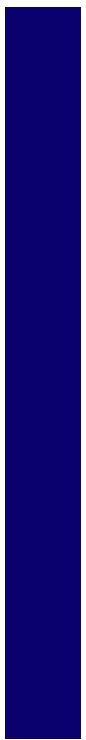


A reader

قلقله

(Qalqalah)



**Marie-laure Allain Bonilla,
Lotte Arndt,
Em'kal Eyongakpa,
Maryam Jafri,
Saadat Hasan Manto,
Pedro Neves Marques,
Marian Nur Goni et Erika Nimis,
Helihanta Rajaonarison,
Sarah Rifky
and Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa.**

**Bétonsalon – Centre for Art and Research
Kadist Art Foundation**

-
Introduction

p. 4-8

I-
Toba Tek Singh, 1955

Saadat Hasan Manto

p. 9-17

II-
**Decolonization in
adversity: Cultural
constellations through
the prism of *Présence
Africaine*, 2015**

Lotte Arndt

p. 18-34

III-
**Getty
VS
Kenya
VS
Corbis, 2012**

Maryam Jafri

p. 35-38

IV-
**Republic Day 1958
and Independence
Day 1960
in Antananarivo, 2012**

Helihanta Rajaonarison

p. 39-50

V-
**Some Sketches
for a Hypothetical
*Postcolonial Theories
for Museums
Handbook*, 2014**

Marie-laure Allain Bonilla

p. 51-63

VI-
**Why the Forest
is the School, 2014**

Pedro Neves Marques

p. 64-76

VII-
La Croisière Noire, 2015

Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa

p. 77-86

VIII-
**Be-side(s) work,
friends and traces,
2014-2009**

Em'kal Eyongakpa

p. 87-95

IX-
**Connected Africa?
Photographic
communities
in the digital age, 2014**

Erika Nimis and Marian Nur Goni

p. 96-105

X-
**Qalqalah: The Subject
of Language, 2014**

Sarah Rifky

p. 106-110

Introduction

Virginie Bobin, Mélanie Bouteloup,
Elodie Royer, Emilie Villez

■

“A movement of language, a phonetic vibration, a rebound or an echo” —these are a few possible meanings of the Arabic word **قلقلة** (*Qalqalah*). In the futuristic fable by author and curator Sarah Rifky, *Qalqalah* is also the name of the polyglot heroine, who gradually loses her memory in a not too distant future where notions of language, art and economy such as we know them today have quietly collapsed. In this world of re-edited knowledge —a world we are not sure whether to fear or hope for— the word *Qalqalah* resonates as one way of navigating. We, in turn, are now borrowing the word to give a name to the “reader” that we have developed as a response, an echo, to the studies led by Bétonsalon – Centre for Art and Research and Kadist Art Foundation that will be extended and amplified over successive installments published on the web.

Over a year ago, Bétonsalon – Centre for Art and Research and Kadist Art Foundation began discussions around the desire to create an outlet for shared questions, and broadcast the voices that are still too seldom heard within the contexts of our work. This outlet would be a way of charting new paths to allow us to circumvent the hegemony and Eurocentrism of certain discourses. Starting from the observation that, especially in France, other perspectives have difficulty finding support, our “reader” was also born from long-held conversations with researchers deeply involved in these issues and their under-representation —namely Lotte Arndt, teacher of theory at the École Supérieure d’Art et Design de Valence, and Zahia Rahmani, head of the globalization program at the Institut National d’Histoire de l’Art in Paris. Rather than follow the ad hoc logic of the single event, we gambled instead on the idea of a longer-term project— to consider *Qalqalah* as a journal perhaps, to infiltrate existing networks and renew the voices that will be heard over the course of successive issues.

Qalqalah arose from our twofold desire to share resources and increase their dissemination, while contributing to the introduction of research not yet translated —hence the choice of a bilingual English/French publication available free online. If the texts published in this first issue reflect the current programming at our sites, our intention is to expand their impact while allowing the digital piece to circulate in an autonomous and viral manner. *Qalqalah* was conceived to develop over time and, in the hands of its successive guest participants, to offer a space for interactions, overlaps, digressions and interpretations.

Qalqalah brings together authors who seek to reshape too-linear accounts, who see art as a tool for research and a field of investigation where instruments for understanding and alternative maps of contemporary societies can be devised; and where less-explored grey zones can be envisioned differently. This first issue assembles a dozen contributions that deconstruct the dominant historiographies, through a reinterpretation of archives taken from various sources. We have chosen to juxtapose existing texts, reworked or simply translated for the occasion, with specific commissions. Taking advantage of the benefits of online publishing, we also decided to punctuate the texts with hyperlinks so as to disrupt the linearity of the reading experience with a series of departure points.

Another fictional character, *Toba Tek Singh*, the eponymous hero from a short story by Saadat Hasan Manto (reprinted here), could also have lent his name to our “reader.” In the story, the old man, an inmate of a Lahore asylum, refuses to be part of an exchange of Pakistani and Indian patients imposed by the governments of India and Pakistan, young nations born from the Partition following former British India’s independence a few years earlier, in 1947. Marked by increasing insanity, the character represents a resistance to the blinkered notion of belonging dictated by identity and territory. This conflicted relationship with the concept of the nation, whose pertinence today is reduced — and which, incidentally, has disappeared from the future portrayed in *Qalqalah* — took on a significant dimension following the independences across Asia and Africa. The journal *Présence Africaine*, founded in Paris in 1947 by the Senegalese Alioune Diop, was set up as its vessel, while welcoming the occasionally antagonistic viewpoints of African, North American and European intellectuals. A forum that saw the development of a “counterculture of modernity,” to quote Lotte Arndt, the journal became a model for these “adversarial decolonizations,” where new cultural and political ideals were invented.

