



Contemporary African Cultural Productions



Productions culturelles africaines contemporaines





This book is a product of the CODESRIA Annual Social Science
Campus

Ce livre est une compilation des articles issus du Campus annuel sur
les sciences sociales du CODESRIA

Contemporary African Cultural
Productions

Production culturelles africaines
contemporaines

Edited by

V. Y. Mudimbe



CODESRIA

Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa
DAKAR

© CODESRIA 2012

Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa
Avenue Cheikh Anta Diop, Angle Canal IV
BP 3304 Dakar, 18524, Senegal
Website: www.codesria.org

ISBN: 978-2-86978-539-7

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage or retrieval system without prior permission from CODESRIA.

Typesetting: Daouda Thiam
Cover Design: Ibrahima Fofana
Printing: Imprimerie Graphi plus, Dakar, Senegal

Distributed in Africa by CODESRIA
Distributed elsewhere by African Books Collective, Oxford, UK
Website: www.africanbookscollective.com

The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) is an independent organisation whose principal objectives are to facilitate research, promote research-based publishing and create multiple forums geared towards the exchange of views and information among African researchers. All these are aimed at reducing the fragmentation of research in the continent through the creation of thematic research networks that cut across linguistic and regional boundaries.

CODESRIA publishes *Africa Development*, the longest standing Africa based social science journal; *Afrika Zamani*, a journal of history; the *African Sociological Review*; the *African Journal of International Affairs*; *Africa Review of Books* and the *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*. The Council also co-publishes the *Africa Media Review*; *Identity, Culture and Politics: An Afro-Asian Dialogue*; *The African Anthropologist* and the *Afro-Arab Selections for Social Sciences*. The results of its research and other activities are also disseminated through its Working Paper Series, Green Book Series, Monograph Series, Book Series, Policy Briefs and the CODESRIA Bulletin. Select CODESRIA publications are also accessible online at www.codesria.org.

CODESRIA would like to express its gratitude to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA/SAREC), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Ford Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), the Danish Agency for International Development (DANIDA), the French Ministry of Cooperation, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Rockefeller Foundation, FINIDA, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), TrustAfrica, UN/UNICEF, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and the Government of Senegal for supporting its research, training and publication programmes.

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vii
<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	ix
<i>Preface</i>	xiii
<i>Pinkie Mekingwe and Adebayo Olukoshi</i>	
1. Dancing through the Crisis: Survival Dynamics and Zimbabwe Music Industry	1
<i>Nhamo Anthony Mbiripiri</i>	
2. Retelling Joburg for TV: Risky City	29
<i>Muff Andersson</i>	
3. The Legendary Inikpi of Nigeria: A Play – Political Interpretation and Contemporary Implications	47
<i>Reuben Adejob</i>	
4. <i>Makishi</i> Masquerade and Activities: The Reformulation of Visual and Performance Genres of the <i>Mukanda</i> School of Zambia	67
<i>Victoria Phiri Chitungu</i>	
5. Religiosity in Vihiga District: Modernity and Expressions of Outward Forms	83
<i>Susan Mbula Kilonzo</i>	
6. Striking the Snake with its own Fangs: Uganda Acoli Song, Performance and Gender Dynamics	109
<i>Benge Okot</i>	

7. Industrie musicale au Sénégal : étude d'une évolution	129
<i>Salion Ndour</i>	
8. Voix féminines de la chanson au Cameroun : émergence et reconnaissance artistique	177
<i>Nadeige Laure Ngo Nlend</i>	
9. Vidéo et espace politique : le cas de la Côte d'Ivoire	197
<i>Oumar Silué N'Tchabétien</i>	
10. Les Bantous de la capitale de Brazzaville : Cycle de vie et productions culturelles	233
<i>Geneviève Mayamona Zibouidi</i>	
11. Le vidéoclip congolais : Politique de mots et rhétorique d'images	261
<i>Léon Tsambu</i>	
12. Artes e reconstruir indentidades : Um Proyeto de teatro em Mozambique	287
<i>Vera Azevedo</i>	
13. Afterword: A Meditation of the Convener	301
<i>V. Y. Mudimbe</i>	

