee, but also provided significant support for American participation, funding a charter flight to take performers, writers, and artists to Dakar for the event.[103] In 1967, AMSAC was identified as one of several academic and international organizations that was receiving money from conduits of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).[104] Fuller claims that an agent of the CIA told him that American participation in the Festival was part of a plan to limit African-American control of the event, and to ensure the ongoing power of Western interests in Africa, writing, "Yes, he told me, with a sneer that expressed all his racist feelings, we are keeping Black radicals away from the Africans, and we will succeed. There's a damned good chance that we'll have the French back in control here after a few years!"[105]

Fuller's words shed light upon the political weight associated with the selection of artists sent to Dakar by the United States. The relatively conservative character of the individuals selected by the National Committee and its subcommittees was a general point of criticism among those who lamented, for example, that black America's musical scene would be represented by Duke Ellington rather than James Brown.[106] It is thought-provoking to consider American contributions to *Tendances et Confrontations* in relation to such critiques. After the

[103] Ratcliff, 175.

[104] Neil Sheehan, "5 New Groups Tied to C.I.A. Conduits," *The New York Times*, February 17, 1967.

[105] Fuller, 92.

[106] As a critique of insufficiently radical arts, see: Keorapetse Kgositsile, "I Have Had Enough!," *Liberator* (1966).

many reductions made to the U.S. submission, organizers arranged with galleries and museums to borrow artworks by four of the artists who had withdrawn their contributions—Lawrence, Majors, Reid, and White. This allowed for an exhibition of twenty-one works by ten artists.[107] Among the selected objects, a few general tendencies emerge. Works by six artists (Chase, Gilliam, Hunt, Majors, Reid, and Williams) were non-objective abstractions.[108] [Figure 3.20, Figure 3.21, Figure 3.22, Figure 3.23] The works by Morgan, Majors, Reid and White all made reference to Christian themes or subjects. [Figure 3.24, Figure 3.25] Works by two artists directly addressed historic moments in African American history. Four paintings by Lawrence were drawn from his 1941 *John Brown Series*, a group of paintings showing the life of the 19th century abolitionist and the raid on Harper's Ferry. [Figure 3.26] One work, *Birmingham Totem* (1964) by Charles White, alluded to the ongoing experience of racism in America. [Figure 3.27]

White's drawing shows an unclothed, adolescent, African-American boy sheltered only by a blanket, who sorts through a pile of splintered wooden debris three times his size. The work responds to the 1963 bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, involved in registering African-American voters and organizing Civil Rights activism, by a group of the Ku Klux Klan. In Dakar, the drawing may have been a reminder of recent racial violence in the United States, a portrayal seemingly at odds with the State Department's likely interest in

[107] The included artists are profiled in a bilingual catalogue published on behalf of the United States National Committee. Twenty-one works are named as submissions to *Tendances et Confrontations*, but it is likely that fewer appeared. The dimensions of Richard Hunt's three sculptures, for example, suggests that they should be visible in existing installation photographs of the American section, but only one appears. *Dix Artistes Nègres Des États-Unis : Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres, Dakar, Sénégal*, (New York: Distributed by October House, 1966).

[108] Barbara Chase's art, however, reportedly did not arrive in Dakar after being lost in transit, and does not appear in any known installation photos.

conveying an idealized impression of black life in America. Still, White's portrayal of the young, vulnerable boy picking up the pieces of a shattered place of worship honors resilience before resistance. Particularly when displayed in conversation with other works recalling Christian thought, like Reid's cruciform-covered *Agon II*, Morgan's *David in the Wilderness*, and Majors's *Ecclesiastes, V, 15*, the work's criss-crossing planks of a destroyed church's wood, pierced with nails, calls to mind the martydom of Christ—a story of mercy rather than justice.

The group of artworks that appeared on behalf of the United States was, to an extent, accidental; it had been greatly affected by a last-minute reduction of the available works by more than half. But possible motives conditioning their inclusion might be related to the criticism alleging that American contributions to the festival were insufficiently politically-engaged. The only works that suggested the value of revolution, Lawrence's paintings of John Brown, conveyed a narrative that was already over one century old, and that featured the leadership of a white protagonist. The only work that acknowledged ongoing racism in the United States, Majors's drawing, was a monument to grace in the face of persecution. Indeed, while both contemporary racism and radical approaches to social change were portrayed, both themes were kept neatly within their own frames. Of course, the absence of a radical response to racism is not altogether surprising; organized on behalf of the government, it is unlikely that artists who took a more critical approach towards their country and its leadership would have been granted admission. In any case, the national contribution to the Festival provided a sampling of works by several already-famous African-American artists, and others who would soon become well-known. Exemplifying the diverse techniques and interests of black American artists, the works on view could have connoted American intellectual freedom and creative achievement, propagandistic ends that had been assigned to American art exhibited abroad over the preceding

decades.[109]

Conclusion

Tendances et Confrontations, as an exhibition of national cultures curated largely by the represented nations themselves, is productively viewed in relation to Senegal's national and foreign policy. The blended doctrine of African Socialism allowed for Senegal to attract broad political and economic support, creating alliances without alienating the rivals of the countries with whom they coordinated.[110] By adopting the open structure of preceding biennials, *Tendances et Confrontations* similarly performed a delicately choreographed neutrality that attracted the simultaneous support of rivaling sides. The allotment of consistent amounts of space, based upon population, and the selection of work by national committees rather than a central curatorial authority, staged a distance between Senegalese interests and the display. To extend this impression, the awarding of prizes was outsourced to a group in which no Senegalese individuals were included. When Senegalese organizers received complaints, they could deny their own involvement with the jury's secret deliberations.[111] But the performance of Senegal's

[109] While the particular role of abstract expressionism in this anti-communist mission has been debated, the general use of art exhibitions abroad for the purpose is established. Eva Cockroft, "Abstract Expressionism, Weapon of the Cold War," *Artforum* xii, no. 10 (1974); Michael Kimmelman, "Revisiting the Revisionists: The Modern, Its Critics, and the Cold War," in *Pollock and After: The Critical Debate, Second Edition*, ed. Francis Frascina (London and New York: Routledge, 1994, reprinted 2000).

[110] Senghor believed that efforts to "thoughtlessly try to copy Russia and China in Africa" were doomed to fail; he viewed the nationalization of Guinea's economy at independence, under the leadership of Ahmed Sékou-Touré (1922-1984), as an illustration of this claim and a cautionary tale. Bonn.

[111] Festival organizers were instructed to respond to Ileka's complaint about the absence of Congolese prize-winners by alluding to the secret nature of jury deliberations. Abdou Diouf. "A. Diouf to D. Thiam, June 24, 1966," National Archives of Senegal, Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Box 45.

distance or neutrality throughout *Tendances et Confrontations* did not result in a withdrawal of Senegalese interests from the artistic display– instead, it served Senegalese diplomatic strategy. Its format conveyed the appearance of impartiality, while generating an environment that gave Senegal great political leverage as a mediator between nations. Constellating itself in this orientation allowed Senegalese organizers to ensure widespread participation in the Festival, material support to ensure its success, and an influx of visitors to Dakar whose relationship to the place might become more intimate after making its acquaintance through the arts.

Conclusion

"The last note of the symphony!"[1]

Senegalese Minister of Culture Abdou Latif Coulibaly used these words to describe the opening of the 150,000 square-foot *Musée des Civilisations Noires* (Museum of Black Civilizations) in Dakar in 2018. [Figure 4.1] The massive museum was devoted to celebrating black history and identity, and its exhibitions enlisted art from Africa and the diaspora in advancing this cause. The conceptual similarity of the museum's ambitions to those driving the Festival that had animated the city just over fifty years before was not lost on Coulibaly; he proclaimed that its inauguration would bring resolution to an unfinished song that had been "been playing since the Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres held in Dakar in 1966."[2]

Senghor's ideas occupy a central place in the new museum's mission statement, which declares its devotion to revealing the "political, cultural, artistic and economic response of 'Negritude' against the technological and cultural devaluation of black civilizations."[3] And it was Senghor himself who, in 1971, had initially envisioned the creation of a *Musée des Civilisations Nègres*: an institution that would not be devoted exclusively to the display of art, but also to conveying historical and social narratives related to African and African-descended

[1] Abdou Latif Coulibaly, "La Dernière Note De La Symphonie!," *Le Soliel*, March 28, 2018.: 12.

[2] The article even lists the construction dates as being from 1966-2018. Ibid.: 12.

[3] Kate Brown, "Senegal Unveils a Vast Museum That Raises the Stakes in Africa's Campaign to Reclaim Its Art," *Artnet* (2018), https://news.artnet.com/art-world/museum-of-black-civilizations-1409911.

peoples.[4] By 1974, UNESCO had been approached to provide aid to the project, and a familiar colleague—*Musée Dynamique* designer Jean Gabus— signed on to assist with its planning.[5] But the museum was never constructed, leaving this piece of Senghor's vision abandoned during his lifetime.

Decades later, the museum's long-awaited unveiling provides an opportunity to reflect upon the ways that the questions structuring this dissertation reverberate into the present day. Beyond drawing direct inspiration from Senghor's cultural projects, *The Musée des Civilisations Noires* recalls the 1966 Festival in its enlistment of financial support from abroad. In front of the museum, fluttering at the same height as the Senegalese flag, flies the banner of the People's Republic of China, from whom the Museum was offered to Senegal as a gift.[6] Upon the museum's opening, the world leaders involved in its realization invoked rhetorical strategies comparable to the ones used by Senghor, portraying the institution as an illustration of both a symbolic brotherhood and a political alliance between nations. Senegalese President Macky Sall called the Museum a "symbol of the friendship and solidarity of the Chinese and Senegalese peoples," while the Chinese Minster of Culture and Tourism Shugang Luo, on behalf of

[4] This document notes that in addition to Gabus, the building would be designed in consultation with the architect who designed the National Anthropology Museum of Mexico, Pedro Ramirez-Vazquez. Gabus says that the museum would examine black cultures through "anthropological, ecological, technological, sociological, ideological, historical and aesthetic" approaches. Georges-Henri Rivière. "Musée Des Civilisations Nègres: 1er Octobre - 4 Novembre 1974," January, 1975; National Archives of France: Box UNESCO Series 3118/RMO.RD/CLP 690AP 97.

[5] Ibid.

[6] China also offered a large theatre to Senegal as a gift. It is located directly across from the new Museum. "Senegal Unveils Museum of Black Civilisations," *BBC News* (2018), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-46467098.

President Xi Jinping, said the museum represented the "strategic cooperative partnership" between the two countries, adding that, "black civilizations are very special among the civilizations of the world. They have contributed much to the development of global civilization."[7]

Luo's words echo the aspirational language and intercultural networks that underpinned Senghor's Civilization of the Universal. But Chinese involvement also evoked suspicion among some attendees, who viewed the nation's gift as a kind of Trojan horse: a gesture of generosity that masked attempts to gain power in Africa and exploit Senegal economically. Critics have decried Chinese interventions in Dakar as a form of neo-colonialism, invoking the same label that had been used to describe French involvement in 1966. Days before the new museum's opening, one journalist noted the similarities between the two countries' roles:

> Fifty-two years ago, just after Senghor had hailed Senegal as the capital of Black Civilization at the opening of the festival of Black Arts, a French minister moved forward to give a speech. A minister from a foreign country will also address the nation on Thursday, but this time they will be Chinese.[8]

In Senegal, once again, a major cultural project celebrating black identity has, at the same time, provided an avenue through which a foreign power has secured local influence. As in 1966, contemporary debates on the new museum's merits have evaluated its commitment to nationalism versus universalism and liberation versus exploitation: does the museum's reliance

[7] Translation mine. Diaga Fall, "Musée Des Civilisations Noires : Macky Sall Réalise Les Rêves De Senghor Et Wade," *Chroniques.sn* (2018), http://chroniques.sn/une/musee-des-civilisations-noires-macky-sall-realise-les-reves-de-senghor-et-wade/.

[8] Amandla Thomas-Johnson, "Museum of Black Civilisations Aims to "Decolonise Knowledge"," *Al Jazeera News* (2018), https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/museum-black-civilisations-aims-decolonise-knowledge-181204221519936.html.

on a foreign power undermine its professed devotion to African identity? Can it truly be considered an agent of Black empowerment and liberation if its establishment contributes to increasing Chinese power throughout the continent?

My dissertation offers historical depth to these debates. As the preceding chapters have shown, at the moment of Senegalese independence, cultural projects played a role in the country's diplomatic negotiations, and state-sanctioned representations of African identity were often affected by the interests of nations located well beyond the continent. To a certain extent, the diplomatic utility of pan-Africanist cultural projects can be understood as a hallmark of Senegalese foreign policy. In addition to the 1966 Festival and the 2018 Museum, the 2010 erection of the enormous *Monument de la Renaissance Africaine (African Renaissance Monument)* under the administration of former Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade provides an example of this strategy. [Figure 4.2] Its inauguration was attended by nineteen African heads of state on the date of the fiftieth anniversary of Senegalese Independence, marking the monument as a symbol of unity and liberation on both a national and continental scale. But the $27 million monument was perceived to be disconnected from the interests of ordinary Dakarois, a suspicion reinforced during the weeks following its founding, when, each night, its illumination caused surrounding residential neighborhoods to lose power.[9] Furthermore, its construction was outsourced to a North Korean contractor called Mansudae Overseas Projects, generating misgivings about the debts and political affiliations that the project may have generated.[10]

[9] On the local impact of the African Renaissance Monument, see: Grabski. On the price of the monument's construction, see "Senegal President Wade Apologises for Christ Comment," *BBC News* (2009), http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8435805.stm.

[10] The exporting of statues created by Mansudae Overseas Projects was initially used as a tool by North Korea to gain the support of nations on the U.N., and has since provided a significant

Senegal's cultivation of intercontinental political and economic networks through symbolically pan-African cultural projects has drawn comparable critiques in 1966, 2010, and 2018. The maneuver has been decried as sleight-of-hand by those alleging that the Festival, the Monument, and the Museum arrived at the expense of Senegalese non-elites and attached Senegal to foreign powers with exploitative intentions. The limited effects of the 1966 festival drew criticism upon its closure, when newspaper headlines like "Senegal Returns to Reality's Grip: Grim Plight Again Evident as Negro Festival Ends," suggested that the Festival's lasting impact upon locals was negligible.[11] And a number of historians reflecting upon the event have understood it to be a harbinger of *françafrique*: the covert French strategy to regain economic, diplomatic, and political control of postcolonial Africa through unofficial channels.[12]

But the realization of the First World Festival of Negro Arts also won Senghor widespread acclaim. Even Nigerian journalist Onouru Nzekwu, elsewhere critical of the Senegalese president, praised the festival as an administrative triumph and a valuable creative interface:

> Despite the shortcomings, one cannot fail to commend the stout spirit with which Senegal accepted a gigantic responsibility […] and saw it through. In facing the challenges posed by accommodation, feeding and transportation and other demands of the thousands of academicians, ethnologists, painters, critics, performers, journalists, tourists and culture-vultures gathered on her shoes for four weeks, and security for all the art treasures assembled in her capital, Senegal stood the strain very well. […] As a means of focusing world attention on Negro

source of income for the country. Pearson reports, "North Korea has generated more than $160 million since 2000 from buildings and monuments in places like Namibia, Congo, Botswana and Senegal." James Pearson, "U.N. Decapitates North Korea's Statue Export Business," *Reuters* (2016), https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-nuclear-un-statues-idUSKBN13Q4Z8.

[11] Garrison, "Senegal Returns to Reality's Grip."

[12] Murphy, 22. Catherine Coquio, "Un Intellectuel 'Accompagné': Malraux, De Gaulle, Foccart Et Le Réveil De La "Décolonisation"," in *Malraux Et L'afrique*, ed. Raphaël Lambal (2012).

> art, as an opportunity for authors and performing artists to crystallize their own thinking about art, and as an occasion for giving Dakar a face-lift, the festival was a success.

Nzekwu's words begin to detect the role that the festival played in establishing Dakar's identity on the continent as a hub for the arts. The city maintains this reputation today as the host of the Dak'Art Biennale (1990-), the continent's longest-running large-scale art event. The Festival is also remembered nostalgically as a source of national pride by individuals like Coulibaly and many of the Senegalese intellectuals who convened to celebrate the event's fiftieth anniversary at a scholarly colloquium held in Dakar in 2015.[13] Testifying to the Festival's ongoing contribution to contemporary Senegalese identity, the nation's President, Macky Sall, made a surprise appearance at the commemorative event, providing its opening remarks.

The festival, then, can be understood as meeting-place for African and African-descended artists, a feat of national infrastructure, an outlet through which Senegal developed its diplomatic and economic networks, and, for some, an enduring source of patriotic sentiment. Nonetheless, it was *also* a staggering national expense that did little to improve the lives of the poor and working-class, and a gateway through which major powers, like France, the U.S.S.R., and the United States, extended their influence upon the African continent. Making sense of the Festival and its complex legacy requires moving beyond the easy binarism that allows for the event to be portrayed as *either* a symbolic triumph *or* a neo-colonial sham; both interpretations convey revealing but incomplete understandings of the historical event.

In this sense, the Festival may have succeeded in manifesting at least one dimension of Senghor's worldview: that which understood competing perspectives as analogues, perpetually

[13] These remarks are based on my observations, having attended the event. For official remarks on the event by its primary organizer, see Mbaye.

in dialogue rather than conditioning the other's impossibility. Throughout this dissertation, I have worked to show that the visual arts at the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* often worked to mediate or cohabitate rivaling worldviews. In my first chapter, I discussed how the planning and architecture of the *Musée Dynamique* expressed the universalizing museological theories of UNESCO and the networked essentialism underlying post-war negritude. Chapter Two discussed the ways in which *l'Art Nègre* simultaneously performed kinship as an outcome of African solidarity, black consciousness, and humanism. In my final Chapter, my examination of *Tendances et Confrontations* illustrated they ways that Senegal appeased both the Eastern and Western blocs while using their rivalry to its benefit.

Beyond its effects upon Senegalese history, international relations, and pan-African thought, the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* can be identified as a historiographical milestone in African Art studies. Senghor's devotion to creating a platform for the arts of African and African-descended people was founded in a belief that cultural representation played a role in maintaining or disrupting the distribution of power. The festival's exhibitions claimed the rightful place of the continent's arts among a global pantheon, and in so doing, called attention to the exclusionary norms underlying existing cultural canons. The Festival thus demanded a more global comprehension of the cultural achievements of the past than Art History had yet realized.[14] Senghor's vision can be viewed in relation to the present-day efforts of Art History departments across the country to expand the geographic purview of their curricula and faculty. As the discipline changes, the multiple effects of the 1966 Festival provide a reminder of the role

[14] Testifying to the discipline's limitations, the first two doctoral dissertations ever to focus upon the arts of Africa were only approved in 1957 (Roy Sieber) and 1966 (Robert Farris Thompson).

that the display and study of underrepresented arts can play in obscuring ongoing hegemony, and also in pursuing a more just and peaceful world.

Figures

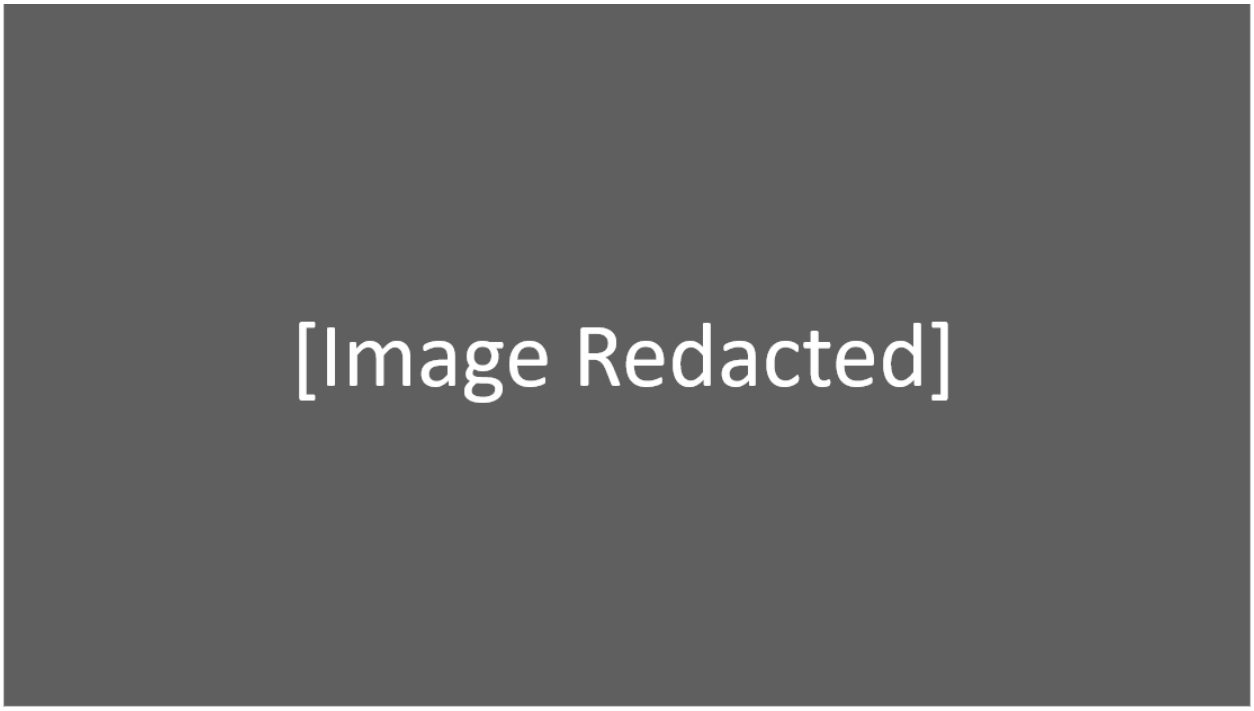


Figure 1.1. The Supreme Court of Senegal, formerly the *Musée Dynamique*.