The work of artist Maryam Jafri, who draws our attention to the writings of Manto, is informed by these conflicts. With *Independence Day 1934-1975* — an installation featuring photographs taken on the first day of independence in former European colonies across Asia and Africa — she reveals the generic character of the rituals and ceremonies held over the extraordinary 24-hour period when a country is transformed

from colonized territory into nation-state. She offers here a parallel study, exploring the issue of copyrights attributed to the images, and updates the power relationships between local states and international mega-institutions with respect to notions of heritage and the writing of history. Researcher Helihanta Rajaonarison, who collaborated with Maryam Jafri in her research for *I.D. 1934-1975*, took an interest in the individual accounts of events surrounding the independence of Madagascar, using photographic documents as catalysts for an alternative vision to the official History.

Today, major European cultural institutions are also attempting to address these issues. Marie-Laure Allain Bonilla is studying how the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Reina Sofía in Madrid, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and London's Tate Modern are taking steps to reformulate how their collections are constituted and presented. Each museum is seeking to "globalize" their collections by adopting different and equally revelatory strategies. In the sudden interest in artistic output from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, one can read a kind of cultural cannibalism, reverse to the one called for by Oswald de Andrade in his famous *Cannibal Manifesto* from 1928. Invited by Julia Morandeira Arrizabalaga, the curator of the *Canibalia* exhibition at Kadist Art Foundation, the artist Pedro Neves Marques —revisiting the cultural construction of the figure of the cannibal, from its colonial origins to its imaginary form, and subsequent representations— revives the legacy of this revolutionary concept as a tool to allow us to reconsider our relationship to the other, the community, the economy, and territory.

Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa also takes an interest in the forms of predation practiced by colonial societies, whose legacy continues to this day. Having taken up a study of the famous *Croisière Noire* of 1925, she is confronting reluctant institutions today unwilling to see their name and archives associated with this episode, now criticized, of "cultural and scientific exploration" of African territories led by European countries in the first half of the 20th century. Another example of the repercussions of these explorations can be found in the contribution of Cameroonian artist Em'kal Eyongakpa. After a visit to the Linden Museum in Stuttgart (Germany), he describes on his Facebook page the unease he felt at being confronted with African artifacts that were removed from their original environment to be displayed in the museum context. Excerpts from his book (printed at the end of 2014), a selection of observations, pictures and drawings taken from his sketchbook and Facebook page, are super-

imposed here and engage in a dialogue, from which a portrait, infused with the plurality of influences and cultures he encountered, emerges as a cross between story and self-portrait.

The explosion of social networks and progressive democratization of the Internet (though still unevenly accessible across the globe) have profoundly affected our ways of searching, reading, debating, and accessing information. This reconfiguration of practices —at play also in these pages— is dissected by Marian Nur Goni and Erika Nimis, two researchers particularly interested in the practices of photography on the African continent. They analyze the revealing gap between the circulation of images and the circulation of bodies, in a world where the illusion of global access is superimposed onto tensions surrounding geographical borders.

In Qalqalah's future (the future described by Sarah Rifky), these frontiers have disintegrated and its inhabitants have forgotten the historical accounts that are no longer the foundation of the world around them nor of their relationships. Qalqalah, now old, represents an outmoded conception of language and storytelling. And yet she continues to believe that every word spoken can give birth to a new meaning, every conversation to a possible future. The texts in this "reader" were assembled in homage to her vibrant, resonant mind, just like her name suggests. Preparations for a second issue are under way, and we hope it will provide a worthy echo to these first voices.



Toba Tek Singh

Saadat Hasan Manto

I-



SAADAT HASAN MANTO

Toba Tek Singh

Toba Tek Singh

Two or three years after Partition, it occurred to the Pakistani and Indian governments that like the prisoners in their jails, the insane too should be exchanged. This meant that mentally sick Muslims in Indian mental homes should be sent to Pakistan, and the Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan's mental homes should be handed over to India.

Whether or not it was the right view is open to question; however, there were high level conferences following the decision taken by the sages of the two countries, and finally a date was settled on which the mentally sick would be exchanged. A thorough investigation was made, and those insane Muslims whose relatives were in India were kept back in India while the rest were dispatched to the border. In Pakistan the situation was slightly different. Since almost all the Hindus and Sikhs had left the country, there was no question of keeping anybody back. All the insane Hindus and Sikhs were taken to the border under police escort.

One doesn't know what happened on the other side, but when the news of the exchange reached the mental home here in Lahore, it became the subject of a lot of interesting gossip. A mentally sick Muslim who had been reading the *Zamindar* regularly everyday was asked by a friend, 'Maulvi Saab, what is this 'Pakistan'?' After pondering the question for some time, the man answered, 'Pakistan is a place in India where they make razors.' His explanation satisfied his friend.

Similarly, one insane Sikh asked another, 'Sardarji why are we being sent to India? We don't even know their language.'

His interlocutor said with a smile, 'I know the language of those Indians. They strut around like the devil, those Indians.'

An insane Muslim shouted the slogan 'Pakistan Zindabad' in his bath with such fervour and force, that his foot slipped and he fell down unconscious.

There were some among the 'mentally sick' who were not insane. A majority of these were murderers whom their relatives had bribed the officials to admit into the mental home, in order to save them from the hangman's noose. These individuals had some comprehension of why the partition had taken place and what Pakistan was. But even they were unaware of the true circumstances. Nothing could be gleaned from the newspapers, and the guards at the mental home were illiterate and ignorant. So, all these people knew was that there was a man called Mohammad Ali Jinnah who was known as Quaid-i-Azam. He had founded a separate country for Muslims that was called Pakistan. But they knew nothing about where this country was located or how it was situated. Consequently all the inmates of the mental home, who were not completely insane were baffled by the question of whether they were in Pakistan or in India; if in India, then where was Pakistan? And if in Pakistan, how was it possible that having lived in the same place for some years, they used to be in India?