Acknowledgements

Sincere gratitude to the coordinators of the 2007 CODESRIA Campus, Pinkie Mekgwe and Adebayo Olukoshi; to Karen Peters and the Howard Campus College for its technical arrangements; Jean-Pierre Diouf, Dr Ravayi Marindo, Virginie Niang, Oyekunle Oyediran and Dr Ebrima Sall, other members of the CODESRIA Secretariat in Dakar; and indeed, the participants of the Campus for a challenging intellectual engagement. A recognition is due to members of the Duke University Literature Programme who have helped in this project, to Abbie Langston for editing the proceedings, and also Trip Attaway, Rizvana Braxton, Erin Post, Abraham Geil, Peter Otiato and David Schultz for their administrative management.



Notes on Contributors

Reuben Adejoh is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. He has attended international conferences, and published a number of articles on strategic studies and political economy. He is a member of the National Association of Political Science of Nigeria. His research is in the area of religious fundamentalism and national security in Nigeria.

Muff Andersson, a Researcher, works in the Office of the Principal, University of South Africa (Unisa), and is currently writing the multi-volume “A History of the University of South Africa” which looks at the history of Higher Education in South Africa. A specialist in African Literature and Popular Culture, her focus is on youth and violence. She is a scriptwriter and author of several books, the most recent of which is *Intertextuality, Violence and Memory in Yiṣo Yiṣo: Youth TV Drama* (Unisa Press, 2010).

Vera Azevedo graduated from the School of Theater and Cinema, and the Instituto Superior das Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa (ISCTE), both in Lisbon, Portugal. She is presently a Technical Assistant at the Teatro Nacional D. Maria II in Lisbon, and conducting her doctoral research in the field of Anthropology and Popular Culture in Mozambique.

Benge Okot holds a PhD from the University of the Witwatersrand. He is currently teaching in the Department of Literature at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. He has conducted fieldwork in Sudan and Uganda. With Alex Bangirana, he co-edited *Uganda Poetry – Anthology 2000*. He is working on a new book “Ethnopoetics and Gender Dynamics among the Acoli of Northern Uganda”.

Susan Mbula Kilonzo is a Professor of Religious Studies. She teaches in the Department of Religion, Theology and Philosophy at Maseno University, Kenya. Her main research interests are in Sociology of Religion, African Culture, Gender and Development. She has published articles in these areas, and a book on *Christian Diversity and Community Development* (Lap Lambert Academic Publishing, 2010).

Geneviève Mayamona Zibouidi, a laureate of the 2006 CODESRIA Research Seminar on the Youth, and the 2007 Durban Campus, holds an MA in International Economic Relations from Marien Ngoubi University in the Congo. A member of the Research Centre on Economic and Political Analyses, her field of research includes cultural structures and politics of pricing food products.

Pinkie Mekgwe is a specialist in English and African literature, gender politics and education. With a BA from the University of Botswana, and an MSc and DPhil (Gender and Literary Studies) from the University of Sussex, Dr. Mekgwe is a former Programme Officer in the Research Programme of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). She has served as assistant lecturer at Sussex University's School of African and Asian Studies, and as a visiting lecturer at Malmo University in Sweden. A post-doctoral fellow at the Institute for Economic and Social Research, University of the Witwatersrand, Dr. Mekgwe contributed to a discourse on "Sexuality and Masculinity", and to a book on *Sexuality and the Concept of the Nation*. She has been a producer and presenter of "Open Book" (an educational literature radio programme in Gaborone), and a founding Board Member and first female chairperson of the Botswana Media Regulatory Body.

Nhamo Anthony Mhiripiri teaches Media Studies at the Midlands State University in Zimbabwe. His doctorate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal was on "Contemporary Visual Cultural Productions of the Zulu and Bushmen in South Africa". He has published short stories in several anthologies, including *Dreams, Miracles and Jazzy* (Picador Africa, 2008) and *No More Plastic Balls* (College Press, 2000). He is the author of academic articles in *Emerging Perspectives on Dambudzvo Marechera* (Africa World Press, 1999), *The Hidden Dimensions of Operation Murambatsvina* (Weaver Press, 2008), *Muziki: The Journal of Music Research in Africa*, *Visual Anthropology* and the *Journal of Literary Studies*.

