

Framing Iconic Architecture: Context and Dimensions

Langtone Maunganidze

Abstract

For many years, Zimbabwean architecture was subjected to variants of appropriation and materialization with multifarious effects on individual and collective identities. In particular, its forced engagement with colonial powers followed by a repressive post-colonial state left legacies of multi-layered elitist and totalitarian inscriptions. The chapter supports other scholars who have regarded coping with African iconic architecture as something of a bind: a combination of significance, contestability and asymmetry. It concludes that the mediating influence of political power in the construction of these “grand” structures has rendered many of the architectural products to vacillate between national icons and memory dispositives.

Keywords: Artefact, Discourse, Dispositive, Elitism, Gender, Heroes, Heroes’ Acre, Heritage, Historicist, Iconic, Iconicity, Iconographies, Modern, Mythologies, Nationhood, Nazi, Parliament, Pluriversality, Ruins, Symbolic, Sovereign, Sovereignty, Soft technology, Power, Propaganda, Statues, Zimbabwe Bird