One inmate was so confounded by the Pakistan-India and India-Pakistan conundrum that his sanity was even more challenged. In the middle of sweeping the floor one day, he suddenly climbed a tree and sat there on a branch, delivering a speech for two hours on the delicate Pakistan-India issue. When the guards asked him to climb down he ascended even higher. When they threatened him he declared, 'I wish to live neither in India nor in Pakistan. I am going to live on this tree.' After much difficulty, when his fit was over, he climbed down, and embracing his Hindu and Sikh friends, sobbed for a long time. He was heartbroken by the thought that they would be going away to India.

A Muslim who held an M.Sc. degree in radio engineering, used to keep to himself, strolling quietly all day on a particular walk in the garden. The change that came over him was that he took off

all his clothes, and handing them to the warden, started walking stark naked all over the garden.

A fat Muslim from Chiniot who was once an active worker of the Muslim League, and used to bathe fifteen or more times a day, suddenly gave up his habit. His name was Mohammad Ali, and so one day he announced from his ward that he was Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Following his example, a Sikh became 'Master Tara Singh. There would have been bloodshed in their ward but for the fact that they were branded dangerous maniacs and locked up separately.

A young Hindu lawyer from Lahore who had become deranged as a result of a love affair, was very disturbed when he heard that Amritsar was now a part of India. He had fallen in love with a Hindu girl from that city, and though she had rejected him he did not forget her even in his insane state. He would therefore abuse all the Muslim League leaders who had ripped up India into two parts with the result that the girl he loved was an Indian while he was a Pakistani. When the plan for exchange of the mentally sick came up, many inmates of the mental home tried to reassure him that he would be sent to India, where his beloved was; but he didn't want to leave Lahore because he thought his practice would not thrive in Amritsar.

In the European ward there were two deranged Anglo-Indians. When they heard that the British had left India after granting it independence, they were very distressed. For hours they would discuss secretly how the new arrangement would affect their status in the mental home. Would the European ward remain a separate entity or not? Would they get a proper breakfast or not? Would they continue to get decent European style bread or would they have to make do with the bloody Indian chapatti?

There was one Sikh who had been admitted into the mental home fifteen years ago. He could be heard saying strange words all the time. He would say, '*Oopardi gurgur di annex di bay dhiyaan di mung di daal of the lantern*'. He slept neither during the day nor at night. The guards used to say that in the whole long period of fifteen years that he had been there, he had not slept a wink. Nor

did he ever lie down. Only now and then he would lean against a wall. His feet were swollen from standing so much and his calves were puffy, but despite all the physical pain he would not lie down and rest. Whenever there was some talk about India and Pakistan, or the exchange of mentally sick patients between the two countries, he would listen attentively, and if he was asked for his views he would gravely reply, '*Oopardi gurgur di annex di bay dhiyaana di mung di dal of the Pakistan government.*'

However, later 'of the Pakistan government' was replaced by 'of the Toba Tek Singh government.' At the same time he began to ask other mentally ill patients where Toba Tek Singh was and where they came from. But they too did not know whether Toba Tek Singh was in Pakistan or in India. They tried to answer his question, but became entangled in other complexities, such as, Sialkot used to be in India but now one hears it is in Pakistan; Lahore, which is now in Pakistan may be part of India tomorrow; or perhaps all India would become Pakistan; and, in any case, who can swear with his hand on his heart that both India and Pakistan would not vanish from the face of the earth some day?

The Sikh patient's long hair had become very sparse. Because he bathed rarely, his hair and his beard had become one mass of hair, giving his face a terrifying look, although he was in reality an inoffensive man. In the fifteen years that he had been there he had never quarrelled with anyone. All that the old employees of the mental home knew about him was that he owned a good deal of land in Toba Tek Singh. He was an affluent landowner who had suddenly lost his mental balance. His relatives had brought him tied up with thick iron chains and had him admitted in the mental home. Thereafter they used to visit him once a month. This routine lasted for a long time, but the relatives stopped visiting when trouble erupted between the two newly independent countries.

His name was Bishan Singh but he was known as Toba Tek Singh. He had no idea which day or month it was, or how many years had passed since he first came to the mental home. But every month he knew without being told, when it was time for his relatives' visit, and would tell his warder that his visitors would be

coming. On the appointed day he would give himself a thorough wash, using plenty of soap, oil his hair and comb it, and put on clothes which he hardly ever used. All decked out, he would then go to receive his visitors. If they asked him a question he would remain quiet, or sometimes he would say, '*Oopardi gurgur di annex di bay dhiyaana di mung di dal of the lantern*'.

He had a daughter who, steadily growing during the fifteen years of his stay at the mental home, had turned into a young woman by the end of it. Bishan Singh would never recognise her. When she was a child she used to weep to see her father, and when she grew up she would still shed tears when she saw him.

When the Pakistan India affair began he started asking the other inmates where Toba Tek Singh was. Not getting a satisfactory answer, his probing intensified. His people no longer visited. When they used to come he knew without being told when they were expected. But now it seemed that the voice in his heart that used to inform him of their arrival had become silent. His great desire was for those people to come who showed him kindness, and brought him fruit, sweets, and clothes. Had he asked them where Toba Tek Singh was they would undoubtedly have told him, because he thought they used to come from Toba Tek Singh where his lands were.

There was one inmate of the home who called himself God. One day when Bishan Singh asked him where Toba Tek Singh was, he laughed as was his habit, and said, 'It is neither in Pakistan nor in India, because we have not yet issued orders.'

Bishan Singh entreated this god many times to issue the orders so that the matter could be settled, but he was too busy since he had numerous other orders to issue. One day Bishan Singh lost his patience and yelled at him, '*Oopardi gurgur di annex di bay dhiyaana di mung di dal of Vahe Guruji da khalsa and Vahe Guruji ki Fateh. Jo bole so nihal, sat sri akal.*'

Probably he meant to say, 'You must be the God of Muslims. Had you been the God of Sikhs you would have listened to me.'