V. Y. Mudimbe teaches at Duke University. His publications include *L'odeur du père* (Présence Africaine, 1982), *The Invention of Africa* (Indiana University Press, 1988), and *The Idea of Africa* (Indiana University Press, 1994). He is the editor of *The Surreptitious Speech: "Présence Africaine" and the Politics of Otherness, 1947-1987* (University of Chicago Press, 1992) and *Diaspora and Immigration: A Special Issue of South Atlantic Quarterly* (Duke University Press, 1999).

Saliou Ndour holds a doctorate in Sociology and teaches at the Université Gaston Berger in Saint Louis, Senegal. A specialist in African, West Indies and Pacific cultural networks, and an author of numerous articles on industrial cultures, he is the editor of *L'industrie musicale au Sénégal : essai d'analyse* (CODESRIA, 2008).

Nadeige Laure Ngo Nlend teaches history at the University of Yaoundé I in Cameroon. She is the Secretary General of the Cameroonian Centre for Egyptology, and a member of the Research Group on Egyptology at the University of Yaoundé I.

Adebayo Olukoshi, a Professor of International Economic Relations, is currently Director of the UN African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEA). From 2001 until 2009, he served as Executive Secretary of the

Council for Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). Previously a former Senior Research Fellow/Research Programme Coordinator of the Nordic Africa Institute (NAI) in Uppsala, Senior Programme Staff at the South Centre in Geneva, and Director of Research at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) in Lagos, his research interests centre on the politics of economic relations on which he has published extensively.

Oumar Silué N'Tchabétien, a social scientist with a doctorate from the University of Bouake in Ivory Coast, has been researching the sociological spaces of street cultures of the youth in relation to Ivory Coast politics. His research includes the diffusion of political ideologies within these spaces.

Victoria Phiri Chitungu, a specialist in Ethnic studies, is the Curator of Ethnography and Art at the Livingstone Museum of Zambia. She has done extensive work on cultures of Zambia, and is the author of "Masks and Dances, Mwanapwebo and Maliya: A Representation of Woman at the Centre of Social Change in Zambia", published in *Signs*, 2008.

Léon Tsambu is a Lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and researcher at Centre d'études politiques (CEP) of the University of Kinshasa. He is currently working on his doctorate. His interest is in urban culture and creative economy. He is a member of a number of scholarly societies, and has published in *Afrika Studies* and *Africa Media Review*.



Preface

All over Africa, an explosion in cultural productions of various genres is in evidence. Whether it be in relation to music, song, dance, drama, play, poetry, film, documentaries, photography, cartoons, fine art, novels (fiction and fact), short stories, essays and (auto)biography, the continent is experiencing a robust outpouring of creative power that is as remarkable for its originality as its all-round diversity. Home-made movies, including those from Nigeria's Nollywood, and musical outputs powered on the increasingly ubiquitous FM radio stations that have become a core element of the fabric of contemporary Africa may be the most visible aspect of the current efflorescence of cultural productions in Africa; they are, however, by no means the only ones to have experienced a boom. Cartoons, for instance, have come to occupy a new space and potency, encapsulating protest and resistance, as does a new wave of popular comedies that speak truth to power and allow people to laugh at themselves and their circumstances. Thus, even as some old sites of cultural production may be declining, new ones are being created in a dialectic that also suggests an end to the domination of the cultural space by the state and the emergence of a new context of cultural pluralism complete with its asymmetries and power relations.

It is perhaps significant that the contemporary cultural effervescence that has come to the fore began to unfold in the context of the longest – and deepest – economic crises which the African continent has known since the period after the Second World War and which started in earnest in the late 1970s and early 1980s. What is particularly interesting is that while practically every indicator of economic development was declining in nominal and/or real terms for most of the continent, cultural productions were, across the board, on the increase. Out of adversity, the creative genius of the African produced cultural forms that at once spoke to crises and sought to transcend them. It is a creative genius predominantly powered by younger Africans who yesterday may have been tempted to seek formal employment in a government service but today organize themselves, in response to the context of prolonged economic crises, in a search for self-fulfilment that is at once agonizing and liberating. While contemporary cultural productions do not originate exclusively from the urban milieu, it should not be surprising that the urban space and urban themes, in all their complexities, are dominant in the

range of concerns that are covered. Contemporary cultural productions, among the many functions they serve, are clearly engaged and critical chroniclers of a rapidly changing Africa.