Image Capture by Google Street View, October 2015. Accessed October 24, 2018.

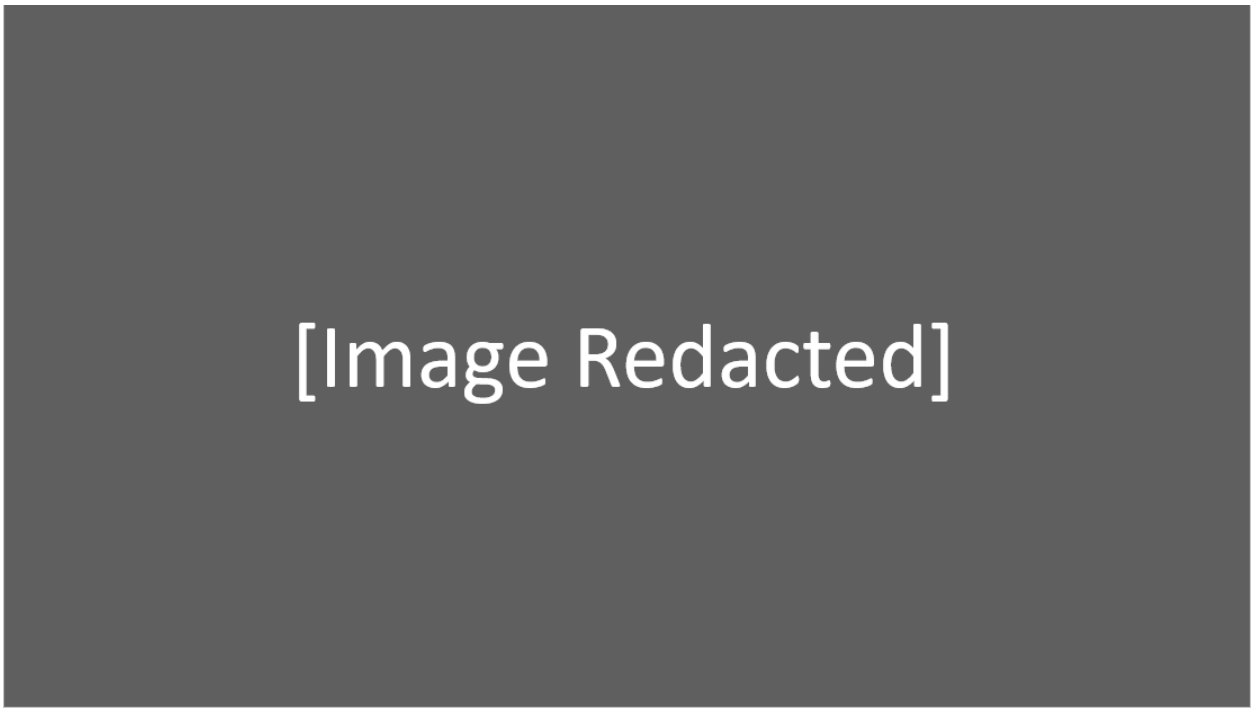


Figure 1.2. Elevation detail of blueprint sketches titled *Grand Hall d'Exposition* by architects Michel Chesneau and Jean Verola, dated April 6, 1963.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: file 1137.1432.

Figure 1.3. Architectural model of *Musée Dynamique*, date unknown. Photograph by Maya Brachar.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

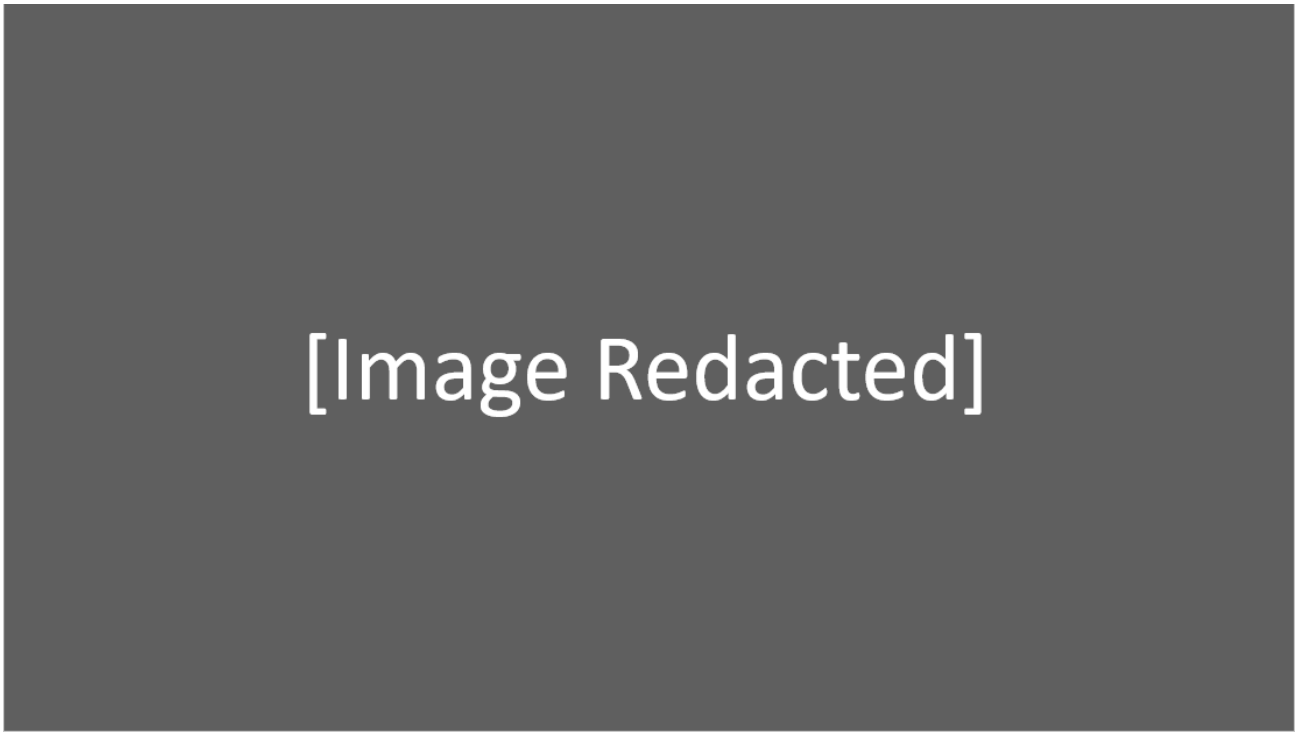


Figure 1.4. Floorplan, ground floor. Detail of blueprint sketches titled *Grand Hall d'Exposition* by architects Michel Chesneau and Jean Verola, dated April 6, 1963.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: file 1137.1432.

Figure 1.5. Floor plan, basement. Detail of blueprint sketches titled *Grand Hall d'Exposition* by architects Michel Chesneau and Jean Verola, dated April 6, 1963

Accessed in the archives of the Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel: file 1137.1432.

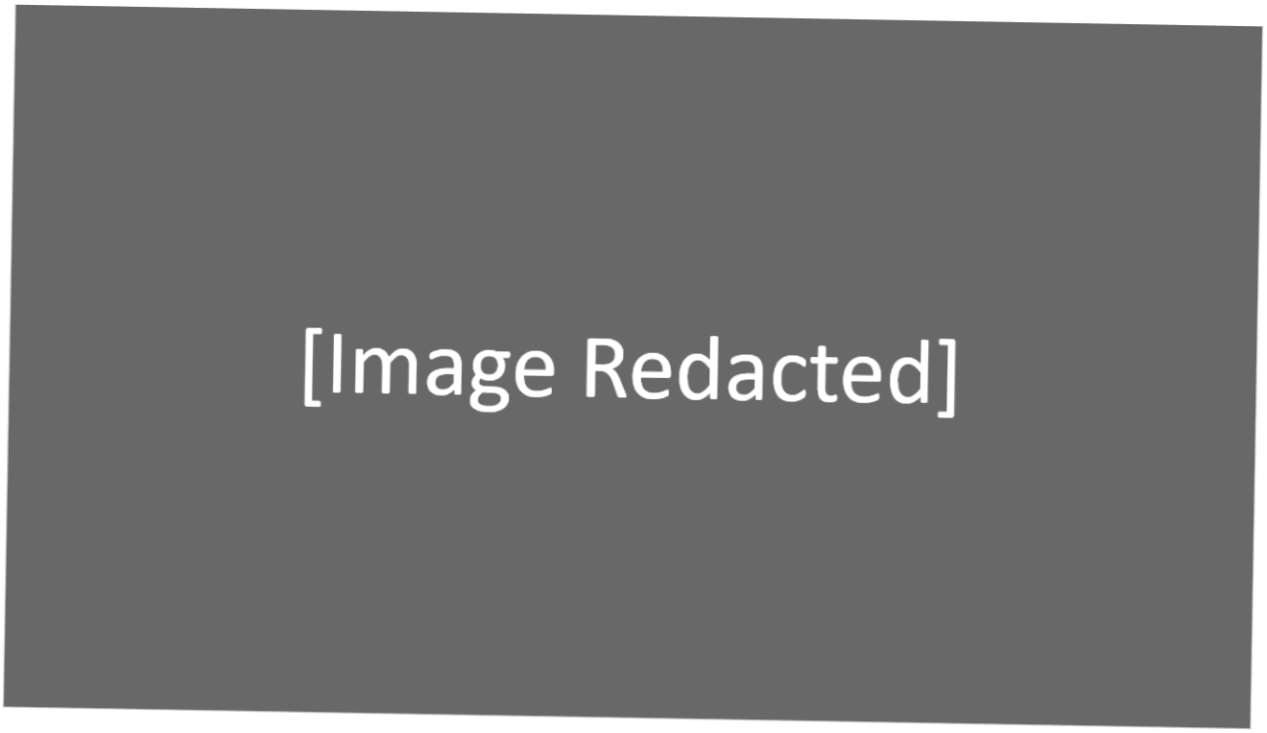


Figure 1.6. Floorplan, Ground floor. *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*.

Source: Gabus, Jean. (1975) *L'objet Temoin : les références d'une civilisation par l'objet.* Neuchâtel : Éditions Ides et calendes : 8.

Figure 1.7. Cross-sections, *Musée Dynamique* in Neuchâtel.

Source: Gabus, Jean. (1975) *L'objet Temoin : les références d'une civilisation par l'objet.* Neuchâtel : Éditions Ides et calendes : 10.

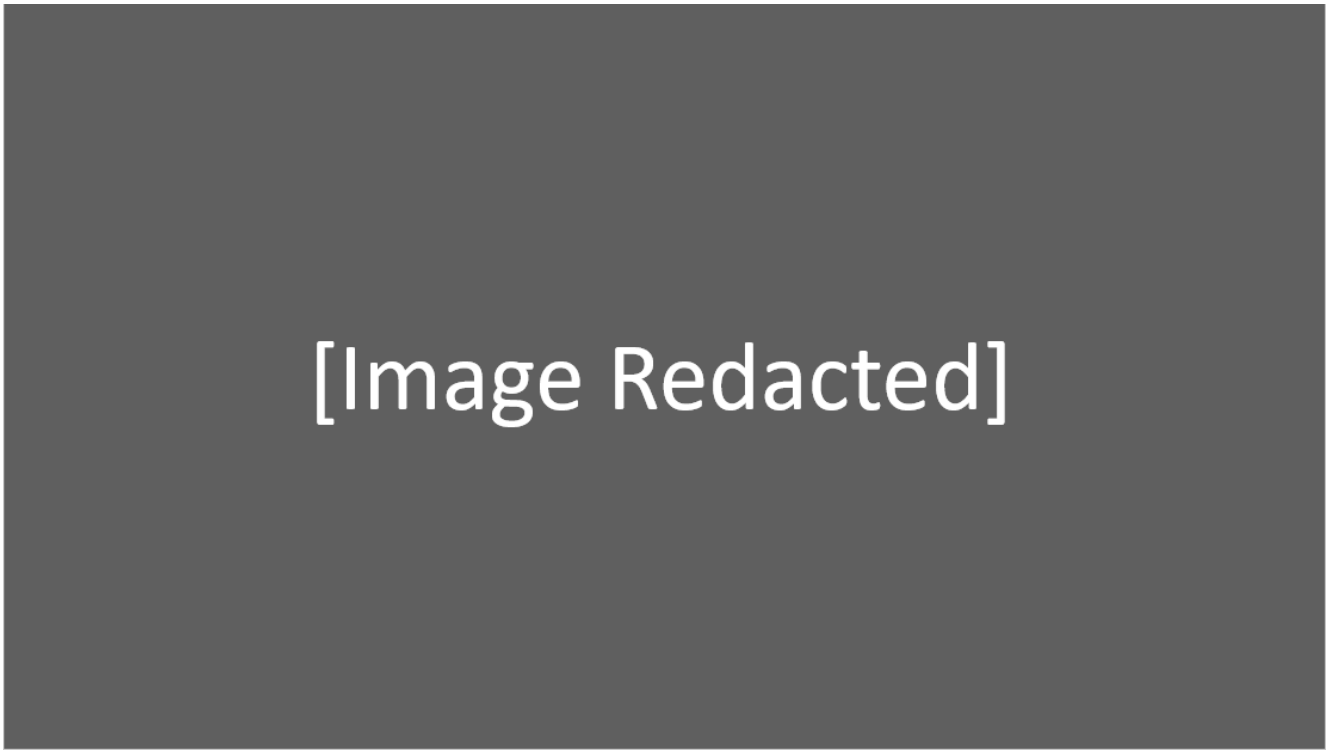


Figure 1.8. Comparison of the floorplans of the Dakar (left) and Neuchâtel (right) *Musées Dynamiques.*

Source: Knodel, Bernard. (2018) *Le musée réinventé : une exposition du TP d'ethnomuséografie Neuchâtel.* Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel.

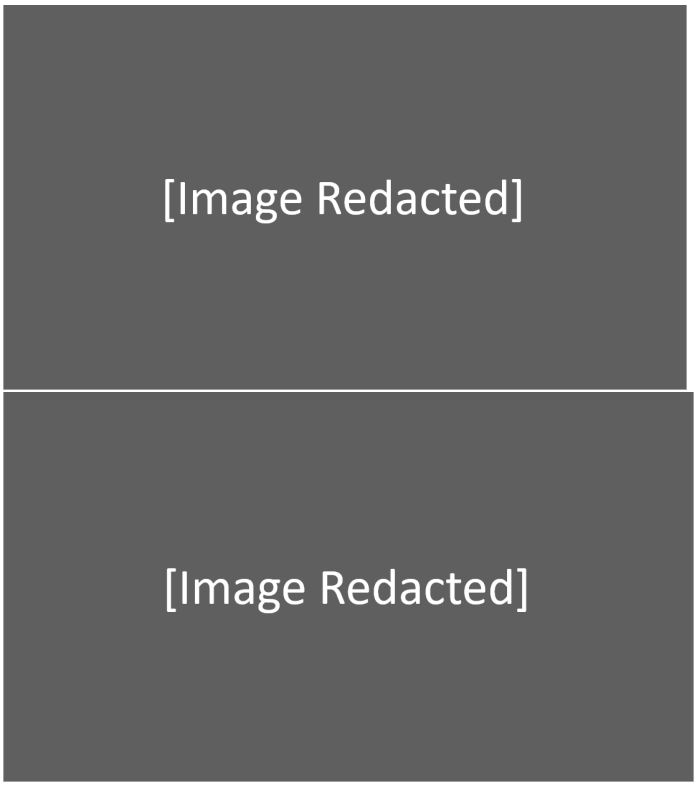


Figure 1.9. Top: Interior view, Neuchâtel *Musée Dynamique*, with exhibition titled *Arts Précolombiens* (1972). Bottom: Interior view, Dakar *Musée Dynamique*, with exhibition titled *l'Art Nègre* (1966). Photograph by Maya Bracher.

Sources:

Top: Gabus, Jean. (1975) *L'objet Temoin : les références d'une civilisation par l'objet*. Neuchâtel : Éditions Ides et calendes : 235 // Bottom: Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

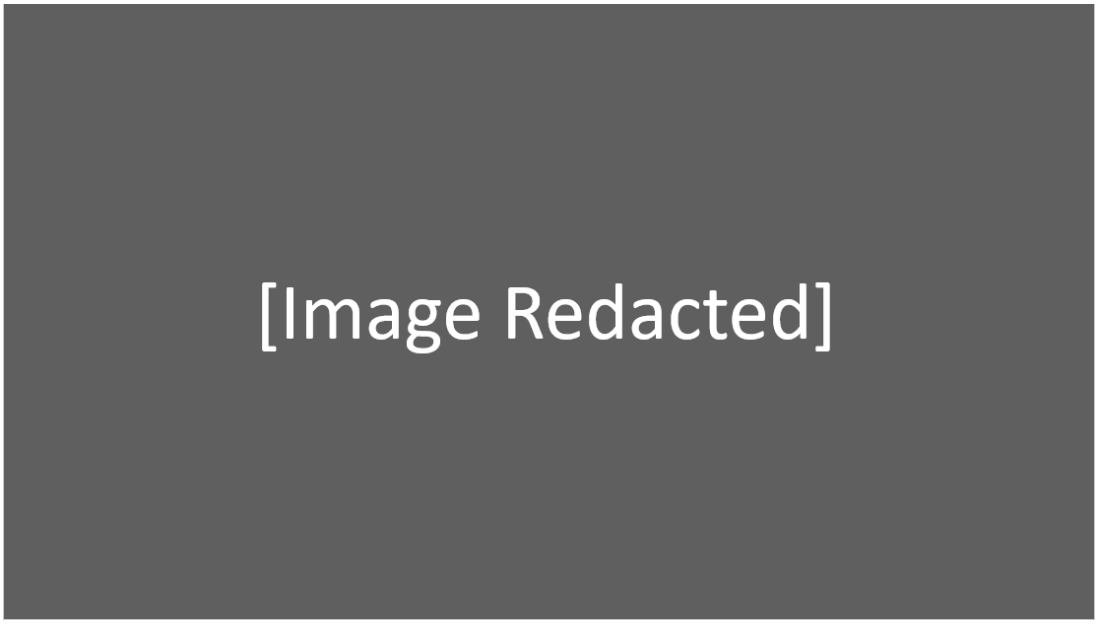


Figure 1.10. Avant-projet floorplan, *Musée National de Nouakchott* (1964)

Source: Knodel, Bernard. (2018) *Le musée réinventé : une exposition du TP d'ethnomuséografie Neuchâtel.* Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel: 62.

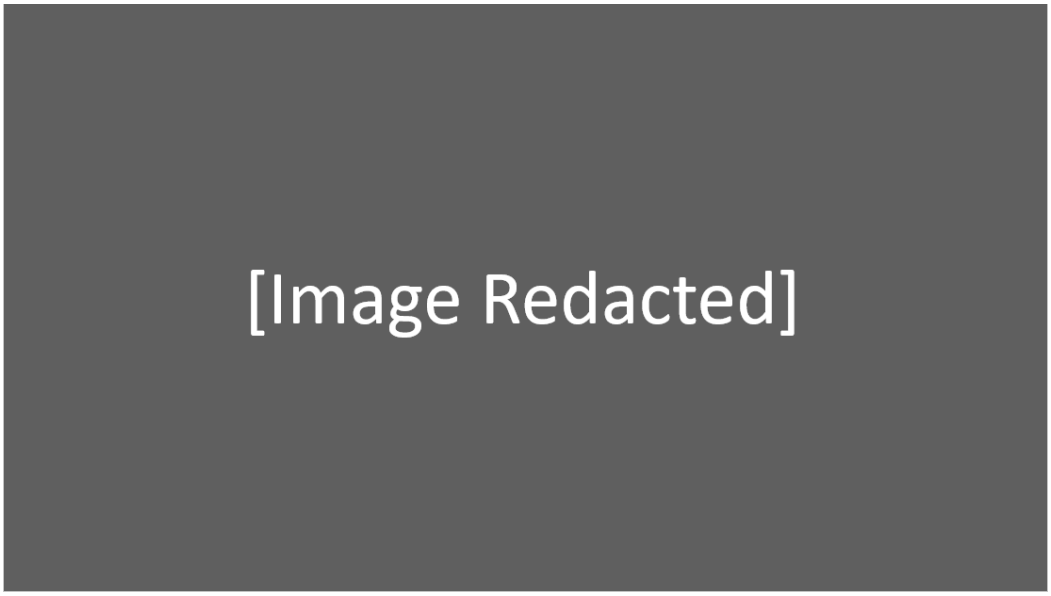


Figure 1.11. Page from the UNESCO publication *Museum*, showing the Fibonacci sequence to be the inspiration for the UNESCO-designed poster printed in eight languages to promote the International Campaign for Museums.