A few days before the exchange, a Muslim from Toba Tek Singh who was a friend of his came to see him. He had never come to

the mental home before. When Bishan Singh saw him he withdrew, but the guards told him, 'It is your friend Fazal Din. He has come to see you.'

When Bishan Singh saw Fazal Din he began to mutter something. Fazal Din stepped forward and put his hands on his shoulders, 'I had been thinking of coming to visit you for a long time but was too busy. All your people have reached India safely... I did whatever I could for them... Your daughter Roop Kaur...' He stopped in the middle of a sentence. Bishan Singh repeated slowly, 'Daughter Roop Kaur'.

Fazal Din continued hesitantly, 'Yes...she...she is quite well too. She left with them.'

Bishan Singh was silent. Fazal Din went on, 'They told me to keep an eye on you. Now I hear that you are going to India. Give my salaams to brother Balbir Singh and brother Vadhwa Singh, and to sister Amrit Kaur too. Tell brother Balbir Singh that Fazal Din is well. One of the brown buffaloes that they left behind has calved. Another had calved too—a female—but she died after six days... And...and if there is anything I can do for you, let me know. I'll be happy to help. I've brought you some *marondas...here.'

Bishan Singh took the marondas and handed them to a guard standing nearby, and asked Fazal Din, 'Where is Toba Tek Singh?'

'Toba Tek Singh?' the man repeated with some surprise, 'It is where it used to be'.

'In India or in Pakistan?' enquired Bishan Singh.

'In India...no, no, in Pakistan' Fazal Din was confused.

Bishan Singh left, grumbling, '*Oopardi gurgur di annex di bay dhiyaana di mung di dal of the Pakistan and India of the dur fittae moo.*'

Preparations for the swap were complete. Lists of the mentally sick who were to go from India to Pakistan and from Pakistan to India had been drawn up and exchanged, and the day was fixed.

On a bitterly cold winter day, lorries full of mentally sick Hindus and Sikhs left the Home under the protection of a detachment of the police, and accompanied by concerned officials. At the Wagah

border superintendents of the two sides met, and having completed the initial procedures, began the exchange which lasted all night.

To bring the insane out of the lorries and hand them over to officials on the other side was rough. Some refused to leave the vehicles. Those who agreed to leave were difficult to manage because they would run in all directions. When the naked among them were made to dress, they would tear the clothes off their bodies. Some were swearing, some were singing, others were quarrelling, sobbing, drivelling—in short there was so much noise that it was impossible to hear anybody speak, and on top of it there was the commotion made by the female mental patients. Making matters even worse was the ruthless cold that made everybody's teeth chatter.

The majority of the mentally sick were not in favour of the exchange. The reason was that they could not understand why they had been pulled out of where they were, only to be tossed into some place they did not know. Those who were capable of some thought were shouting 'Pakistan Zindabad.' The slogan infuriated some of the Sikhs and Hindus, and the situation threatened to turn violent.

When it was Bishan Singh's turn, and the Indian official on the other side of the border was entering his name in the register he asked him, 'Where is Toba Tek Singh, in India or in Pakistan?'

The officer laughed, and answered 'In Pakistan'.

On hearing his reply Bishan Singh ran back to the Pakistani side. The Pakistani policemen caught him and tried to take him back to the Indian side but he refused to go, saying, 'Toba Tek Singh is here!' He then began shouting, '*Oopardi gurgur di annex di bay dhiyaana di mung di dal of the Toba Tek Singh and Pakistan!*'

They tried hard to explain to him, 'Toba Tek Singh has now gone to India, and if it has not, it will be sent there immediately' but he would pay no heed. When they tried to take him to the other side forcibly, he planted himself on his swollen legs in the centre—the no man's land—as though no power could budge him from there.

Because he was a harmless sort, no more force was used, and he was allowed to stand where he was while the work went on. Just before dawn the motionless Bishan Singh uttered a piercing scream. A number of officials from both sides came running; they saw that the man who had been standing day and night for fifteen years was lying face downwards on the ground. Behind the barbed wire on one side was India, and behind similar barbed wire on the other side was Pakistan. In between, on a nameless piece of land, lay the lifeless Toba Tek Singh.

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Decolonization in adversity: Cultural constellations through the prism of *Présence Africaine*

Lotte Arndt

II-

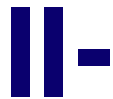
A day after the attack on satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* and the hostage-taking in the kosher supermarket in eastern Paris, several official speeches brandished like a shield the values of the French Republic and “civilization” that needed to be defended against “barbarism.” The attack on the satirical newspaper was transformed into the sacred symbol of freedom of expression and enlightenment — principles that are declared the pride of Western society, to be defended against the enemy at all cost.

In this belligerent scenario that functions through binary oppositions, the selectivity of French universalism remains unmentioned. Yet while claiming to be “blind” to differences, the history of Republican liberty has a color.¹ It is gendered and classist. The racial and cultural codification of the French nation is inextricably linked to its colonial history. It is within this context that the struggle for decolonization occurred and can now inform us. Obviously, historical conditions have changed since the first half of the 20th century. However, today’s mute social divisions and the difficulty of formulating a unifying, transnational project of emancipation, urgent more than ever to counter fundamentalist closures of all denominations — urge us to explore the constellations that fostered the questioning of colonial hegemony in the capital of one of the largest colonial empires: Paris.

On the eve of independence, the shape of the nation-state and the territorial delineation of borders had not yet become essential postcolonial conditions — the possibilities of historical invention still seemed endless². Guadeloupian writer Maryse Condé recalls the unifying period of the journal *Présence Africaine* prior to African independence in the 1960s:

“...There was a wonderful, generous dream in those days. The dream of a black world which would not be broken up into distinct nations by the colonial languages and various colonial systems of governments. A black world which would speak through one voice, through the univocal voice of its poets and writers. A black world which would recover its dignity and pride.”³

While the writer highlights the idea of the cultural unity of a “black world”—opposing cultural continuity to the historical carve-up since the slave trade, and artistic redemption to political violence— other movements were forging third-world alliances, demanding self-determination while seeking allies among those ready to support them by force of arms if necessary. Rather than emerge as a history of indivisible and unambigu-



ous oppositions to colonization, the work of decolonization preceding independence has been accompanied by difficult negotiations, during which political and artistic movements transformed the tools of domination into concepts for a new project for society.