It might be understandable that during the course of the 1980s and 1990s, much of the scholarly output in and on Africa concentrated on the dynamics of the economic crises which the countries of the continent were experiencing, the political economy of the structural adjustment programmes sponsored by the international donor community to manage the crises, and the struggles for political reform and democratization that came to the fore in the 1990s. Yet, through cultural productions, ordinary people, drawing on history, cognition, everyday experience, and the power of imagination, mirrored the contradictory ways in which the context of crises and reform both impacted society and were felt by individuals and groups. In this way, the productions were a potent commentary on power, resilience, resistance, identity and citizenship in a season of painful decline and slow renewal. The visibility of the cultural productions that flourished was reinforced by the revolution in information and communications technology that also helped them to travel beyond national boundaries into a global stream. Yet, they were not seriously engaged by the scholarly community, at least, not African social scientists.

The study of culture remains, however, as crucial today as it ever was. Studying culture from an African perspective in the contemporary era is perhaps even more pertinent. This is an era in which culture is a site that is much contested, and increasingly commodified. This is an era in which there is a global market in culture and cultural production; in which multinational corporate interests are even seeking to generate monopolistic or oligopolistic copyright, patent and intellectual property rights over cultural productions; and where lifestyles are increasingly packaged for consumption and delivered wholesale into our living spaces primarily through the television and internet. With such packages being ever more easily accessible across the globe, it becomes particularly important that we be attendant to the danger of falsely assuming familiarity that can accompany the daily consumption of these cultural productions, and of the dangers of presuming a knowledge of culture – by ourselves and others; of ourselves and of others - that is devoid of history, a sense of location and place, and of serious intellectual investment. Hence, the importance of such scholarly intervention(s) as the Annual Social Science Campus of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) and its other initiatives such as the African Humanities Programme.

The current climate of cultural pluralism that has been produced in no small part by globalization has not been accompanied by an adequate pluralism of ideas on what culture is, and/or should be; nor informed by an equal claim to the production of the cultural – packaged or not. Globalization has seen to movement

and mixture; contact and linkages; interaction and exchange where cultural flows of capital, people, commodities, images and ideologies have meant that the globe has become a space, with new asymmetries, for an increasing intertwinement of the lives of people, and, consequently, of a greater blurring of normative definitions as well as a place for re-definition, imagined and real. Researching into African culture and cultural productions thereof in this environment allows us, among other things, to enquire into definitions, explore historical dimensions, and to interrogate the political dimensions to presentation and representation. Such research offers us the possibility of interventions that go beyond the normative literary and cultural studies' main foci of race, difference, and identity; notions which, while important in themselves, might, without the necessary historicizing and interrogating, result in a discourse that rather re-inscribes the very patterns that necessitate writing against.

Understanding culture through rigorous research into cultural processes and products, as some of the chapters in this volume seek to do, as well as seeking to interrogate the representation of Africa by others and Africans, leads us in the direction of creating work that re-defines – doing so by decoding, re-coding and recording. The 2007 CODESRIA Annual Social Science Campus on the theme of *Contemporary African Cultural Productions* offered a critical space for dialogue among contemporary scholars of Culture and Cultural Production led by a highly distinguished convenor, Valentin Y. Mudimbe, who generously deployed his vast knowledge and experience to catalyse participants to question received wisdom and assumptions, and explore new directions in researching and understanding culture and development. He was also to skilfully guide the laureates of the Campus to rework their thoughts, culminating in this volume which, in many ways, is a first for CODESRIA and the community of scholars it represents. Without doubt, this book will both bring to a broader audience, the rich debate in which participants in the 2007 Campus partook and further extend discussions in new directions on the key subjects they covered. In the end, it will be the distinct merit of the book that it gives full meaning to the long-standing commitment by CODESRIA and scholars such as Mudimbe to the increased privileging of the production of holistic inter-disciplinary knowledge in which the social sciences not only speak more to one another, but also to the arts, humanities, and other sciences.

*Pinkie Mekgwe
Adebayo Olukoshi*