Source: *Museum* (1953) XI,1:2.

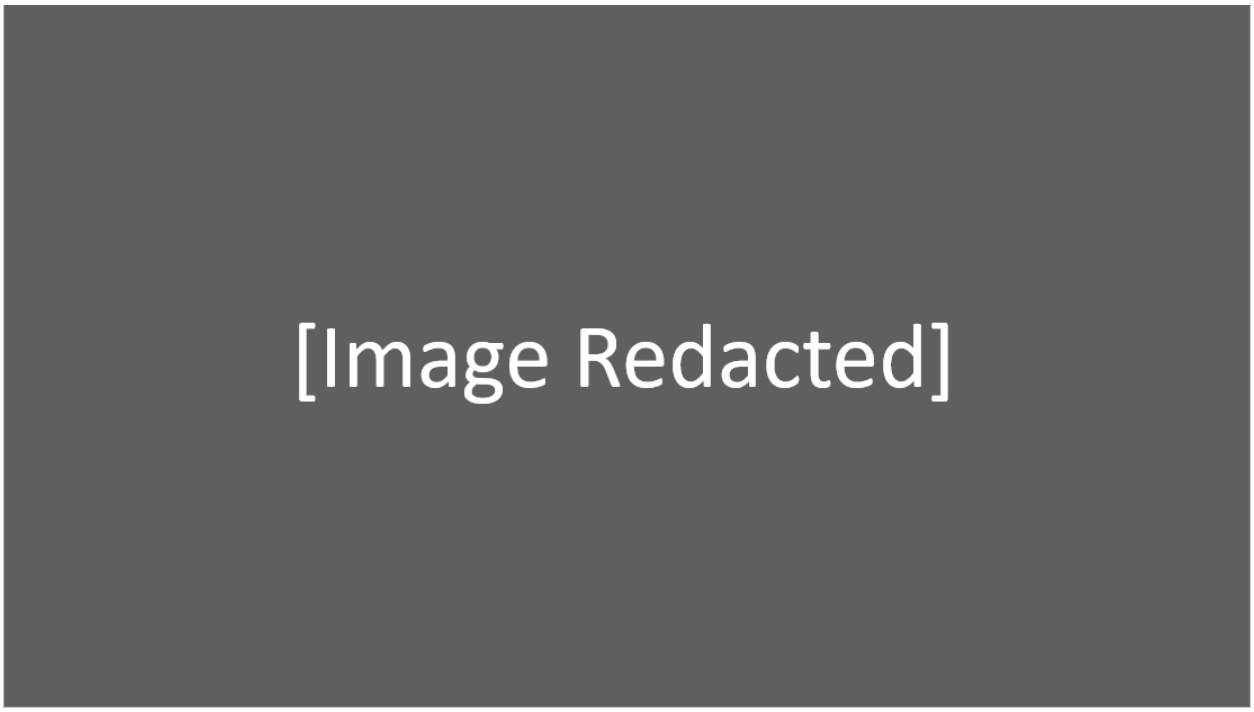


Figure 1.12. Exterior, the *Musée Dynamique* wing of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*, showing the mural *Les Conquêtes de l'Homme* (1954) by Hans Erni.

Source: Gabus, Jean. (1975) *L'objet Temoin : les références d'une civilisation par l'objet.* Neuchâtel : Éditions Ides et calendes : 11.

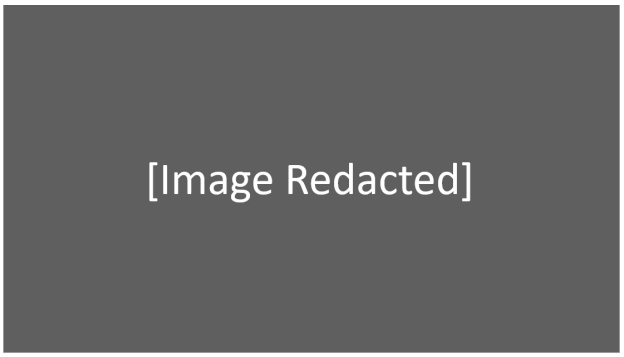


Figure 1.13. Hans Erni, *Les conquêtes de l'homme* (1954)

89 x 23 feet

Source: Website of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel* : https://www.men.ch/fr/histoires/le-musee/peintures-exterieures/

Figure 1.14. Downtown Dakar, 1966.

Source: Irina Venzher and Leonid Makhnatch, *African Rhythms* (1966). Accessed at the *Musée du Quai Branly*, courtesy of Sarah Frioux-Salgas.

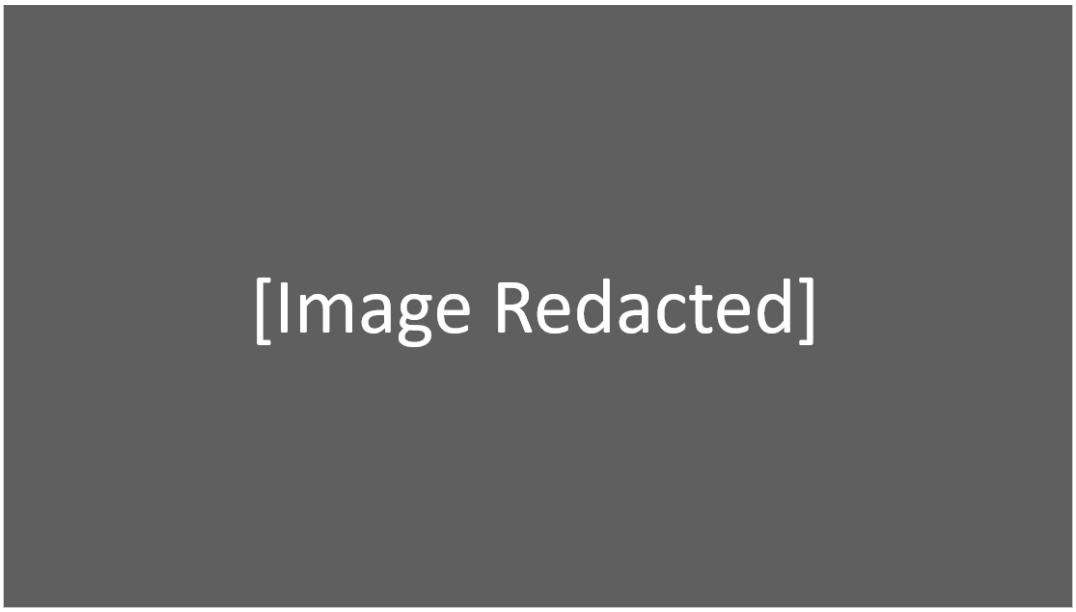


Figure 1.15. Hale Woodruff, "Interchange" from *The Art of the Negro* (1950-1951). Trevor Arnett Hall, Atlanta, Georgia.

Source: Clark Atlanta University Museum Website, at <http://www.cau.edu/art-galleries/murals.html>

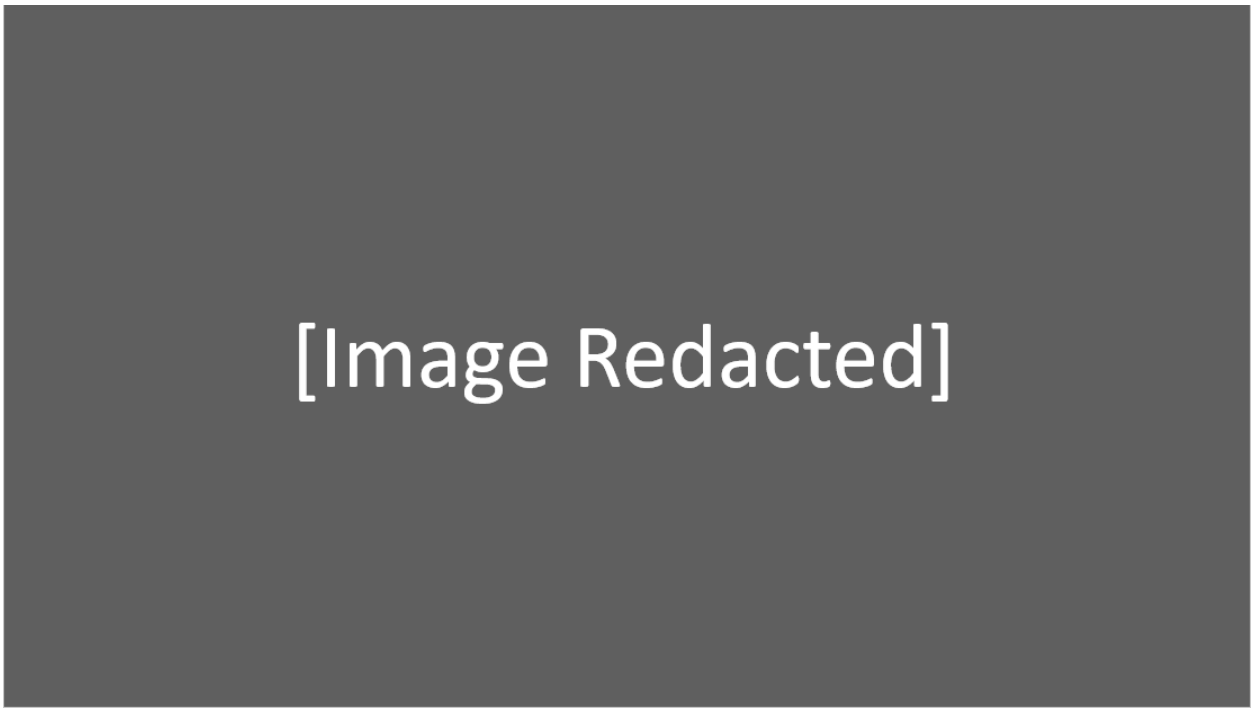


Figure 1.16. The *Musée Dynamique* (1966) in Dakar, Senegal. Photographer unknown.

Source: *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* (1966), page 33.

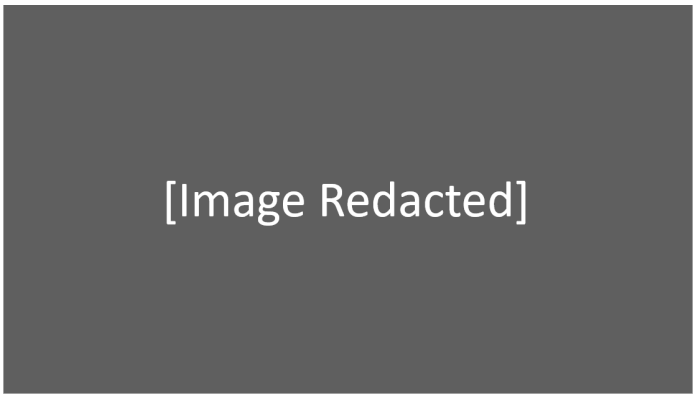


Figure 1.17. Entrance to the *Musée Dynamique*, 1966. Photographed by Maya Bracher.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

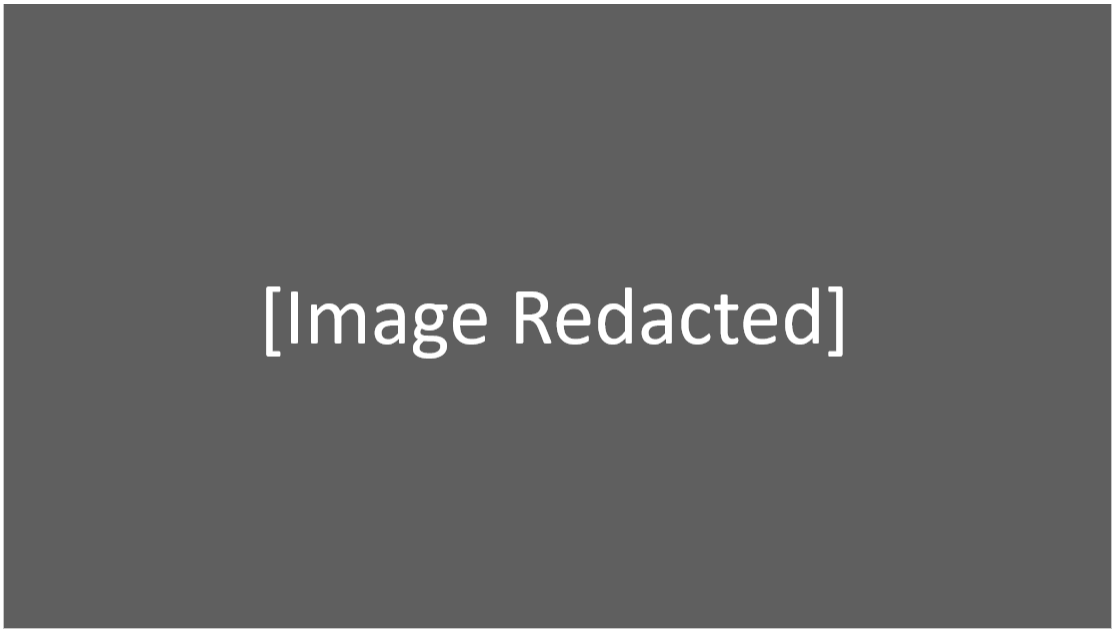


Figure 1.18. The Jefferson Memorial (1943), Washington, DC. Photographer unknown.

Source: Website of the National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/thje/learn/historyculture/memorialfeatures.htm>

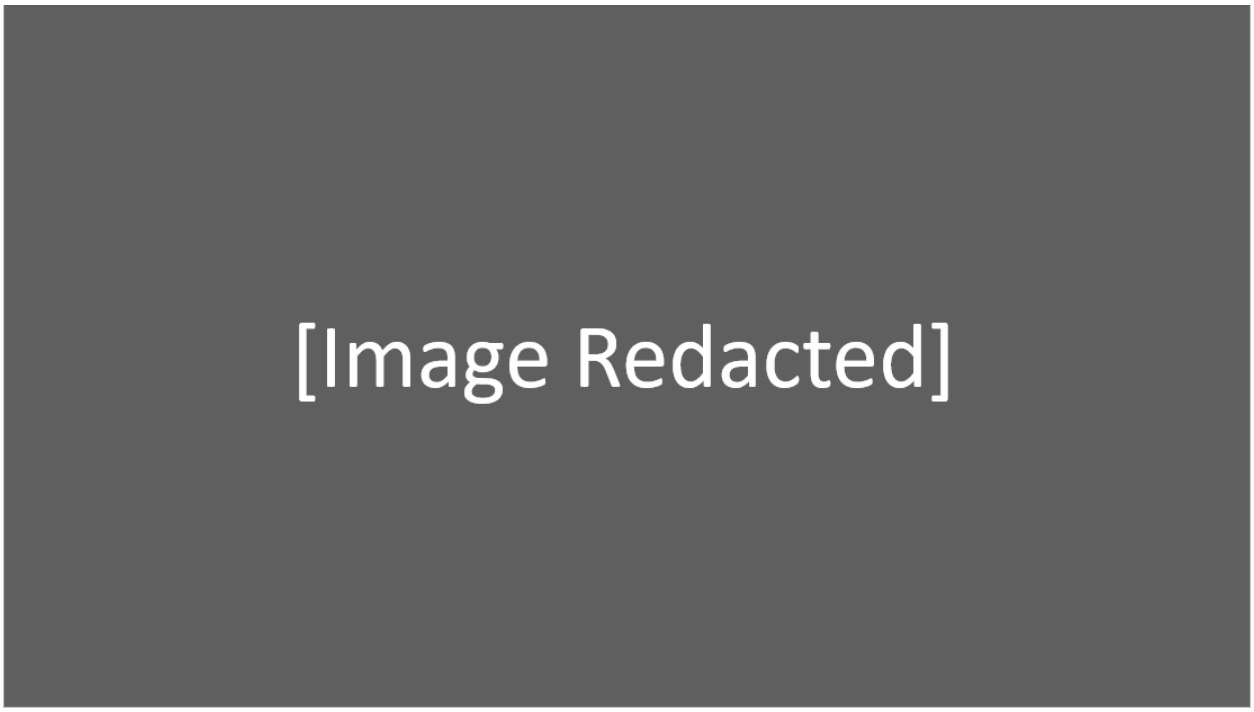


Figure 1.19. Brochure, “Senegal: Crossroads of the World, Door to Black Africa.”

Source: Joshua Cohen, “Locating Senghor’s École de Dakar: International and Transnational Dimensions to Senegalese Modern Art, c. 1959-1980.” *African Arts*, 51:3.

Figure 2.1. Route of Englebert Mveng on Spring 1965 mission to Central and Eastern Africa. Illustration by author, using Google Maps.

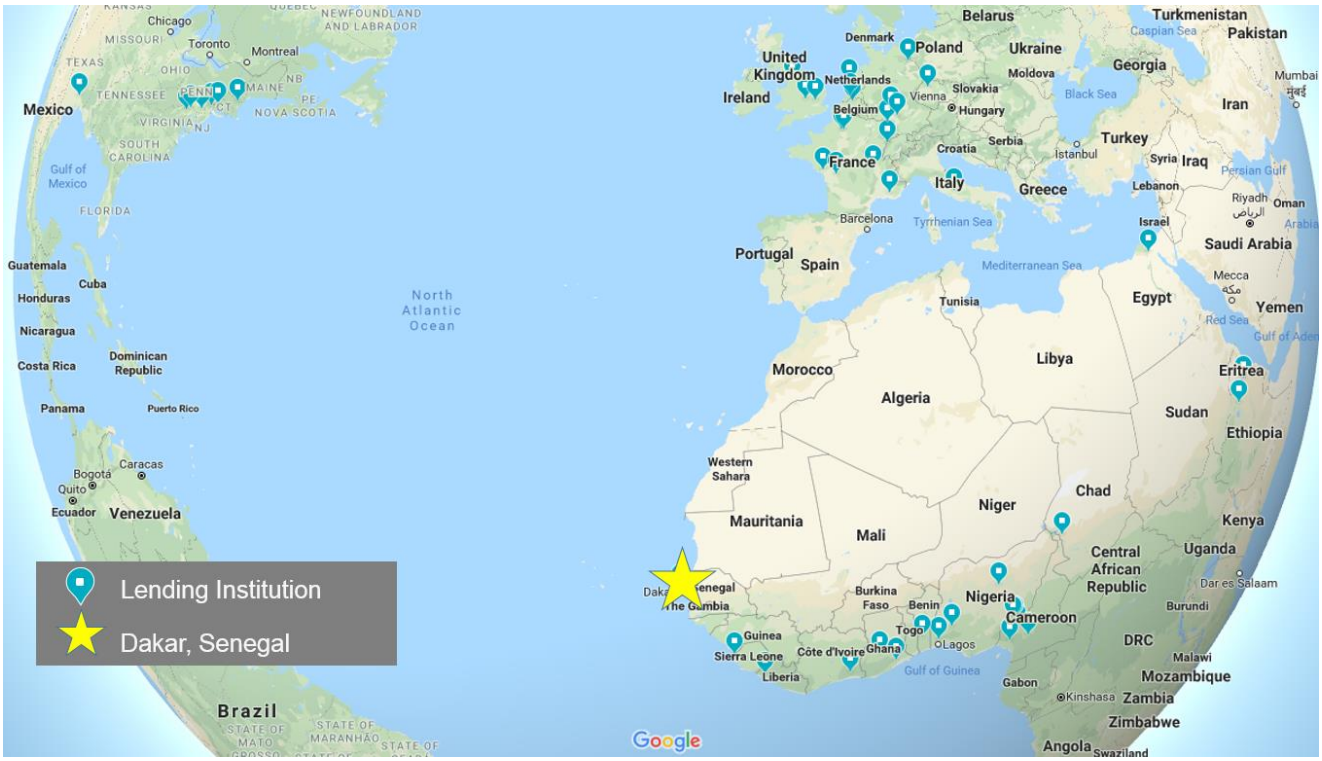


Figure 2.2. Origins of objects loaned to *L'Art Nègre*.

Illustration by author, using Google Maps.