I will examine some of the constellations through which these laborious projects were mapped out in issues of *Présence Africaine*, a journal founded in 1947 (and accompanied by a publishing house since 1949) in Paris by the Senegalese intellectual Alioune Diop. Through the prism of the journal — the quest for a future postcolonial language developed amid the backdrop of that colony’s mainland— there appeared what could be called adversarial constellations: within the policy of unity that *Présence Africaine* defended as its guiding principle⁴, some fundamental fault lines emerged. The journal presented itself as a forum where cultural strategies would be shaped, where both impasses and breakthroughs could be outlined. To refer to Michel de Certeau, I propose to read the work undertaken by the journal as a construction site of the future in confined spaces⁵: in other words, the incessant effort to surpass social assignments while being conditioned by one’s environment and by the power struggles of one’s time.

II-

Image 1: View of the exhibition. *Présence Africaine*.
Une revue, un réseau, un mouvement, [Présence Africaine.
A journal, a network, a movement], Dakar, 2011

© Sarah Frioux-Salgas.

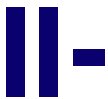
Building an African presence in Paris

Présence Africaine was founded in Paris, that in the 1920s became a nodal point in the creation of a black transnational movement⁶ and internationalist alliances⁷ following the Bandung Conference held in Indonesia in 1955, an event integral to the Non-Aligned Movement and a crucible of nationalisms seeking independence.

“The role of Paris was both fascinating and deeply ironic,” writes Tyler Stovall. “After all, the city was the heart of one of the world’s great colonial Empires, a place where anonymous French officials supervised the subjugation of millions of black Africans. Outside of Marseille, London, and some other British cities, one could not find a more diverse black population anywhere in Europe.”⁸ Ironic indeed because “French colonialism and primitivism [thus] paradoxically combined to foster a vision of pan-African unity.”⁹

The decolonization movements drew upon tireless processes of translation: both in the literal sense of a policy of multilingualism —to allow information and literature to travel between colonies— as well as in the wider sense to do with the translation of ideas¹⁰. A forum for testing proposals and forms, the journal laid the foundation for a “counterculture of modernity,”¹¹ which progressively challenged France’s universalist position and demanded full civil and cultural participation for the colonized. Cultural unity and solidarity —formulated at times in racial terms, other times in anticolonial terms— were key instruments in this pursuit.

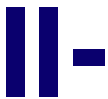
In this context, one can speak —to quote Edward Said and Brent Hayes Edwards— of “adversarial internationalization,” which both authors describe as “the attempts to organize alliances to challenge the prevailing discourses of Western universalism that were simultaneously adversarial in themselves, structured by political disagreements and differences of lived experiences.”¹²



Labor of transformation

In its early years, the evolving discourses published in *Présence Africaine* were conceived in close exchanges with the positions elaborated by the researchers at the *Musée de l'Homme* [Museum of Man]. A follower of the *Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro*, the museum was founded in Paris for the 1937 World Fair. Its purpose was to present humanity in all its anthropological, historical and cultural diversity. *Présence Africaine* shared with the researchers of this institution a unifying concept of humanity and the according of value to “cultural difference.” The concept—vaguely complementarist—posited that an absence of African cultural preservation impoverished the whole of humanity; African renaissance should therefore be based on the recognition of the “black genius.”¹³ An extension of German romanticism—that considered the distinctive character of a “people” to be found in its cultural “genius”—the movement advocated the work of invention on the basis of difference: it stated that it is in the expression gathered in its creations that “a people’s” distinct share of humanity can be found. Studies by German anthropologist Leo Frobenius and Belgian missionary Placide Tempels’ *La Philosophie bantoue* (the first book to be published by *Présence Africaine* in 1949) pursued the journal’s celebration of African cultural specificity.

However, the cultural valorization of the African continent on the basis of ethnographical knowledge was from the very start caught up in a relationship of transformation. Having become emblematic of the pluralist enterprise of *Présence Africaine*, the multiple semantic layers embedded in the symbol of the journal offers a good example.





II-

The symbol was inspired by a Dogon stone painting made famous by French ethnologist Marcel Griaule's studies on the cosmology of the Dogon. During the Dakar-Djibouti mission, the last of the large-scale expeditions financed by the French government between 1931 and 1933, many objects were "collected" in often asymmetrical conditions, and would subsequently make up the collection of the Musée de l'Homme¹⁴. The artifacts became material indicators of the cultural uniqueness of a group. While valorized, these groups became reified as objects.¹⁵

image 3:

View of the exhibition. Dogon Mask. *Présence Africaine*.
Une revue, un réseau, un mouvement. Paris, 2010 © Lotte Arndt.

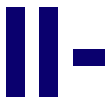
Image 2: Cover of *Présence Africaine*, Issue 1, 1947. Personal archive.

