

ABSTRACT

In this study, I argued that public art in Uganda created the legacy of monuments under the control of Kampala Capital City Authority as historical products that glorified power relations in the context of social closure. I read into the dialectics of inclusion and exclusion basing on the notion of social closure for monuments. I examined the kind of audience they were meant to engage through the ages as well as the kind of legacies they attempted to perpetuate. I examined the historical context of monuments in Kampala's Central Business District in the period 1914-2014. I analysed social inclusion and exclusion in the patronage of monuments in Kampala Capital City Authority during this period. I evaluated the dialectics of inclusion and exclusion in light of the contentions in collective memory. I used a visual sociology research method to read the monuments in the context of Max Weber's theory of social closure in a modern spirit and in light of the Ugandan situation. The findings indicated limited and restricted accessibility to the space and locations of the monuments. They were a preserve of the different regimes that commissioned them for their vested interests of power and its glorification. The study provides a better understanding of the visibility of public art in Uganda. It gives alternative answers on the embodiment of the cultural memory of the country's colonial history. It demonstrates that the monuments have heritage value and that they are relevant in the historiography of public art in Uganda. However, they are also intricately woven into complex political contexts and negotiations and thus contribute to the contemporary debates on power, governance and public art in the country.