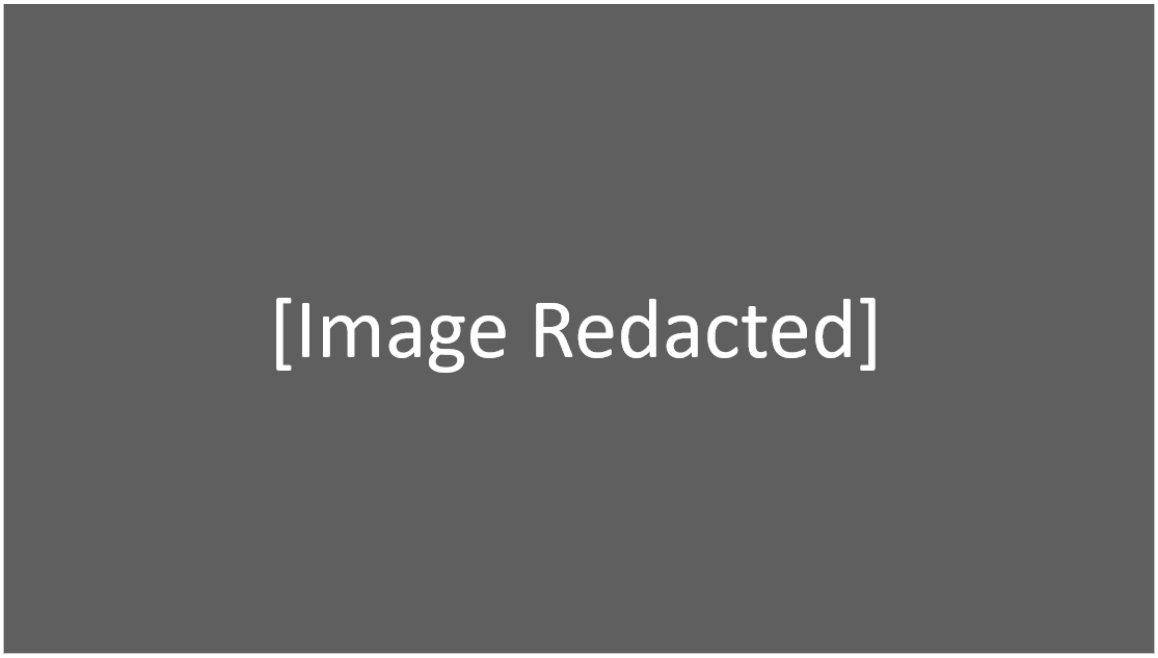


Figure 2.3. Exterior of the *Musée Dynamique* in Dakar, Senegal. Photo credited to "N'Diawar."

Source: Page 33, *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres: Dakar, 1/24 Avril 1966 (Livre d'Or).*

Figure 2.4. Entrance to the *Musée Dynamique*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

Figure 2.5. Wall text upon entry to *L'Art Nègre*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

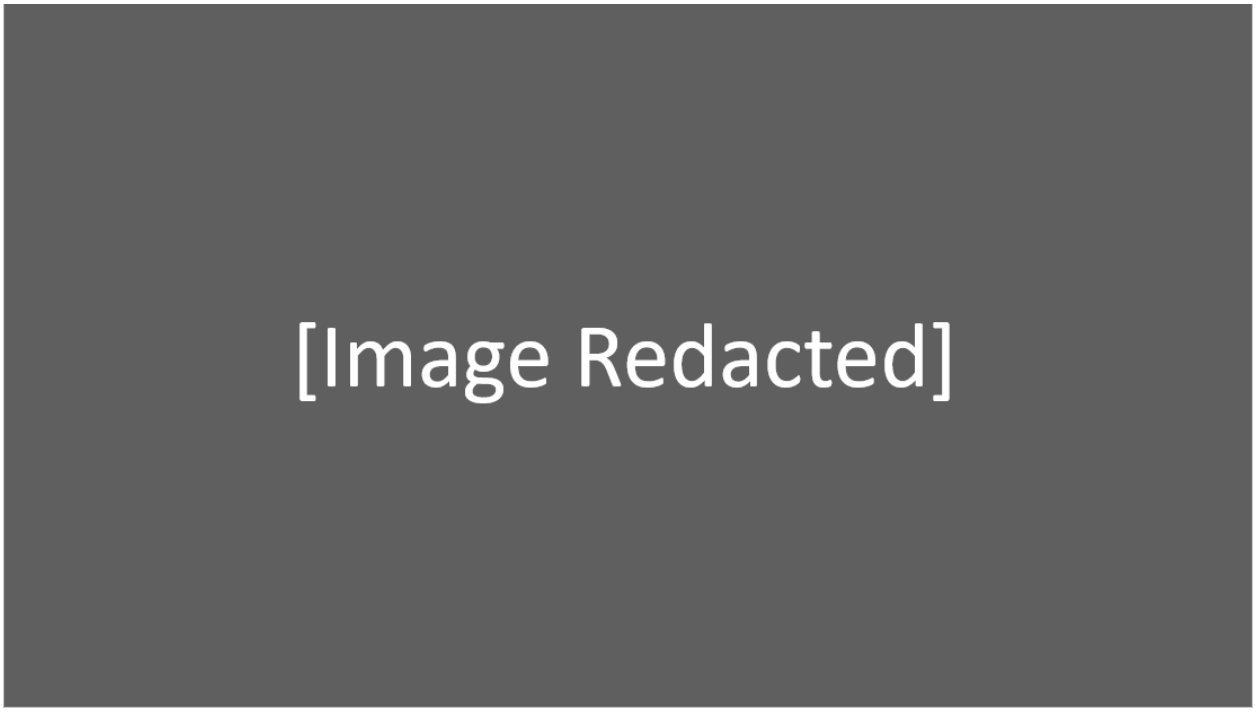
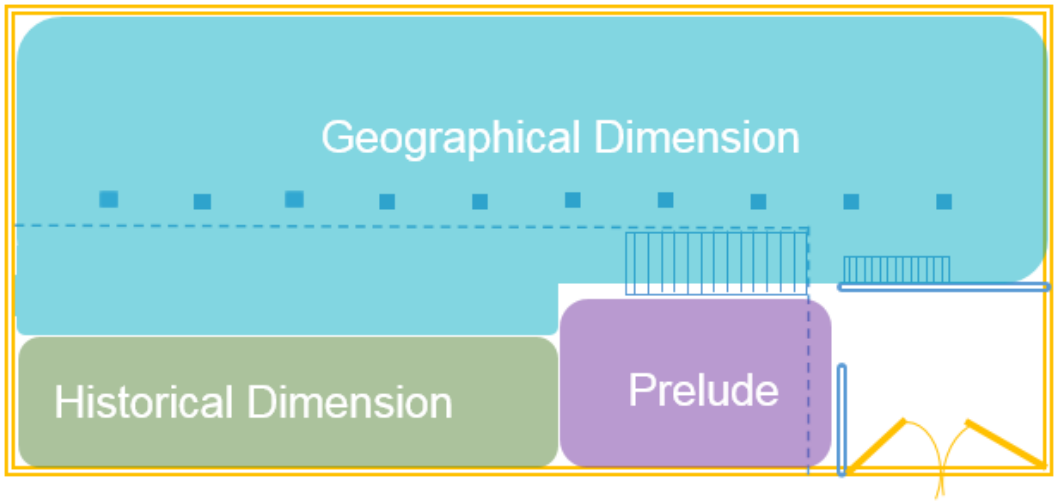
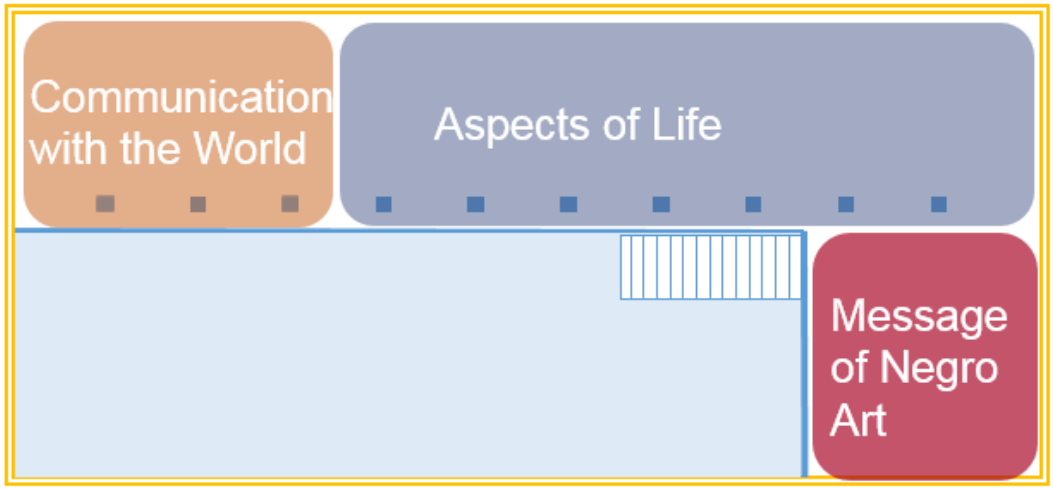


Figure 2.6. *L'Art Nègre* at the *Musée Dynamique.*

Source: PANAFEST Archives, Collection Roland Kaehr in David Murphy and Cedric Vincent, "Inside Dakar's *Musée Dynamique*: Reflections on Culture and the State in Postcolonial Senegal." *World Art* 9.1



Ground Floor. Floorplan, Musée Dynamique



Mezzanine. Floorplan, Musée Dynamique

Figure 2.7. Approximation of the thematic organization of *l'Art Nègre*.

Illustration by author, based on photographic documentation of the exhibition.

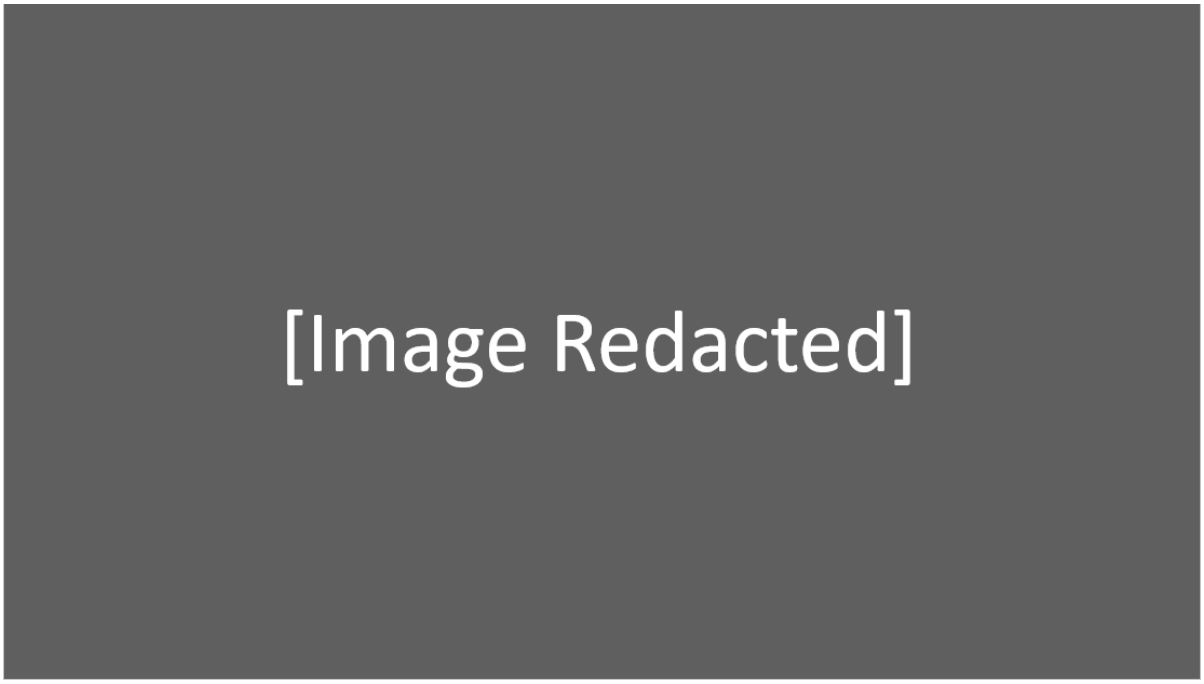


Figure 2.8. *African Negro Art* (1935) at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

Source: Website, Museum of Modern Art:
<https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/2937/installation_images/12422>

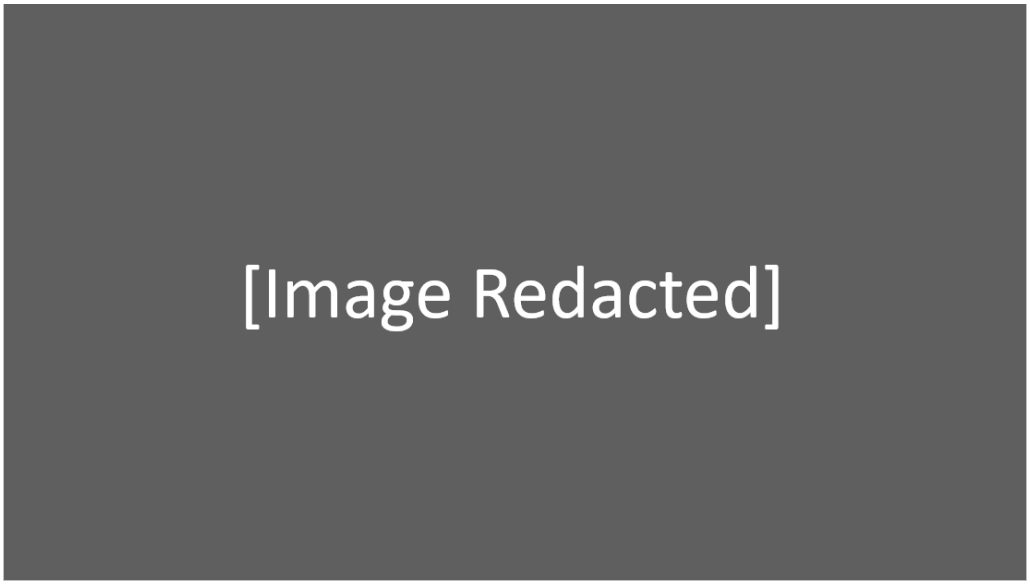


Figure 2.9. Installation view, *Masterpieces of African Art* (1954-1955) at the Brooklyn Museum.

Source: Website, Brooklyn Museum of Art:
<https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/exhibitions/875>

Figure 2.10. Installation view of *l'Art Nègre*, demonstrating the relative scale of African objects and Bracher's photographs. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

Figure 2.11. Overlapping objects on display in *L'Art Nègre*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

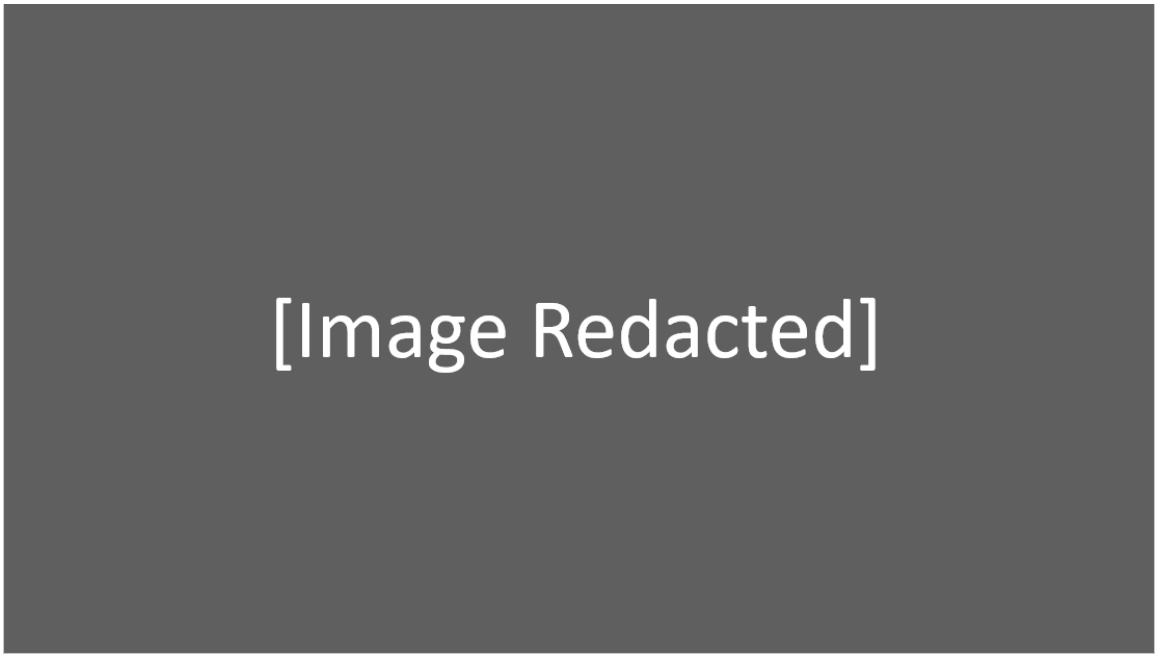


Figure 2.12. Interior view of *L'Art Nègre*, showing two types of vitrines.

Source: Film by Sergio Borelli, *Il Festival di Dakar* (1966) available at https://vimeo.com/135843095

Figure 2.13. *African Negro Art* (1935) at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

Source: Website, Museum of Modern Art:
<https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/2937/installation_images/12429>

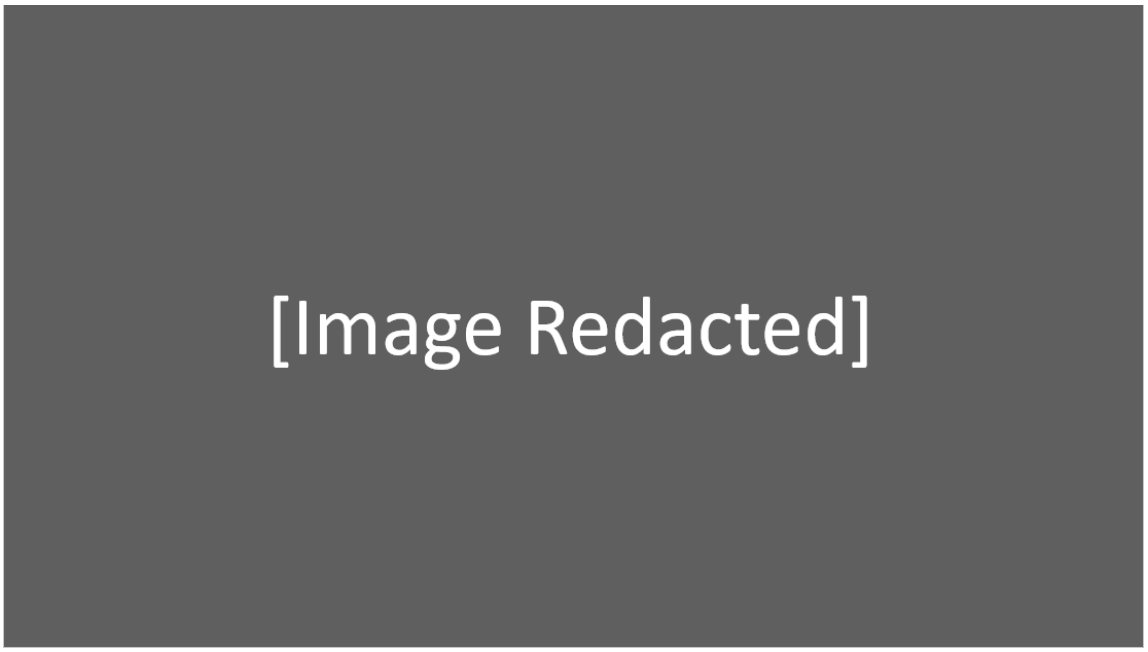


Figure 2.14. Langston Hughes and woman (possibly Marpessa Dawn) examine a manuscript in a tabletop vitrine labeled "Ethiopia" in the exhibition *l'Art Nègre*.