It was within this context that writer Michel Leiris participated in the choice of the symbol for the journal¹⁶. A surrealist, Leiris was a member of the patronage committee of *Présence Africaine* and an occasional contributor to the journal. In his articles at the time, egalitarian humanism and a fascination for Otherness as an invigorating alternative to the petrification of European societies went hand in hand. Leiris was hopeful with regard to ethnography; in 1930 he described it as a “magnificent science” capable of placing “all civilizations on an equal footing, considering none among them more valuable than another. [...] It is the most generally human because it is not limited.”¹⁷ Although his position was anticolonial, he accepted nonetheless to participate in this ample national expedition that “definitely pursued political and economic colonial interests.”¹⁸ The expedition led him to distance himself from the ethnologists’ approach: after returning from the Dakar-Djibouti mission, he published *Afrique fantôme* [Phantom Africa], a critical and self-reflexive travel diary that by virtue of its subjectivism was a turning point in ethnographical writing.¹⁹

The ambiguities of the participant extended to those of the collected objects. In the course of their celebration and interpretation by researchers from the Musée de l’Homme, the Dogon artifacts and drawings became ethnographic objects par excellence. At the same time, they were appropriated for African cultural affirmation. The symbol of the journal — a drawing copied by Marcel Griaule during the expedition — turned into a symbol of the African voice in the heart of the colonial capital. As Salah Hassan rightly points out, cultural signifiers do not stay fixed throughout their successive interpretations. Having become the symbol of the journal, over the course of the 1950s the drawing detached itself from Griaule to become an “image of resistance for African cultural and political identity.”²⁰

These entanglements confirm that it was not only the primitivist appropriation of African artifacts that was integral to Western modernity. On the other hand, ethnological discourses and primitivism themselves constituted a space for action within the project of decolonization. In this sense the cultural transformations of modernity emerged as a “two-way traffic”²¹ that transformed every aspect of the colonial relationship.

In *Présence Africaine*, the valorization and reinterpretation of African artifacts and the magnification of an African imagination²² became tools central to the construction of a counter-modernity. On the cover of an



issue of *Le musée vivant* in 1948 — coedited by the director of the APAM²³, French art historian Madeleine Rousseau and the Senegalese researcher Cheikh Anta Diop — the abolition of slavery in 1848 is juxtaposed with “the evidence of black culture” in 1948. The issue was given an introduction by Communist writer Richard Wright; his combative words were followed with a totally different text by Michel Leiris, who provided a whole list of attributes that likened Africa to an “ethnographical present,”²⁴ immutable and eternal, constructed as the direct opposite of Europe.²⁵



Présence Africaine gradually abandoned its quest for European recognition to take up the development of tools for self-representation. To give an example, the first two meetings of the *Congress of Black Writers and Artists* organized by *Présence Africaine* — in Paris in 1956 (at the Sorbonne, the hub of French culture) and in Rome in 1959 — were accompanied by posters designed by Pablo Picasso. The painter embodied more than anyone else the ambiguous role that primitivism played in African cultural affirmation: while attributing value to African artifacts, especially to masks,²⁶ he showed a disinterest in their creators and contexts.²⁷ Asserting

Image 4: Cover of *Le musée vivant*, 1948
© Lotte Arndt

the “exorcist”²⁸ potential of “black art” as the only thing of consequence in the advent of Cubism, he declares to have found “everything I need to know about Africa [...] in these objects.”²⁹ Using the encounter between Picasso and Guyanese modernist Aubrey Williams as an example, Simon Gikandi aptly discusses this ambiguity. He begins by highlighting Picasso’s apparent ignorance of Williams’ artistic practice — a painter like him — preferring to comment on his “fine African head.”³⁰



The poster for the first congress features the head of a young man, shown in profile, crowned with a wild olive branch. It is in fact a portrait of Jacques Césaire, the eldest son of Aimé Césaire; the portrait accompanied one of the poems in the collection *Corps perdu* by Césaire, illustrated by Picasso³¹. The two men had met at the (communist-leaning) World Peace

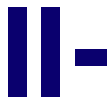
Image 5: View of the exhibition. Poster for the first Congress of Black Writers and Artists, 1956, by Pablo Picasso. *Présence Africaine*. *Une revue, un réseau, un mouvement*. Paris, 2010 © Lotte Arndt.

Council in Wroclaw in 1948. Romuald Fonkoua, the current publication director/editor in chief of *Présence Africaine*, offers a double interpretation of the image: for him it represents the victory of African intellectuals and athletes — but also sacrifice, the Christian crown of thorns.³² The reading becomes even more convoluted if one takes into account that the African intellectuals who gathered at the conference in Paris appropriated the painter's fame for their own cause and, adding a caption to the poster, imposed their own interpretation. The words — verses borrowed from *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* by Aimé Césaire — read:

...what I want
is for universal hunger
for universal thirst
to summon it to generate
free at last, from its intimate closeness
the succulence of fruit

Accompanied by these verses, the portrait on the poster represented, symbolically, the affirmation of the colonized, and embodied the aspirations of a subject.

Yet the history of the appropriation remains convoluted. In 1956, Aimé Césaire left the PCF [French communist party] after writing a furious *Letter to Maurice Thorez* in which he asserted that communist solidarity did not take racism and colonialism into account. At the conference in Rome in 1959, Picasso created a second poster that seems to have come from the movement for peace: it depicts a circle of small figures, each a different color, harmoniously holding up a globe. On the eve of independence and in the middle of the Algerian War, any kind of militant statement was absent from the image. Instead, emphasis was placed on the unity of humanity and a message of pacifism. Here, the partial disconnection of the flow of communication between solidarity movements in emerging Cold War blocs and struggles for decolonization becomes apparent.





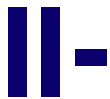
In Rome, Picasso was not the only one to make a poster — South African artist Gérard Sekoto produced a second one. Born in 1913 in South Africa, Sekoto had worked with his compatriot Ernest Mancoba, a member of the avant-garde group CoBrA (created in Paris in 1948). Sekoto participated in both *Présence Africaine* conferences, and contributed often to the journal. A figurative modernist painter, he gradually turned towards Négritude at the end of the 1950s. In 1966, he participated in the First World Festival of Black Arts, co-organized by *Présence Africaine* in Dakar. His positions evolved considerably during the last years of the decade preceding independence: in 1957, he advocated artistic universalism, asserting that art did not accept the color line. Artists were free to create as they pleased, without being confined by predefined affiliations. However, two years later, in a piece entitled “Responsibility and Solidarity in African Culture” that appeared in *Présence Africaine*, he argued that the African diaspora should return “to Africa from time to time to draw inspiration from spiritual sources that have nothing to do with Western influences.”³³ Here, Africa becomes “the origin,” in opposition to Western influences. The poster he conceived for the conference in Rome exudes the influences of Négritude.³⁴

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Image 6: View of the exhibition. Posters for the Congress of Black Writers and Artists, Rome, 1959, by Pablo Picasso and Gerard Sekoto. *Présence Africaine. Une revue, un réseau, un mouvement*. Dakar, 2011 © Sarah Frioux-Salgas.