Source: William Greaves *First World Festival of Negro Arts* (1966), available at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0d572P8U3I >

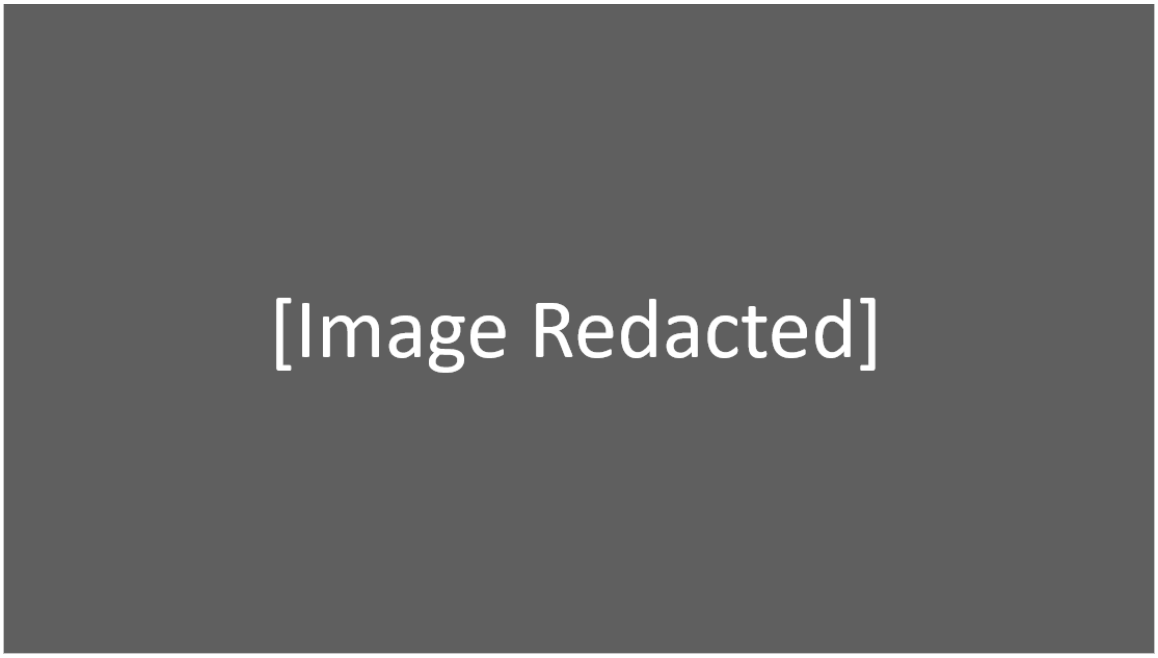


Figure 2.15. Plans for vitrines (1965) by architects Chesneau and Verola.

Contrast and sharpness edited for clarity by author.

Source: Page 46 in Bernard Knodel, *Le Musée Réinventé* (2018)

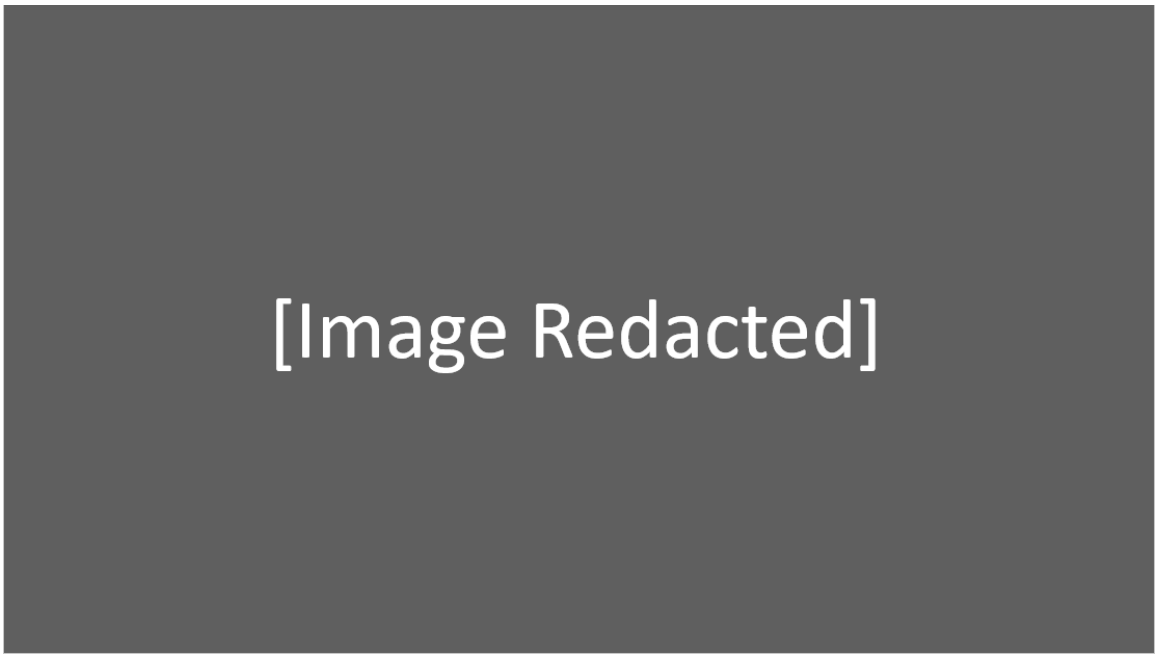


Figure 2.16. Installation view, *Arts Précolombiens* (1972) at the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel.* Gabus's use of facial portraits is highlighted.

Source: Page 235 in Jean Gabus, *L'Objet-Temoin* (1975)

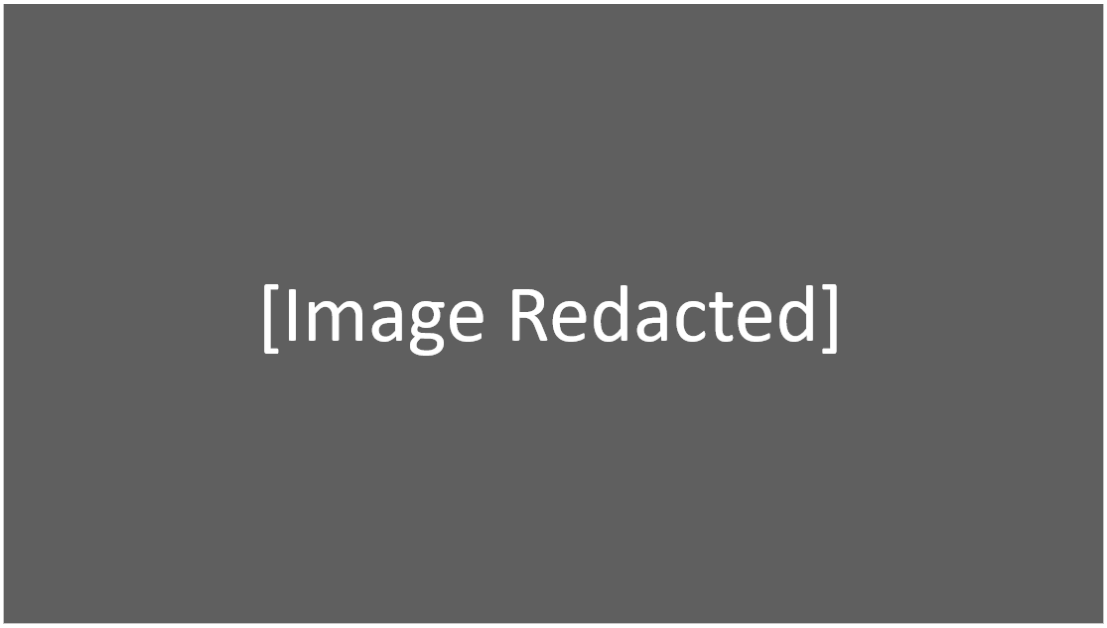


Figure 2.17. Morphology of African Sculpture as drawn by Jean Gabus.

Source: Pages 30-31 in Jean Gabus, *L'Objet-Temoin* (1975)

Figure 2.18. Left: "Preamble" section of *L'Art Nègre*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966. Right: said Baga headdress photographed by the Metropolitan Museum of Art

19th-20th century, pigment on wood

H. 68 1/2 x W. 6 5/8 x D. 17 in.

Sources:

Left: Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

Right: The Metropolitan Museum of Art 1978.412.339. Available online at: <https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1978.412.339/>

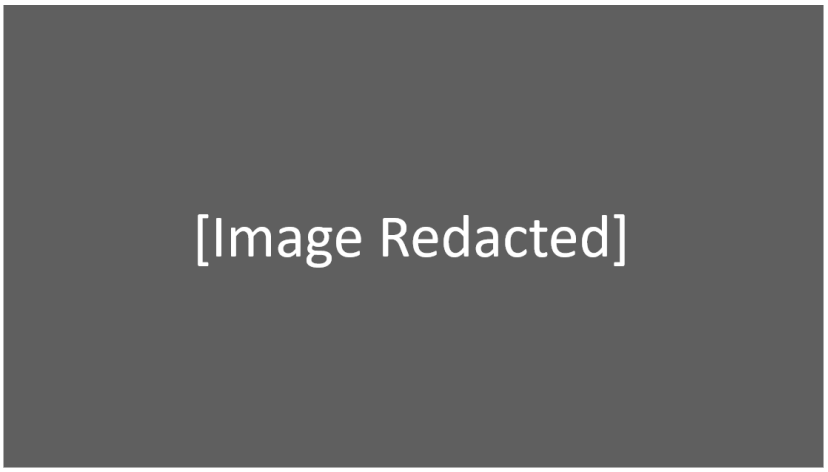


Figure 2.19. Ibo ancestral sculpture loaned by the state of Nigeria, exhibited in "Preamble" section of *L'Art Nègre*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

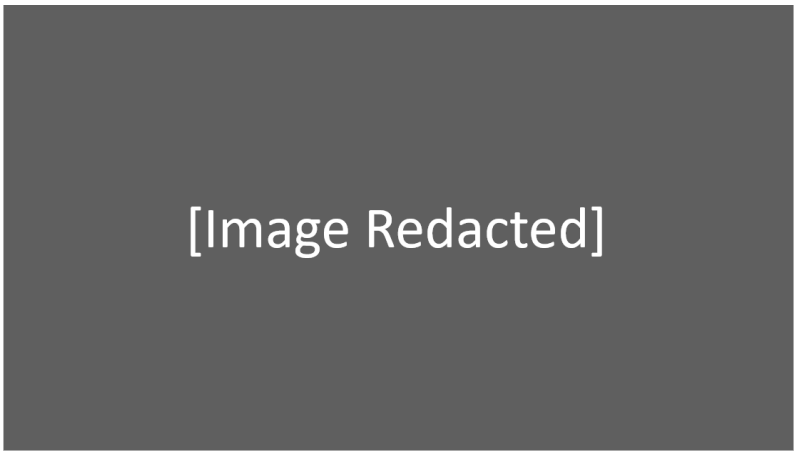


Figure 2.20. Small objects exhibited in the "Preamble" of *L'Art Nègre*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

Figure 2.21. Cameroonian objects on Mezzanine level of the *Musée Dynamique*.

Source: Irina Venzher and Leonid Makhnatch, *African Rhythms* (1966). Accessed at the *Musée du Quai Branly*, courtesy of Sarah Frioux-Salgas.

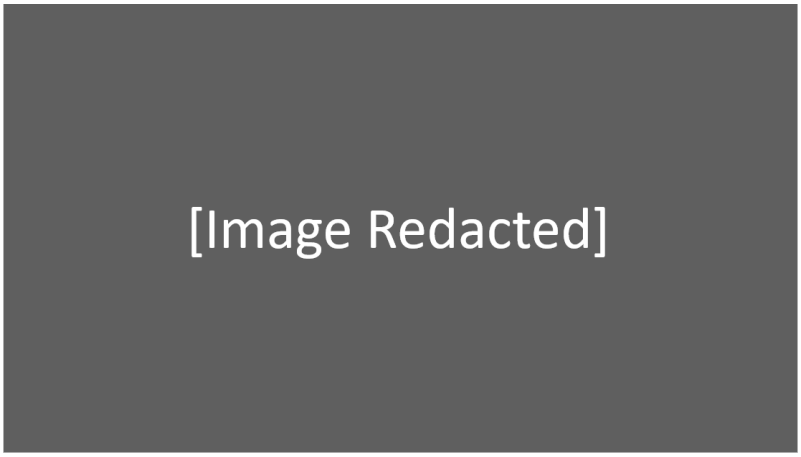


Figure 2.22. Vitrine labeled “Le Message de l’Art Nègre” (The Message of African Art) in *l’Art Nègre*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d’Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder “Dakar Brachar.”

Figure 2.23. Vitrine labeled *Les Aspets de la Vie* (Aspects of Life) in *l’Art Nègre*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d’Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder “Dakar Brachar.”

Figure 2.24. Bamileke thrones and elephant masks in *l'Art Nègre*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

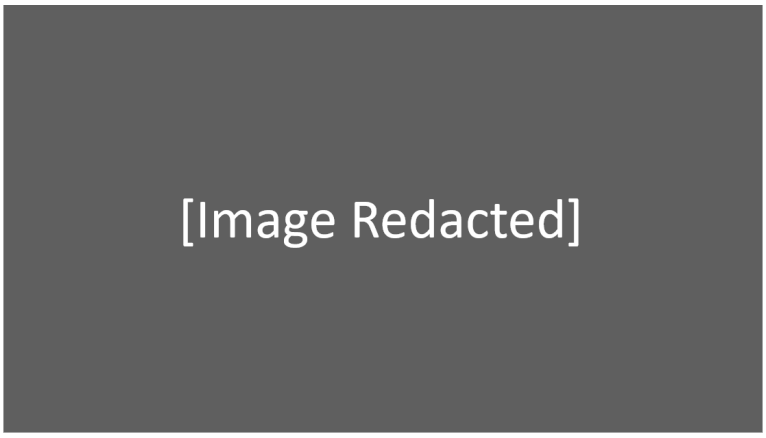


Figure 2.25. Objects from the Cameroon grasslands in *l'Art Nègre*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

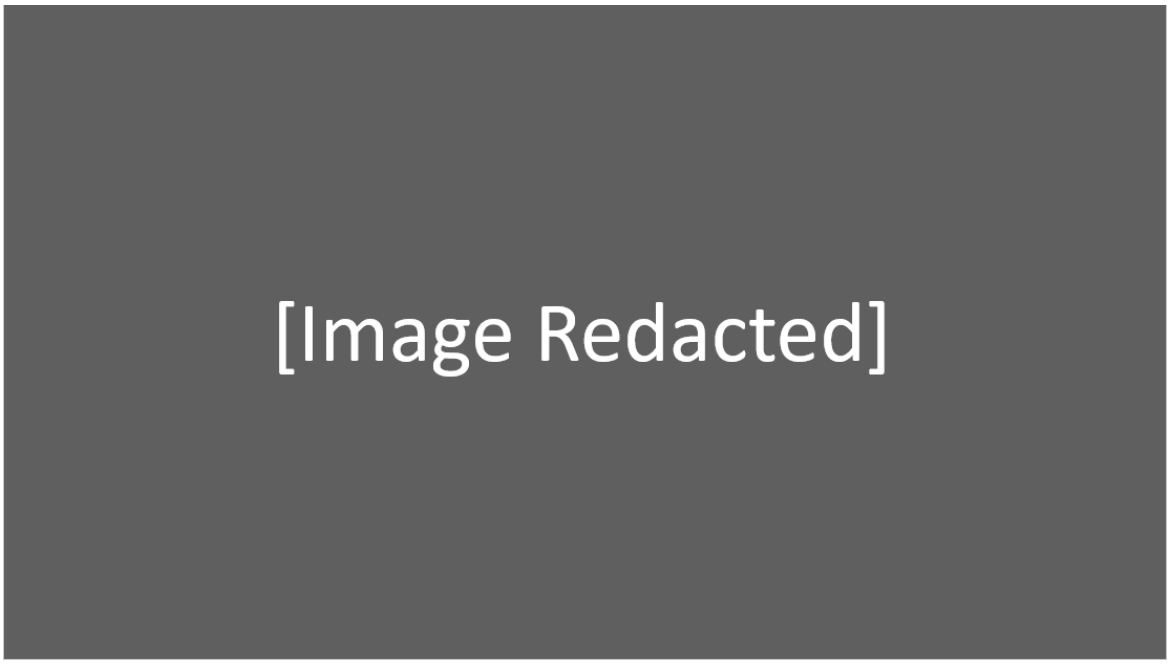


Figure 2.26. Untitled photograph by Tony Saulnier for *Paris Match*, May 1966.

Source: Michel Gall (May 1966) *"l'Art Nègre"* in *Paris Match.*

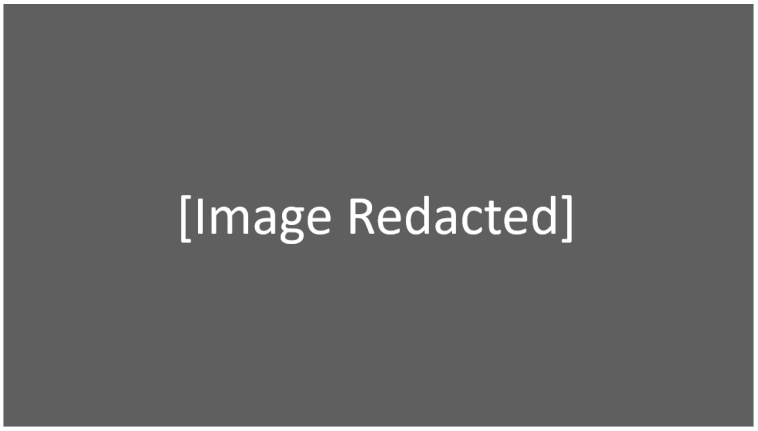


Figure 2.27. Bronzes from the Kingdom of Benin in the "Historical Dimension" section of *L'Art Nègre.* Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

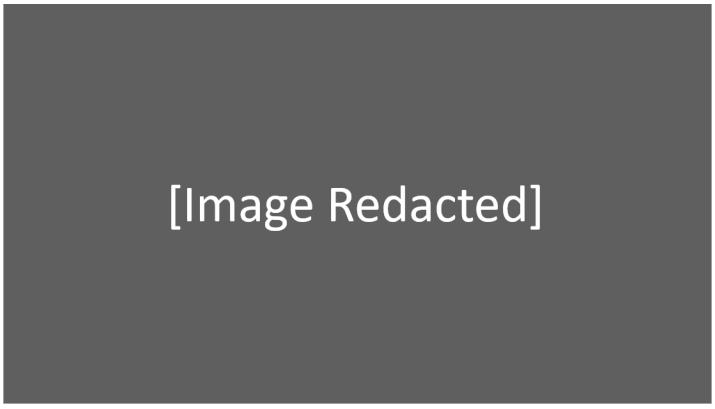


Figure 2.28. Second view, bronzes from the Kingdom of Benin in the "Historical Dimension" section of *L'Art Nègre*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

Figure 2.29. Bronze cavalier, *British Museum* (Af1903,0718.1) Date unknown, acquired 1903.

Height: 59 cm.

Source: Website of the British Museum, <https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=621636&partId=1&museumno=Af1903%2C0718.1&page=17>

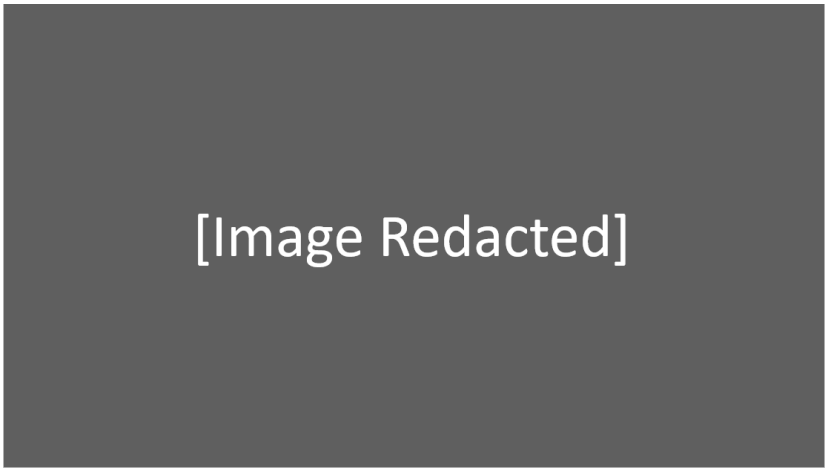


Figure 2.30. Cavalier sculpture in bronze, listed as number 49 in the *l'Art Negre* catalogue.

There, it is listed as being 46 centimeters in height and dating from the mid-sixteenth century, on loan from "Nigerian Museums."

Source: Number 49 in the *l'Art Negre* catalogue.

Figure 2.31. Bronze figural sculpture, Kingdom of Benin, Date Unknown (acquired 1949), from the British Museum collection (Af1949,46.157).

This is likely the figural sculpture that appeared in the discussed vitrine, given that the height provided by the catalogue of *l'Art Nègre* (63.5 cm) and in the British Museum's online catalogue (64 cm) approximately correspond.

Source: Website of the British Museum, <https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?assetId=497639001&objectId=617334&partId=1>

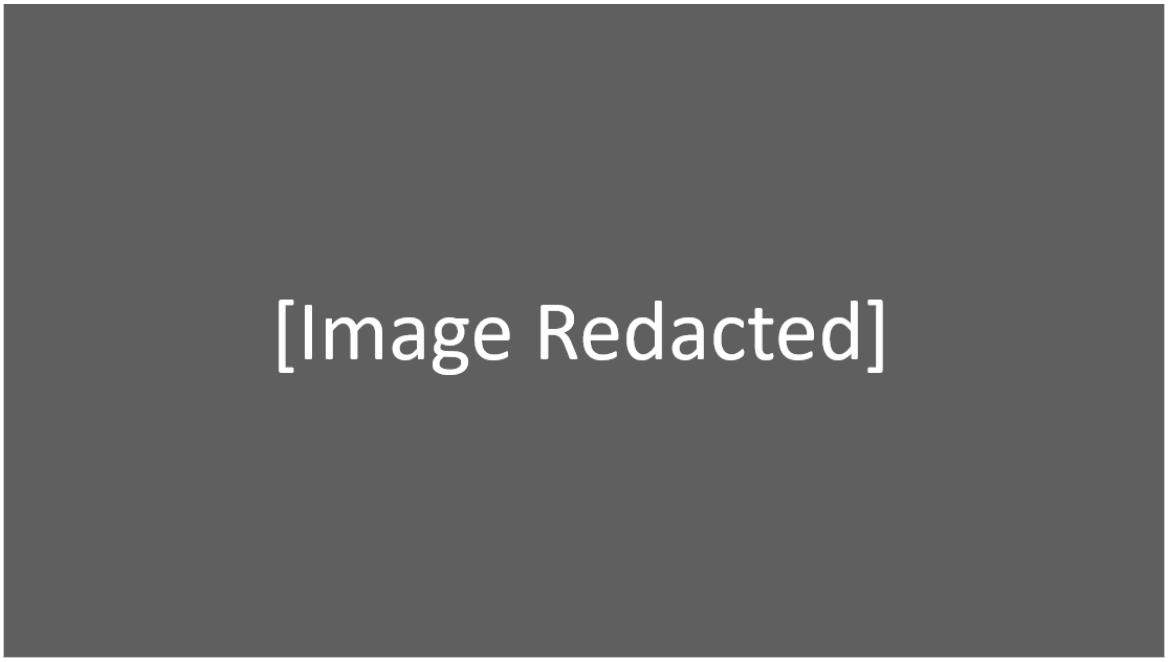


Figure 2.32. Pablo Ruiz Picasso (1907). Titled *Tête de femme, dite aussi une demoiselle d'Avignon* in *l'Art Nègre* (1966) / titled *Buste de femme* at the *Centre Pompidou*, where it is now owned.

Oil on Canvas, 65 cm x 58 cm (per *l'Art Nègre* catalogue) or 66 cm x 59 cm (per *Centre Pompidou* website.)

Source: The *Centre Pompidou*, AM 4320 P. Available online at <https://www.centrepompidou.fr/id/cAbnGky/ryX8GrE/en>

Figure 2.33. "Afro-Portuguese" objects from Central Africa in the "Communication with the World" section of *l'Art Nègre*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

Figure 2.34. Objects from the United Arab Republic in the "Communication with the World" section of *l'Art Nègre*. Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1966.

Accessed in the archives of the *Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel*: folder "Dakar Brachar."

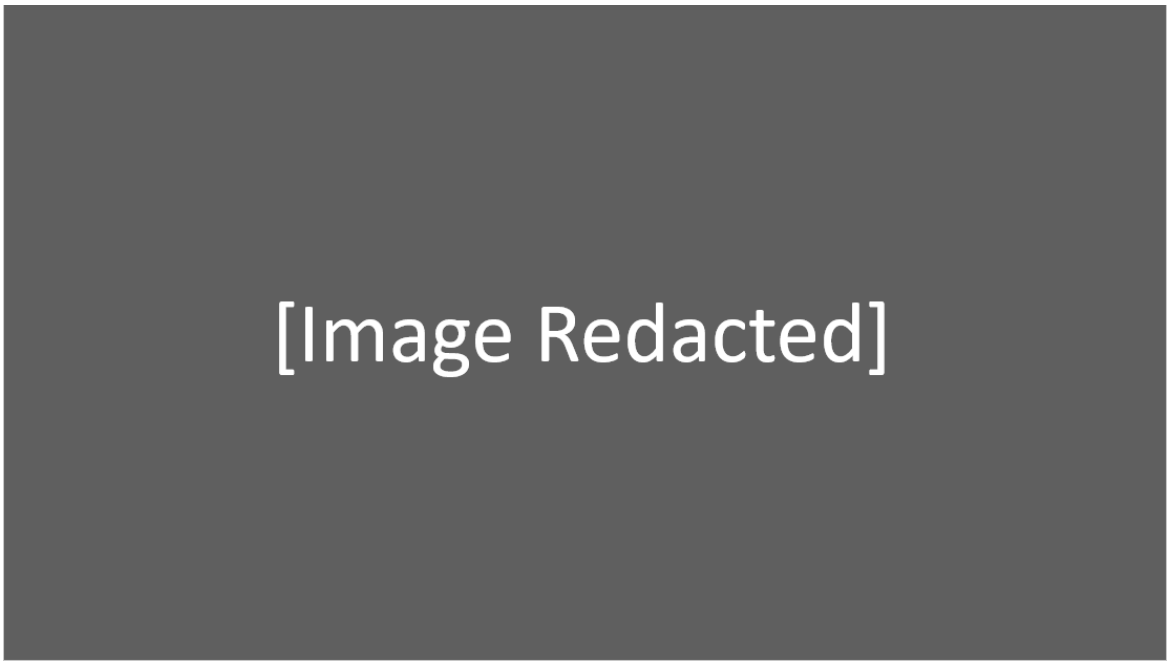


Figure 2.35. "Communication with the World" section of *l'Art Nègre*. On the rear wall, a Guli Mask is juxtaposed with the tapestry *The Creation of the World* (designed 1923, created 1964) by Fernand Léger. Photographer unknown.

Source: *Construire*, June 1, 1966.

Figure 2.36. Installation of *La Création du Monde* (designed 1923, created 1964) by Fernand Léger in *l'Art Nègre*. Photographer unknown.

Source: Page 99 in *Ebony* (July 1966)

Figure 2.37. Fernand Léger, *The Creation of the World* (designed 1923, created 1964).

Wool. 283 x 388 Cm.

Source: Bilbao Fine Arts Museum, Inv. No 82/2353.

Figure 2.38. Jean Atlan, *La Kahena* (1958)

Oil on canvas; 146 x 89 cm.

Source: Collection of the *Centre Pompidou*, AM 3607 P. Available online at: <https://www.centrepompidou.fr/cpv/resource/cX44j4n/rpgybb6>

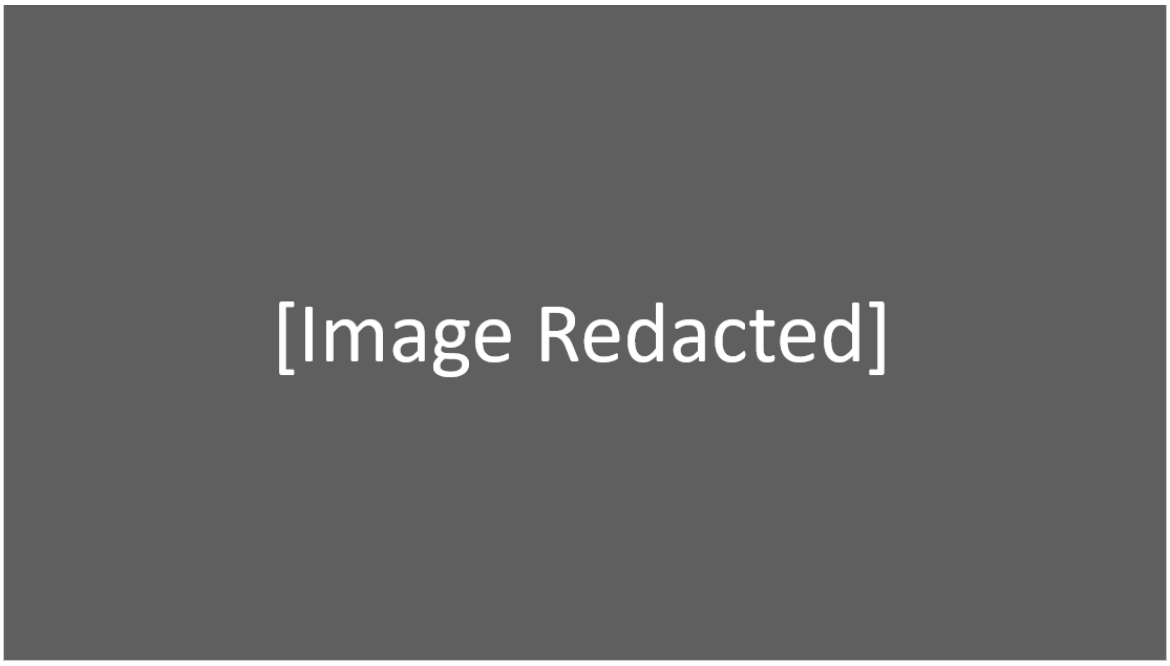


Figure 2.39. Senghor speaks with tapestry in background.

Source: Irina Venzher and Leonid Makhnatch, *African Rhythms* (1966). Accessed at the *Musée du Quai Branly*, courtesy of Sarah Frioux-Salgas.

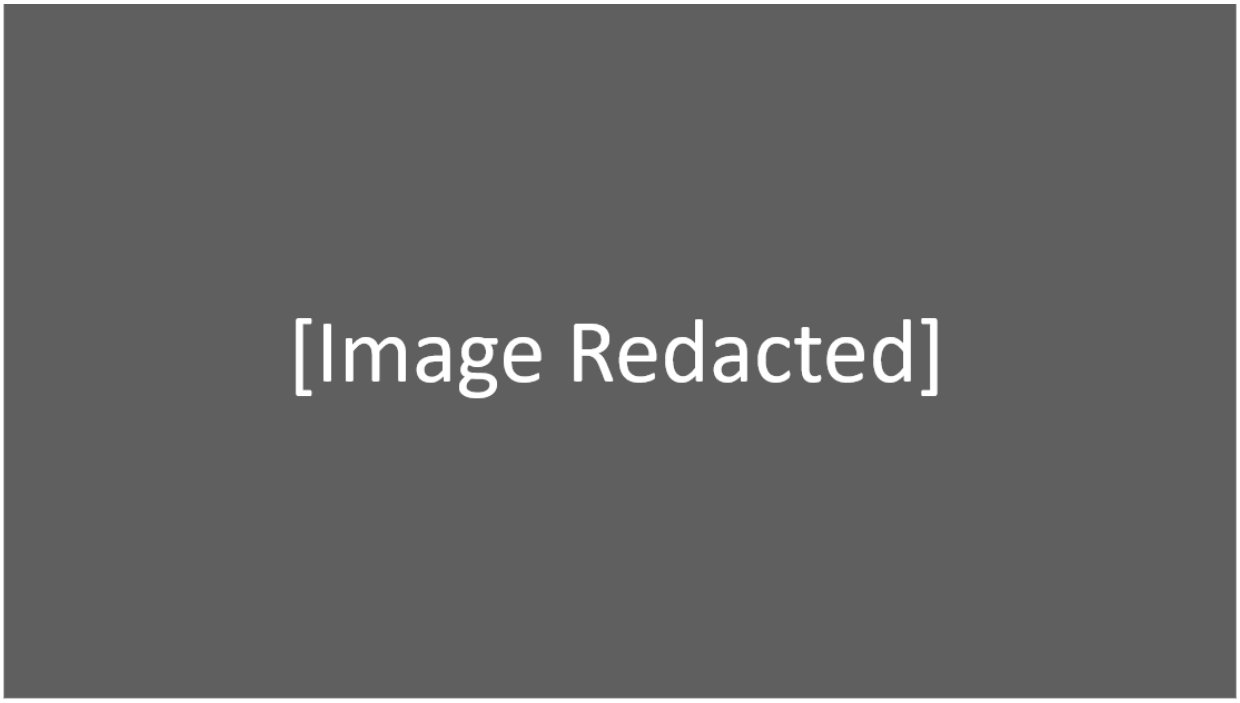


Figure 3.1. Exterior, *Palais de Justice*. (1966) Photographer Unknown.

Source: Image courtesy of Panafest Archive Collection, Paris; reproduced in Vincent (2017): 101.

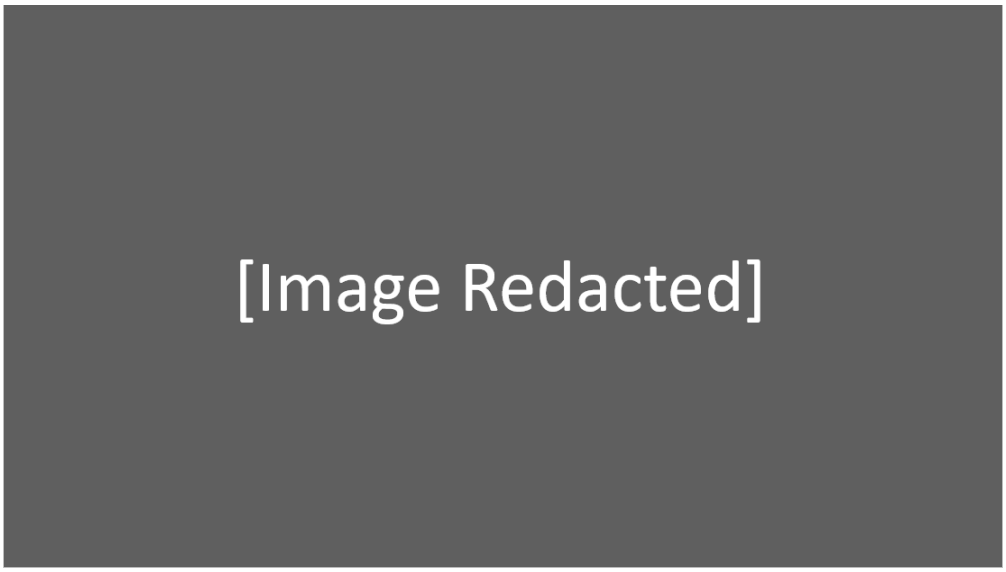


Figure 3.2. *Le Panthère* (The Panther) by Christian Lattier, shown in foreground of *Tendances et Confrontations* (1966). Photographer unknown.

Source: Image courtesy of Panafest Archive Collection, Paris; reproduced in Vincent (2017): 91.

Figure 3.3. Agustín Cardenas with work, *Ombre après Minuit* (1963). Photographer unknown.

Bronze; 95 7/10” x 30 3/10” x 8 ½”

Source: Website of the artist, <http://www.agustincardenasofficial.com/>

Figure 3.4. Guido Llinàs, *White, Blue and Red* (1962).

Oil on canvas. 22 ¾” x 31 ½”

Source: Website of the gallery Cernuda Arte, <http://www.cernudaarte.com/artists/guido-llinas/>

Figure 3.5. Floorplan of the *Palais de Justice*, showing the central courtyard and the arrangement of panels installed for the hanging of works. Undated, draftsman unknown. Photograph by author.

Accessed in the National Archives of Senegal, *Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*, folder 19.

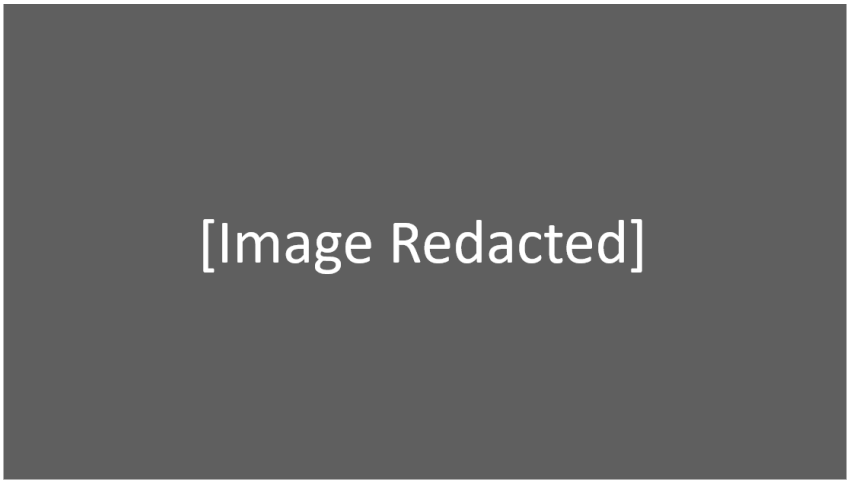


Figure 3.6. Placide Mpane, *Jeune Congolaise* (1964). Photographer unknown.

This example of a photographs of works sent to Senegalese organizers was submitted on behalf of Congo-Léopoldville.

Wood, height of 25 cm.

Accessed in the National Archives of Senegal, *Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*, folder 19.

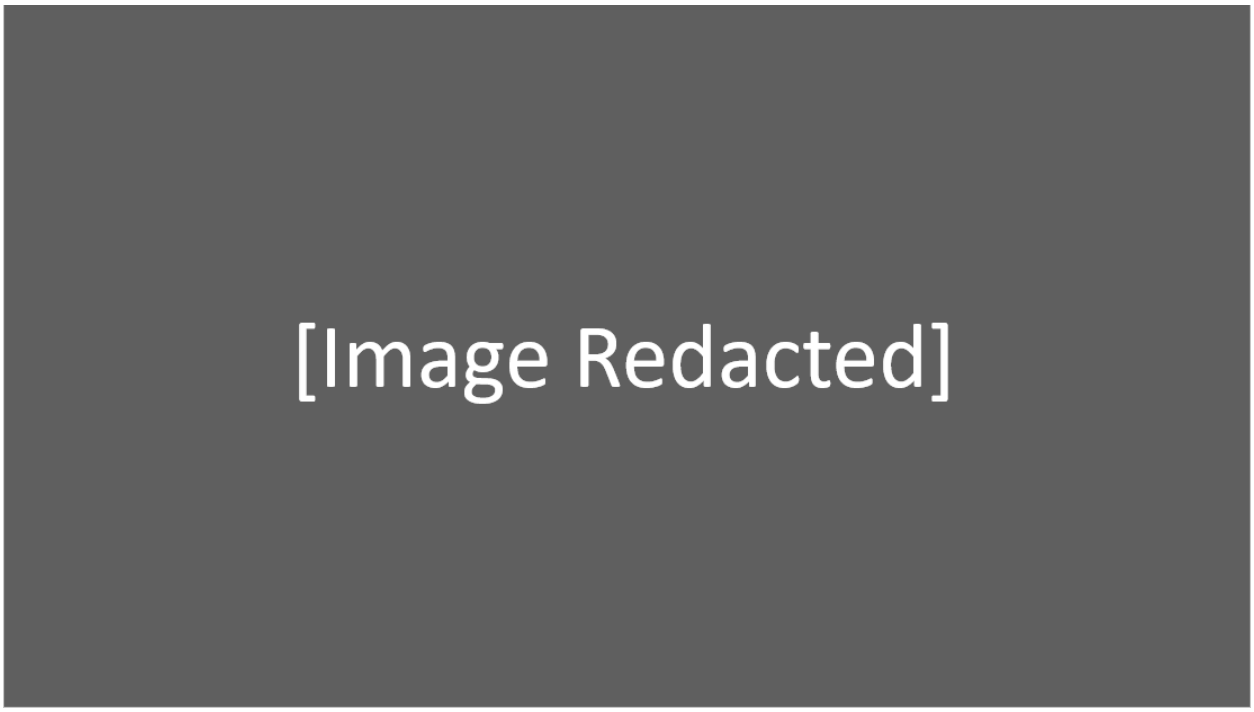


Figure 3.7. Works from the United States of America exhibited in *Tendances et Confrontations*.

Source: Smithsonian Institution Archives. Image # SIA2018-007035. Reproduced in Twa (2019): 20.

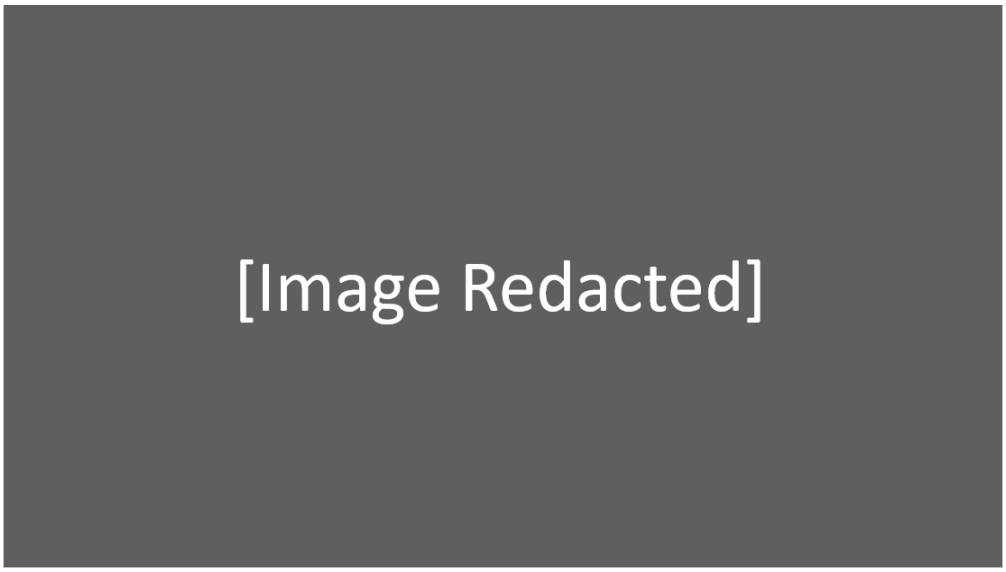


Figure 3.8. *Le Bélier* (The Ram) by Christian Lattier, shown in foreground of *Tendances et Confrontations* (1966). Photographer unknown.