The choice of posters and logo accentuate the slow transformation of signifiers carried out during the decade preceding independence. Alliances were often fragile: though the journal's African editors managed to appropriate the fields of ethnography and primitivism, they were nonetheless subjected to forced Eurocentric and racist readings. When *Présence Africaine* formed its patronage committee, anxious to have access to a European support group capable of championing the journal to the French authorities, intellectuals such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Marcel Griaule, Jean Rouch, Michel Leiris and Emmanuel Mounier were invited to join (only men). To take the example of Mounier (the publication director of the eminent humanist review *Esprit*), his *Lettre à un ami africain* [Letter to an African Friend] that appeared in the first issue exuded such paternalism that Alioune Diop responded to him five issues later, in an editorial furiously rejecting all forms of tutelage and condescension.³⁵ The relationship between the two men was definitively distressed.³⁶ This event confirms the difficult negotiations that marked the period — from the alliances between African and European intellectuals that created a “we” beyond racial divisions, to the violent conflicts that erupted from the pressing demands for equality.

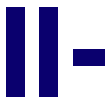
It seems that 1955 was a decisive year with respect to the change of direction at the journal, and exemplary of the constant changes that occur in hegemonies. As noted by Salah Hassan, the relative weight of the three main ideological formations present in the journal — liberal humanism, pan-Africanism and communism— was redistributed around 1955.³⁷ Up until that point, liberal humanism, based on the projection of a universal civilization, dominated.³⁸ From 1955 onwards, political pan-Africanism, nationalism and connections with non-alignment became more prevalent.³⁹ In the summer of 1955, the liminal piece “*Notre nouvelle formule*” [“Our new direction”] declared that all articles would be published as long as they “concern Africa, do not betray either our antiracist, anticolonial determination, or the solidarity of the colonized.”⁴⁰



Blurred forms

Présence Africaine gradually shifted from a humanist concept that saw “culture” as the creative expression of humanity as a whole to a more staunch anti-colonialism. Thus, to resist “colonial negation” —a term employed by Romuald Fonkoua to designate the denial of equality that was the basis of the colonial regime— the journal generally did not advocate a particular aesthetic or ideological orientation. The policy announced by Alioune Diop in the first editorial was to consider publishing work by all “men of good will.” Indeed, among contributing artists there was a wide variety of positions: those of the Nigerian modernist painter Ben Enwonwu who was highly critical of abstraction, which he considered to be an easy seduction by the West,⁴¹ and that he countered with “nka,” the Igbo (a language and people in Nigeria) concept of art as fabrication, or craft;⁴² or the filmmaker Sembene Ousmane, who trained in the USSR and chose the path of social realism; or Haitian architect Albert Mangonès, who, after studying in Brussels and New York, asserted that colonization had destroyed architecture in Africa and left in its wake only the shantytown. Consequently, he explained, an African modernism needed to be invented, based on an analysis of the needs of populations, and following the expertise of modernist architects like Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier.⁴³ In 1955, in a debate on national literature that pitted French surrealist Louis Aragon against Aimé Césaire, followed by various *Présence Africaine* authors against each other, Césaire rejected the prescription of an aesthetic form in the name of the revolutionary cause; he favored instead a syncretic composition —that he named after the fugitive slaves who rebuilt a society on unknown and hostile territory: “marronner” [to maroon]— a position that required the development of an invented aesthetic for an emerging future.⁴⁴ The literary forms in the journal seemed to free themselves more easily from academicism than did visual art. Beyond that, the business of cultural decolonization was partial on yet another level: it presented itself as almost exclusively male. The writer Richard Wright was the only one to point out, in fact, at the conference in 1956, the absence of women among the speakers.

While the concept of culture as the expression of the creative faculty of humans guaranteed an extreme diversity of positions, it also prevented a more militant policy that could have made the journal a tool in the



development of a specific aesthetic proposition. On the other hand, the positions all had in common the search for new forms of expression and construction for the creation of a new Africa. Like Elisabeth Harney, we should thus emphasize that rather than adopt “such blanket terms such as abstraction from a European modernist hermeneutical framework”⁴⁵ we should analyze the processes of borrowing, sharing and reconfigurations in the context of asymmetrical power.



II-

Along with independence came the political divisions of a world henceforth carved out by the Cold War and neocolonial strangleholds. *Présence Africaine* participated in the organizing of large African festivals (Dakar 1966 and Lagos 1977) that replaced the conferences of the 1950s in Europe. Many contributors to the journal also attended the Pan-African Cultural Festival in Algiers in 1969. Yet ideological divisions were strongly felt at these festivals organized within the remit of nation-states, with differing, at times contradictory, geopolitical affiliations.⁴⁶ In 1966 in Dakar, *Présence Africaine* took charge of organizing the World Festival of Black Arts, and published its proceedings. However, because of political differences, many artists — Miriam Makeba and artists from Cuba, Guinea, and Algeria, to name a few — were absent.⁴⁷ Whereas the Afro-Brazilian painter Wilson Tiberio (who had lived for a long time in France) and poet Léopold Sédar Senghor were in tandem in 1956, their paths split soon after. Tiberio became a militant tricontinentalist during the 1960s; he still attended the conference in Dakar in 1966, but was deported afterwards

Image 7: View of the exhibition. *Présence Africaine*.
Une revue, un réseau, un mouvement. Dakar, 2011
© Sarah Frioux-Salgas.