Source: Image courtesy of Panafest Archive Collection, Paris; reproduced in Vincent (2017): 93.

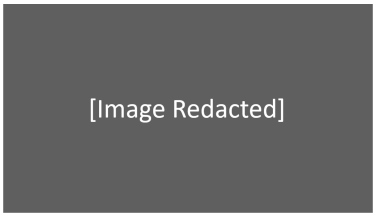


Figure 3.9. A sculpture, likely submitted by a Gabonese artist, in the courtyard of the *Palais de Justice*, revealing the building's opening in the roof. Photographer unknown.

Source: Page 99 in *Ebony* (July 1966)

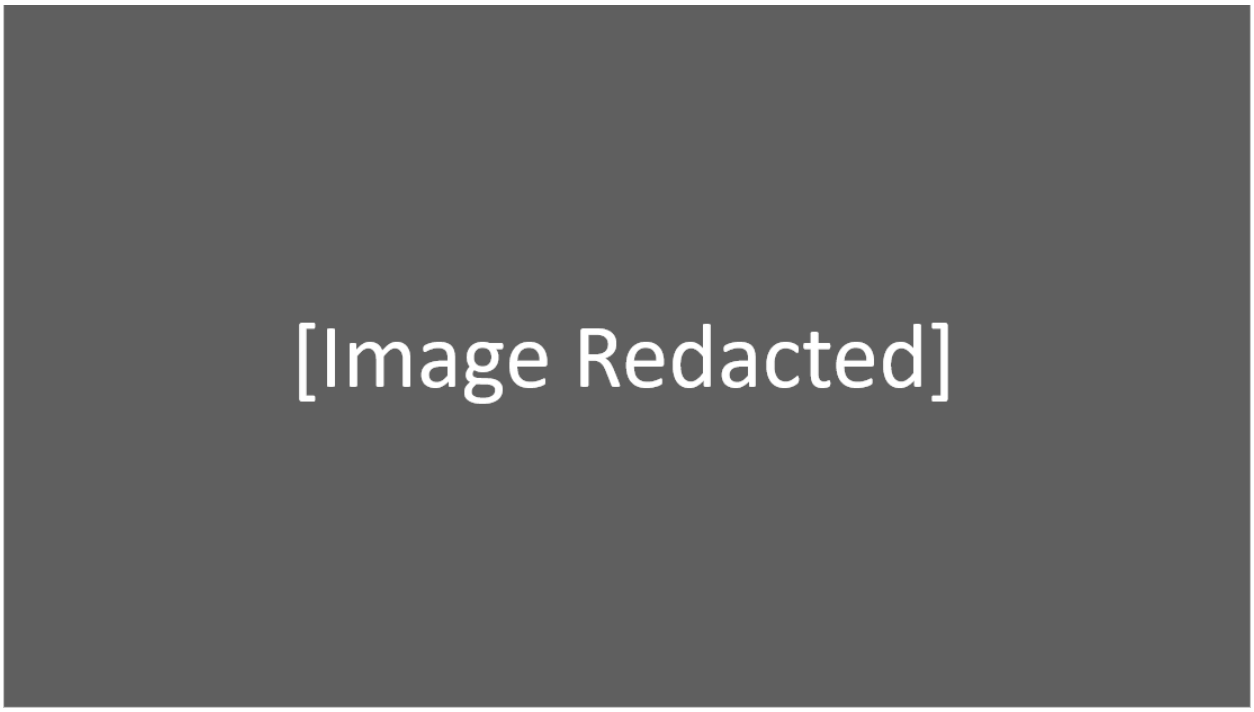


Figure 3.10. Installation view, sculptures by Agnoldo dos Santos (date unknown) with painting by Valentim Rubem (date unknown) in the Brazilian section of *Tendances et Confrontations* (1966).

Source: Film by William Greaves, *First World Festival of Negro Arts* (1966), available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0d572P8U3I>

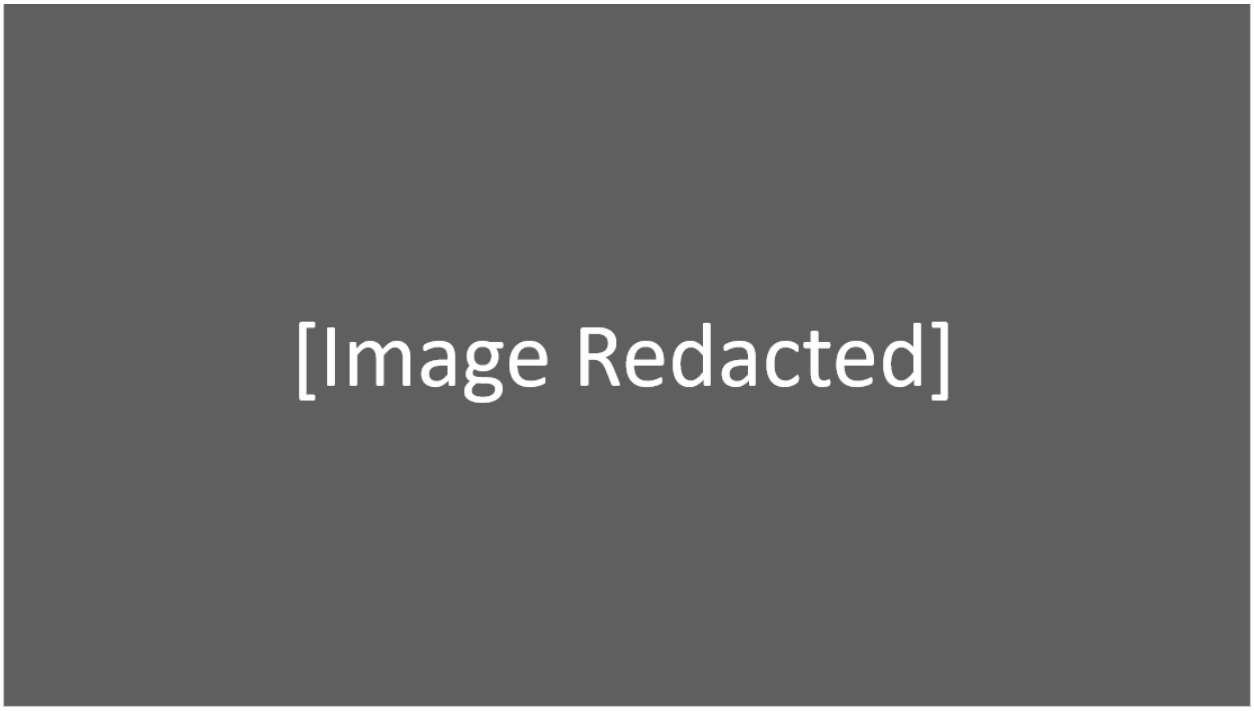


Figure 3.11. Installation view, Paintings by Heitor do Prazeres in the Brazilian section of *Tendances et Confrontations* (1966). Dates of works unknown.

Source: Film by William Greaves, *First World Festival of Negro Arts* (1966), available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0d572P8U3I>

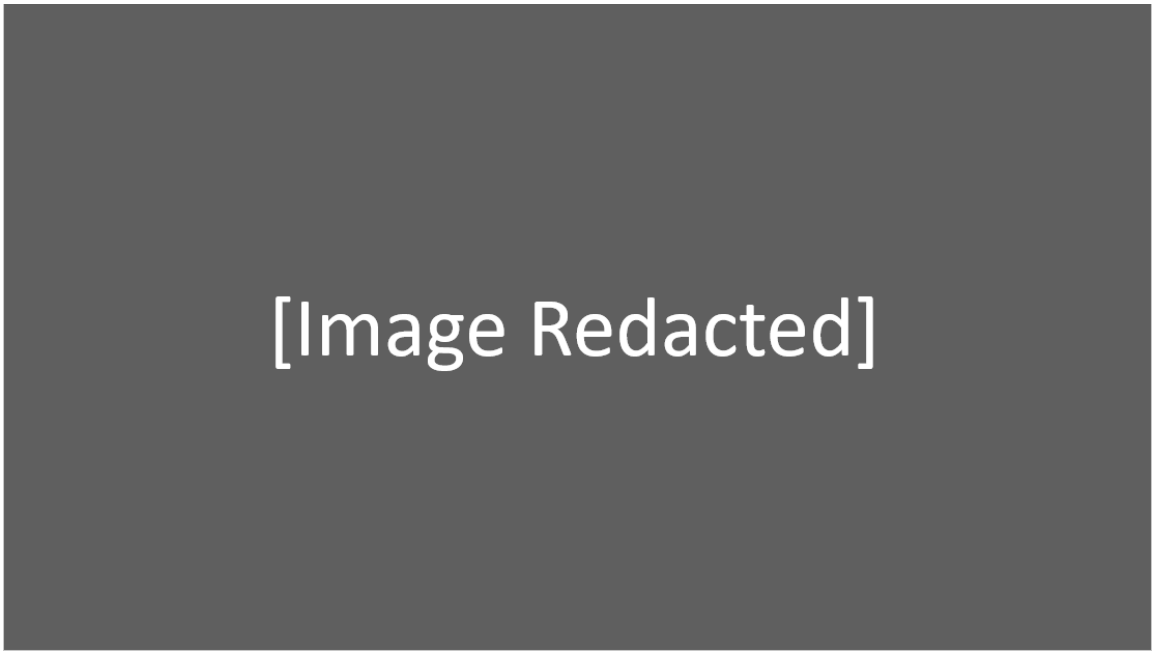


Figure 3.12. Crowd viewing works (dates known) by Rubem Valentim in *Tendances et Confrontations*. (1966)

Source: Valentim Artist File, Archive of the *Museu de Arte da Bahia*, Salvador. © Roberto Bicca de Alencastro. Reproduced in Dardashti (2019): 94.

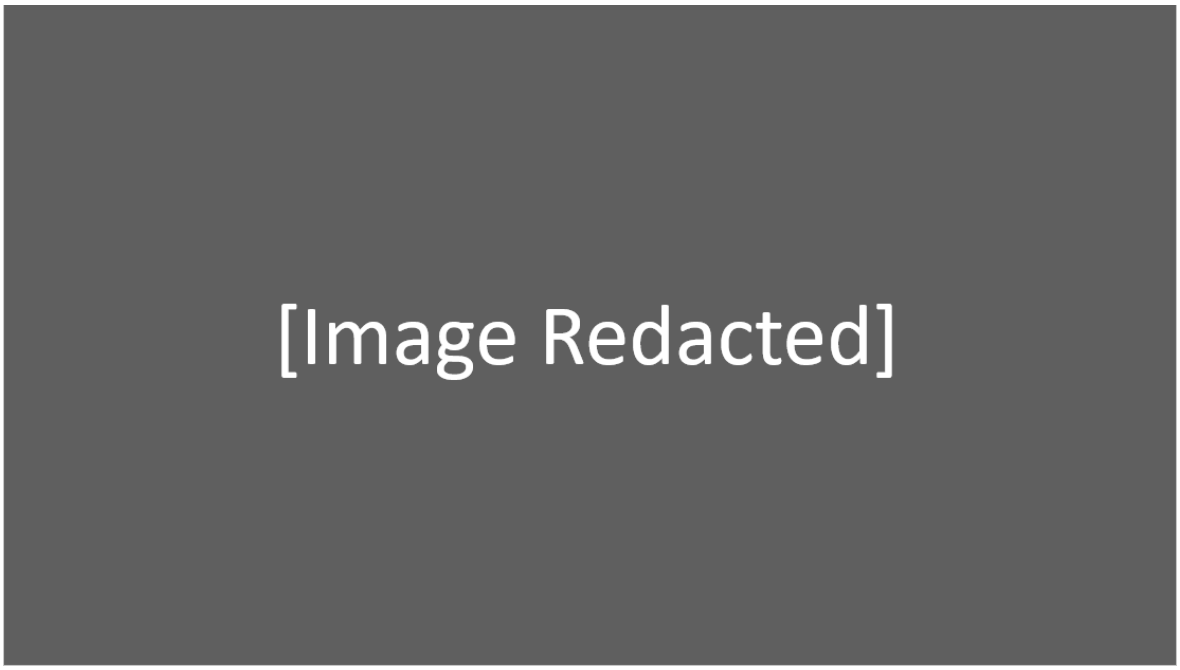


Figure 3.13. "President Senghor responds to our cameraman." Still from documentary film *African Rhythms* (1966) with subtitles courtesy of Sarah Frioux-Salgas.

Source: Irina Venzher and Leonid Makhnatch, *African Rhythms* (1966). Accessed at the *Musée du Quai Branly*, courtesy of Sarah Frioux-Salgas.

Figure 3.14. The illustrations created to accompany the title scenes of African Rhythms emphasized the modern architecture and pleasant climate of Senegal. Still from documentary film *African Rhythms* (1966) with subtitles courtesy of Sarah Frioux-Salgas.

Source: Irina Venzher and Leonid Makhnatch, *African Rhythms* (1966). Accessed at the *Musée du Quai Branly*, courtesy of Sarah Frioux-Salgas.

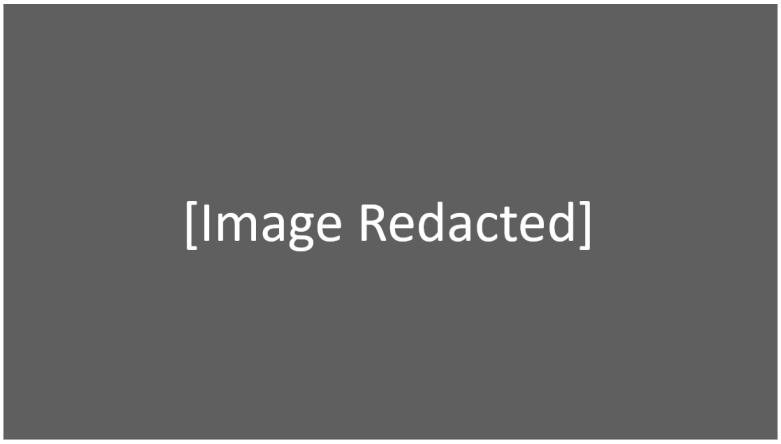


Figure 3.15. On the left, a still from the American film; on the right, a still from the Russian film.

Sources:

Left: William Greaves *First World Festival of Negro Arts* (1966), available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0d572P8U3I >

Right: Irina Venzher and Leonid Makhnatch, *African Rhythms* (1966). Accessed at the *Musée du Quai Branly*, courtesy of Sarah Frioux-Salgas.

Figure 3.16. The boat *Rossia*, sent from the U.S.S.R. to accommodate Festival visitors. Photographer unknown.

Source: Page 99 in *Ebony* (July 1966).

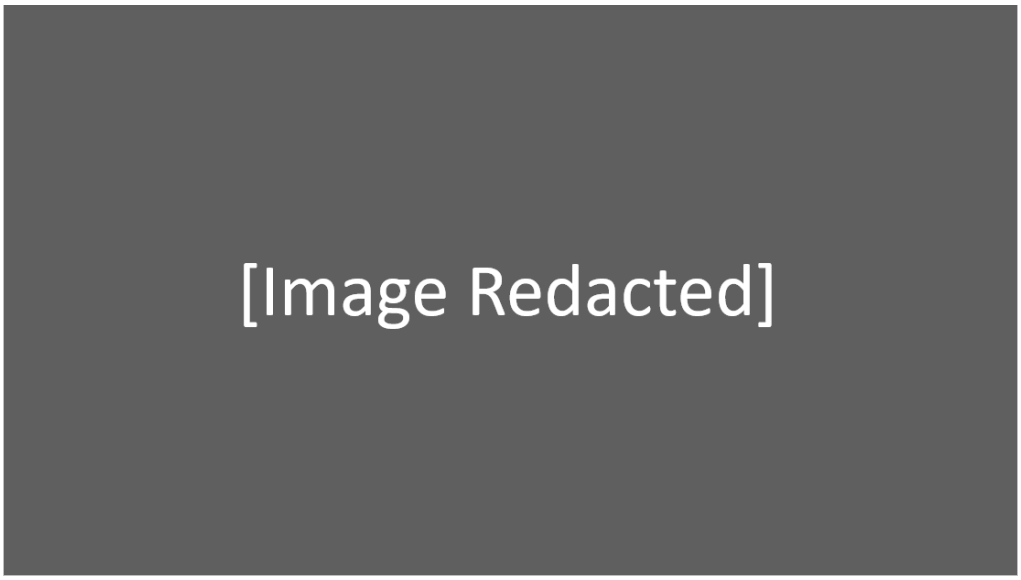


Figure 3.17. *Nouvelles Sovietique* (March 1966), a newsletter published by the Soviet embassy in Dakar.

Accessed in the National Archives of Senegal, *Fonds du Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*, folder 32.

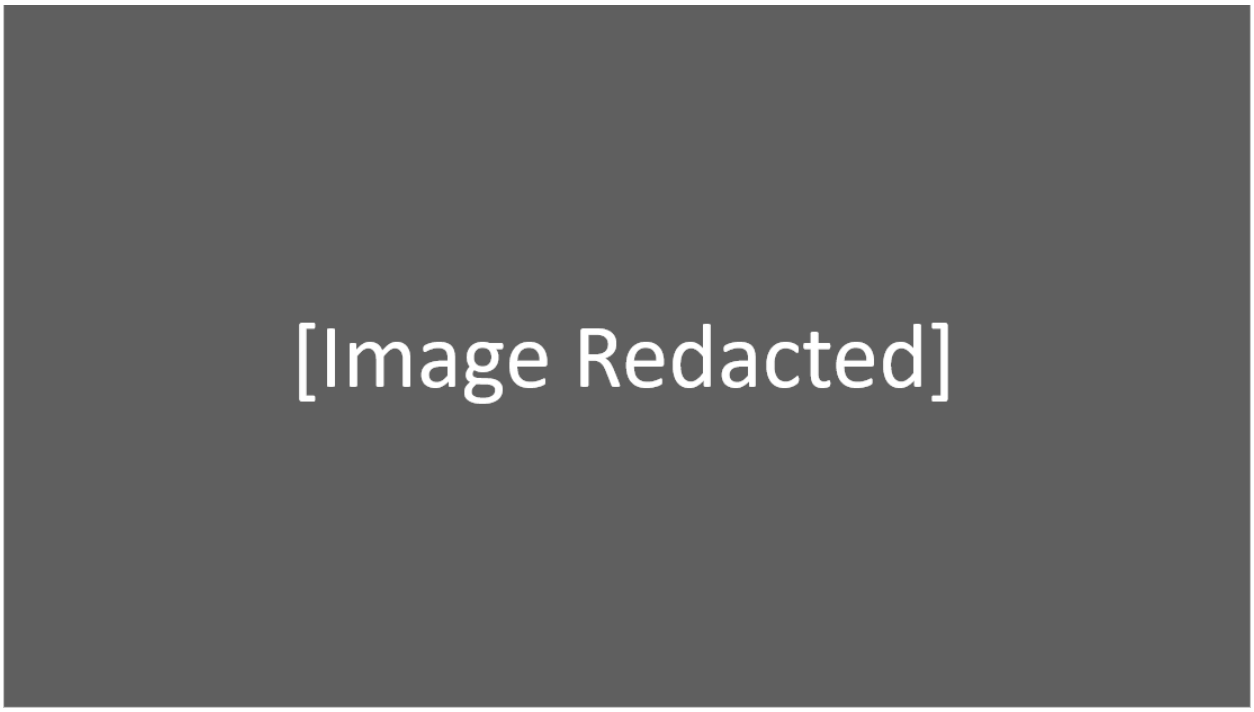


Figure 3.18. Installation view of the American section of *Tendances et Confrontations* (1966). On the left, *Birmingham Totem* (1964) by Charles White. (See also Figure 3.27)

Source: Page 99 in *Ebony* (July 1966).

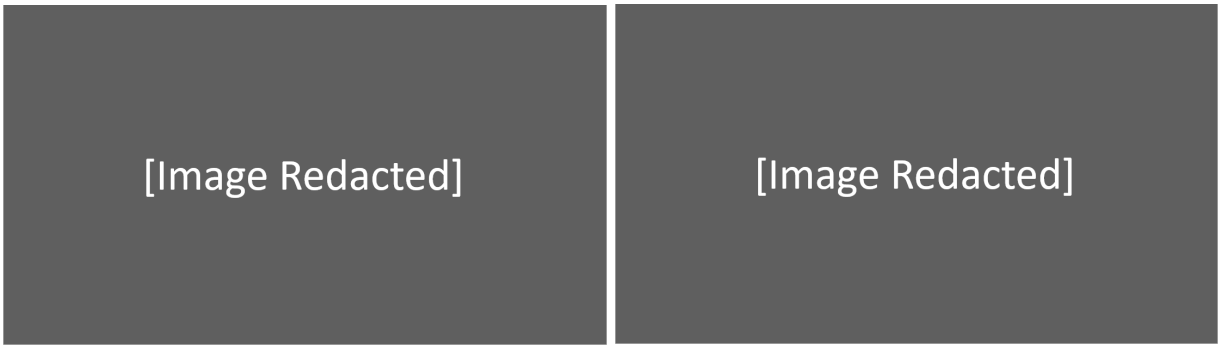


Figure 3.19. Left: Sam Gilliam, *Tempo* (1965)

Acrylic on canvas. 56” x 56”.

Source: *Dix Artistes Nègres des Etats-Unis: Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* (1966), Exh. Cat., Figure 6 (unpaginated)

Right: This may be a color image of the 1965 painting *Tempo* by Sam Gilliam, though it is undated and untitled in the (non-peer-reviewed) site where it appears online.

Source: <https://diattaart.wordpress.com/2013/07/25/artist-of-the-moment-sam-gilliam/>

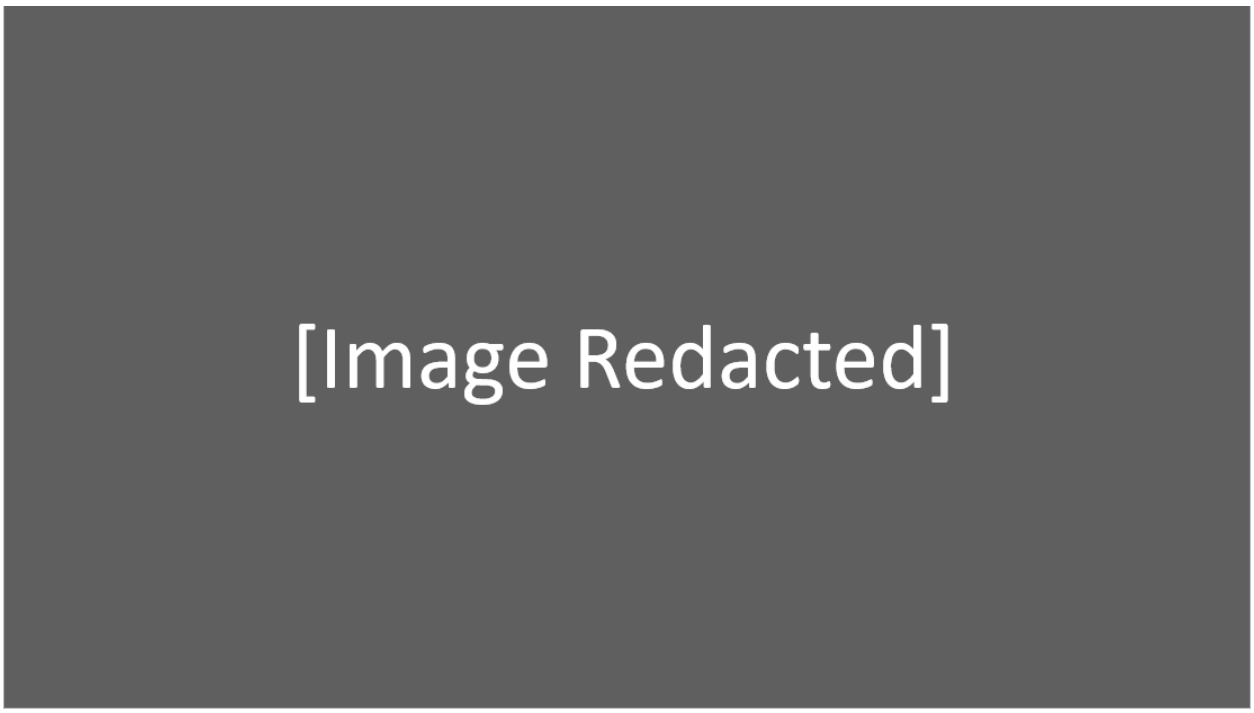


Figure 3.20. Barbara Chase, *Figure Volante* (1965).

Bronze, 7 ½” x 12” x 7”

Source: *Dix Artistes Nègres des Etats-Unis: Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* (1966), Exh. Cat., Figure 1 (unpaginated)

Figure 3.21. In the foreground, a sculpture by Richard Hunt: likely Minor Monument No. 5 (1964).

Welded steel, height of 61”

Source: Page 99 in *Ebony* (July 1966). Title and dimensions given in *Dix Artistes Nègres des Etats-Unis: Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* (1966), Exh. Cat., footnote 9 (unpaginated).

Figure 3.22. William Majors, *Ecclesiastes*, V 15. (1965)

Ink on paper, etching and aquatint. 9 15/16” x 13 3/4” (plate)

Source: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 66.13J

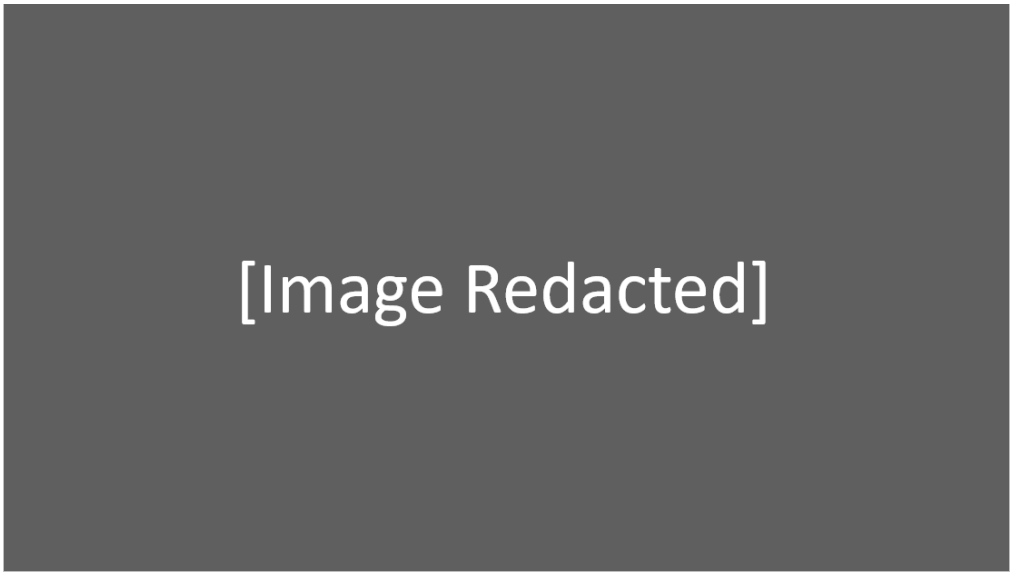


Figure 3.23. Todd Williams, *Coney Island* (1965)

Painted steel and iron, 62” x 23” x 20”

Source: Dix Artistes Nègres des Etats-Unis: Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres (1966), Exh. Cat., Figure 19 (unpaginated)

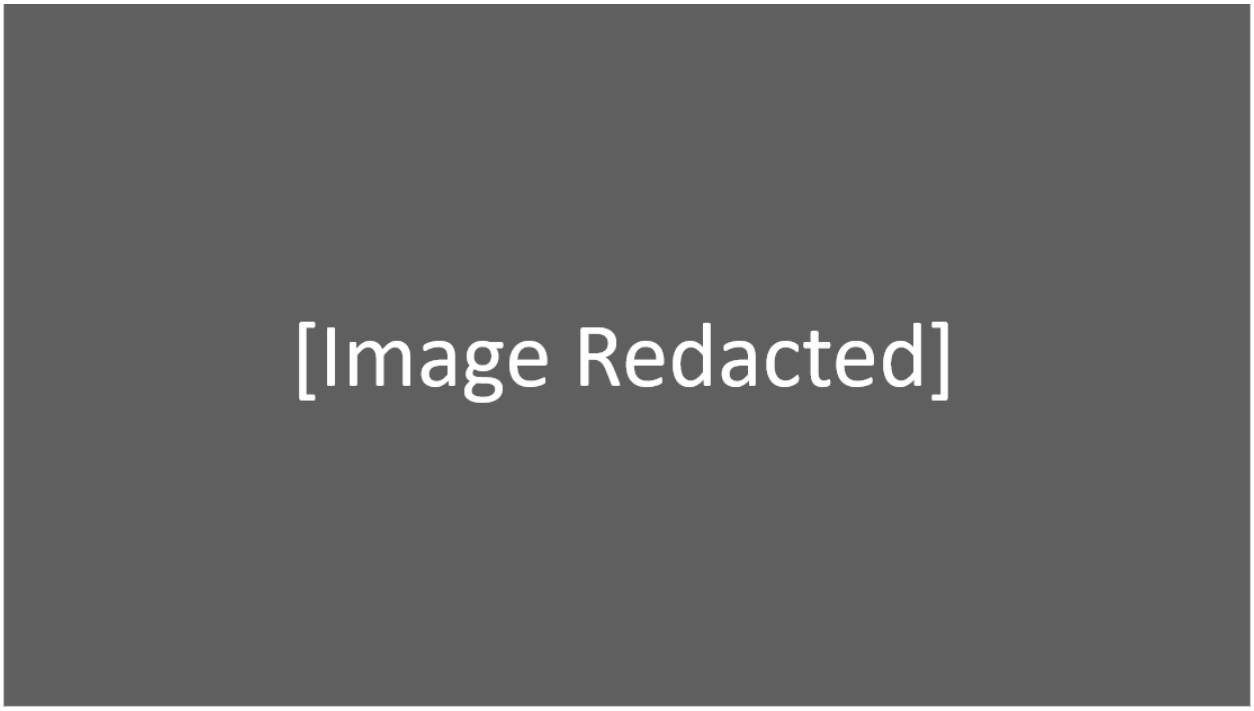


Figure 3.24. Robert Reid, *Agon II* (1964-1965)

Oil on canvas, 39.5” x 41”

Source: Dix Artistes Nègres des Etats-Unis: Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres (1966), Exh. Cat., Figure 17 (unpaginated)

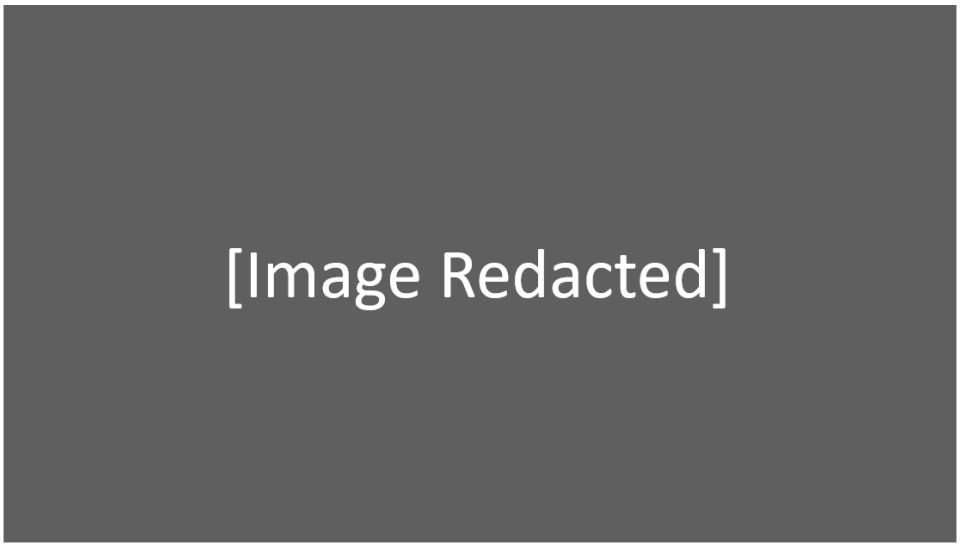


Figure 3.25. Norma Morgan, *David in the Wilderness*. (1955-56)

Engraving, 34 5/8 " x 17 ½”

Source: Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York: 372.1956.

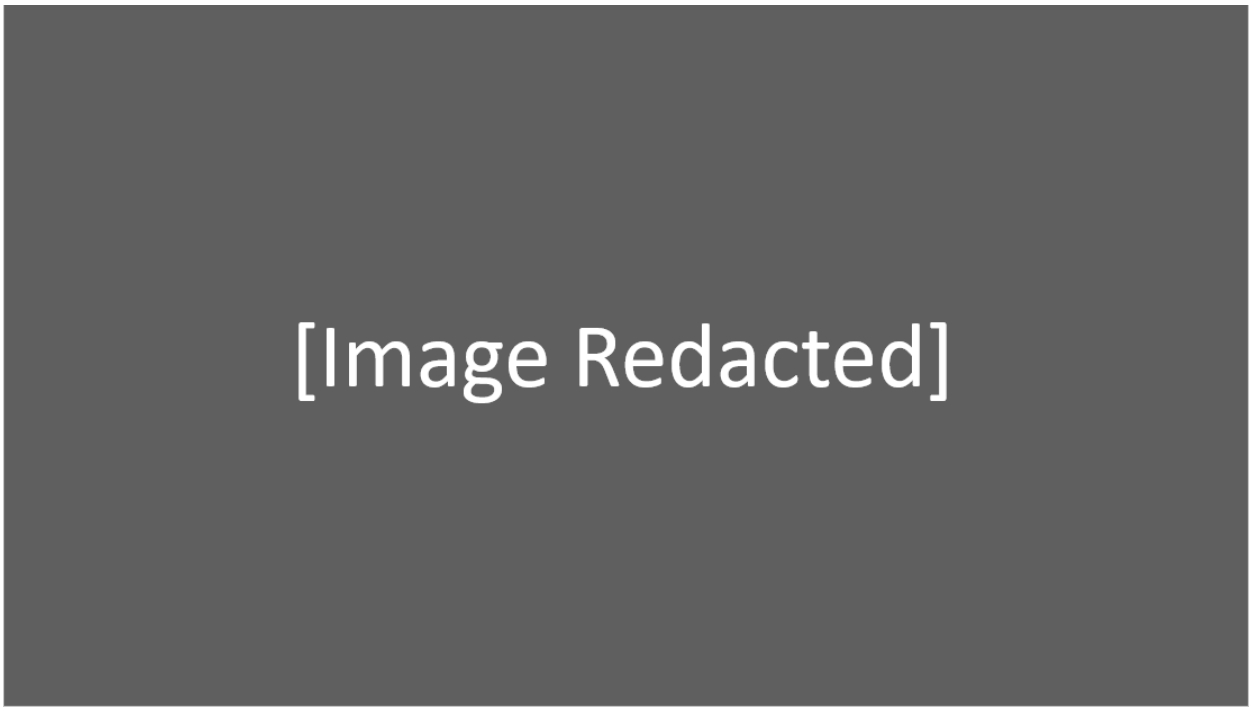


Figure 3.26. Jacob Lawrence, *John Brown Held Harper's Ferry for Twelve Hours*, No. 20 from *John Brown Series*. (1941, repainted 1977)

Gouache on paper, 14” x 20”

Loaned to *Tendances et Confrontations* by the Detroit Institute of Arts.

Source: National Museum of African American History and Culture, TR2007-8.1.20.

Figure 3.27. Charles White, *Birmingham Totem* (1964)

Chinese ink drawing on paper, 73 ¼” x 43 ½”

Image source: Website of The Hammer Museum <https://hammer.ucla.edu/now-dig-this/art/birmingham-totem/>

Figure 3.28. Christian Lattier, *L'Orchidée* (The Orchid), shown installed in *Tendances et Confrontations*. (1966) Photographer Unknown.

Source: Image courtesy of Panafest Archive Collection, Paris; reproduced in Vincent (2017): 90.

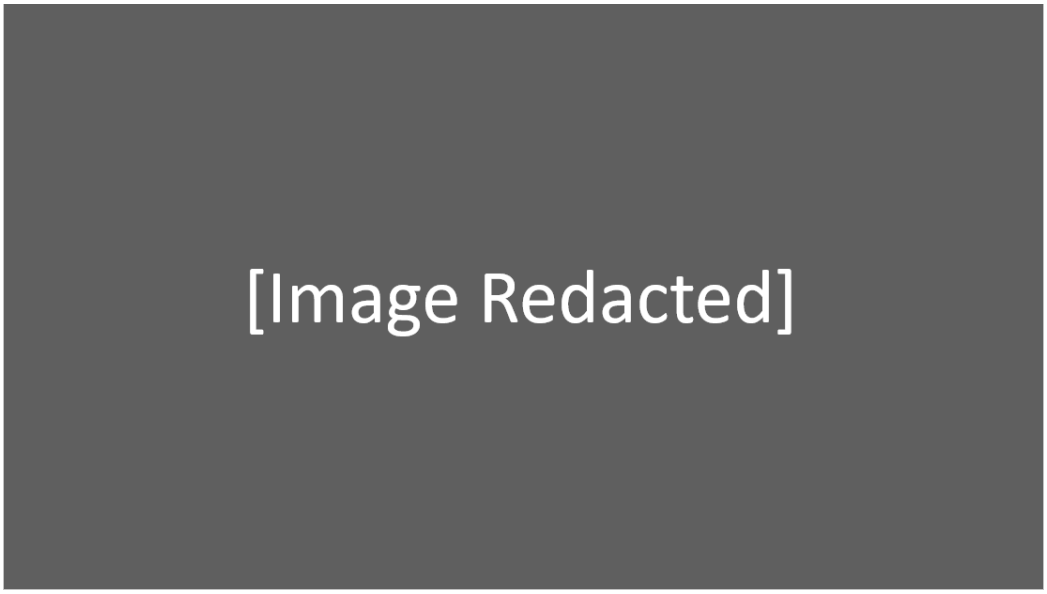


Figure 3.29. Frank Bowling, *Big Bird* (1964)

Oil on canvas. 74 x 144 cm.

Source: Image courtesy of Bridgeman Images.

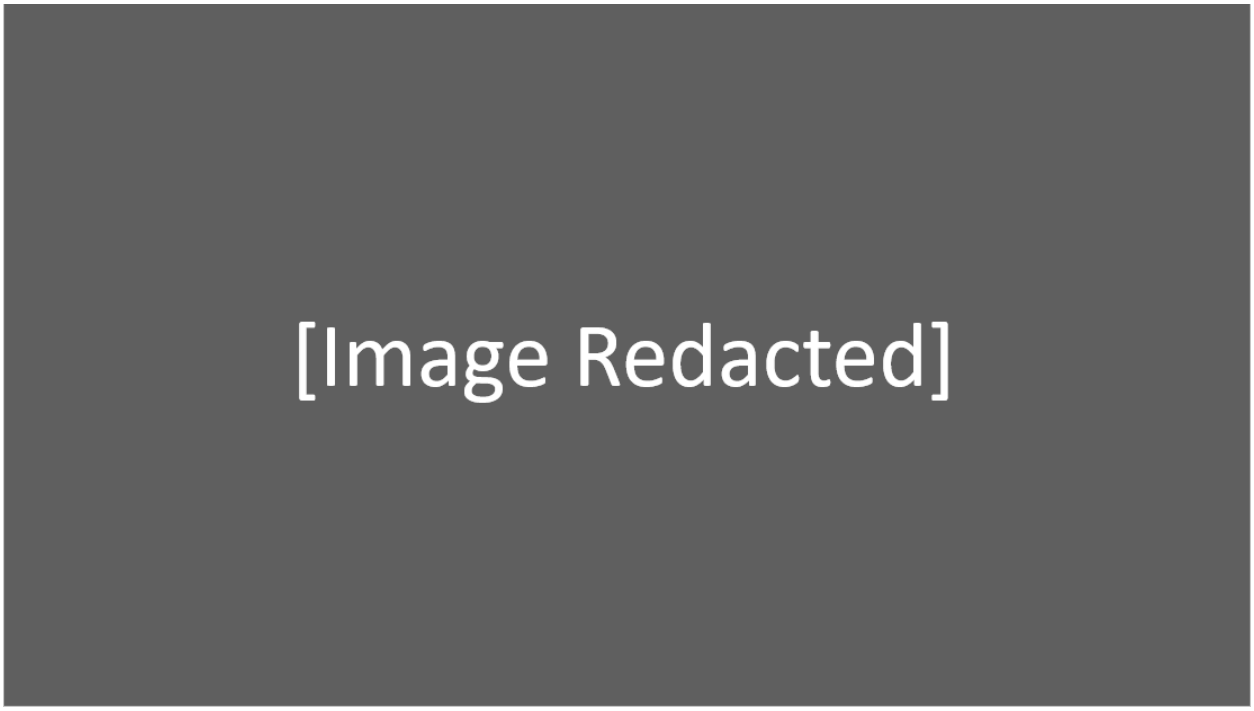


Figure 4.1. President Macky Sall (front, left) and others walk away from the Museum of Black Civilizations.

Source: "MUSÉE DES CIVILISATIONS NOIRES : Macky Sall réalise les rêves de Senghor et Wade."*Chroniques.sn* December 7, 2018 <http://chroniques.sn/une/musee-des-civilisations-noires-macky-sall-realise-les-reves-de-senghor-et-wade/>

Figure 4.2. The African Renaissance Monument (2010) in Dakar.

Source: http://cvdakar.com/en/2015/11/28/monument-de-la-renaissance-africaine/

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