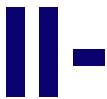
by president Senghor due to Tiberio's political stances. While Senegal built the Musée Dynamique, thus anchoring its postcolonial modernity in Ancient Greece, the Pan-African Cultural Festival in Algiers, with its parades and performances, celebrated "ancestral" popular culture. And when Alioune Diop sought a place for *Présence Africaine* in the organization of the Festac 77 in Lagos, pursuing the idea of a united vision of the continent, the clashes that emerged with the heads of this regional power in full national expansion were such that he left the country, outraged. The African unity voiced from the diaspora of Paris or the Caribbean was now at loggerheads with the national realities, rivalries and geopolitical affiliations of African countries. The adversarial decolonization extended well beyond independence, and was now being negotiated within the context of a network of nation-states — that had become the condition for postcolonial independence.

II-

Notes :

1. Sue Peabody and Tyler Stovall, eds., *The Color of Liberty. Histories of Race in France* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003).
2. Thanks to Virginie Bobin, Mélanie Bouteloup and Élodie Royer. A first draft was presented as part of the "Action! painting/publishing" closing exhibition and public events rounding out the residency of Marion von Osten at the Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers in summer 2012.
3. Maryse Condé, "Order, Disorder, Freedom, and the West Indian Writer" in *Yale French Studies*, n° 97, part 2 (2000): p. 155.
4. For an ample presentation of *Présence Africaine*, see Sarah Frioux-Salgas, ed., *Présence Africaine. Les conditions noires: une généalogie des discours*, special issue n° 10 (Paris: Gradhiva, 2009) accompanying the exhibition *Présence Africaine* (curator: Sarah Frioux-Salgas), Musée du Quai Branly, 2009-2010. I would like to thank Sarah Frioux-Salgas for her generous comments, and for the views of the exhibition *Présence Africaine* at the Cheikh Anta Diop University, Dakar, 2011.
5. De Certeau speaks of cultural work as a "proliferation of inventions in limited spaces" in *La culture au pluriel* (Paris: Seuil, 1993 [1974/1980]), p. 13.
6. Iris Schmeisser, *Transatlantic Crossings between Paris and New York. Pan-Africanism, Cultural Difference and the Arts in the Interwar Years*, (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2006).
7. See Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora. Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2003); Michel Fabre, *La rive noire. De Harlem à la Seine* (Paris: Lieu Commun, 1985).
8. Tyler Stovall, *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996), p. 90.
9. Ibid., ("French colonialism and primitivism [thus] paradoxically combined to foster a vision of pan-African unity").
10. See Edward Said, "Travelling Theory" in *The World, the Text, and the Critic*, (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 226-247.
11. Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic. Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993).
12. Edward Said, "Third World Intellectuals and Metropolitan Culture," *Raritan*, 9 (1990): p. 31.
13. Alioune Diop, "Malentendus" in *Présence Africaine*, n° 6 (1948): p. 6.
14. On the role of the Dogon in building French identity, see Irene Albers, "'Passion Dogon. Marcel Griaule und Michel Leiris. Die Geheimnisse der Dogon (und der Franzosen)'" in Bettina von Lintig, Kerstin Pinther and Tobias Wendl, eds., *Black Paris. Kunst und Geschichte einer schwarzen Diaspora* (Wuppertal: Peter Hammer Verlag, 2006), pp. 161-180.
15. "When statues die, they enter art," declares the narrator in *Les statues meurent aussi* [Statues Also Die], a film commissioned in 1953 by *Présence Africaine* from Alain Resnais and Chris Marker. The filmmakers describe thusly the mutation of these artifacts, objects both esthetic and informative of their "culture of origin" that constitute the material collection of representations of Africa in Europe. See Peter Bloom, "La subversion des hiérarchies du savoir dans "Les statues meurent aussi" in Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard et al., eds., *Zoos humains* (Paris: La Découverte, 2002), pp. 355-361.
16. Frioux-Salgas 2009, p. 10.
17. Michel Leiris, "L'œil de l'ethnologue" in *Documents*, n° 2, vol. 7 (1930): p. 407.
18. Simone Ott, *Schwarz hat so viele Farben. Afrikanisch-französischer Kulturtransfer im frühen 20. Jahrhundert*, (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009): p. 284. Retrospectively, he offers some quite harsh criticism of ethnography: "I was not let down by Africa but by ethnography. [...] I thought upon leaving that, thanks to ethnography, I would be able to leave my own skin, and get inside the skin of others, so to speak. However, I realized that I did not change in the least, and that if among the people I met I did make some friends, it was not the ethnographical study that created proximity between us." Michel, Leiris, "Les Africains ont aussi le sens du beau, Entretien avec Irmeline Hosmann" in *Afrique, magazine de L'Afrique et de Madagascar*, n° 69 (1967): p. 34.
19. Michel Leiris, *Afrique fantôme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1981 [1934]).
20. Salah Hassan, "Inaugural Issues: The Cultural Politics of the Early *Présence Africaine*, 1947-55" in *Research in African Literatures*, n° 30, vol. 2 (1999): p. 205.
21. Kobena Mercer, "Introduction" in *Cosmopolitan Modernisms* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), p. 21.
22. Bennetta Jules-Rosette, "Conjugating Cultural Realities: *Présence Africaine*" in Valentin Yves Mudimbe, ed., *Surreptitious Speech. Présence Africaine and the Politics of Otherness (1947-1987)*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992), pp. 14-44.
23. The *Association populaire des amis des musées* [People's Association of Friends of Museums], founded in 1936, with links to the Musée de l'Homme, directed by Madeleine Rousseau.

24. Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other. How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).
25. Michel Leiris, "Message à l'Afrique" in *Le musée vivant*, 1948, p. 5.
26. According to Guillaume Apollinaire, Picasso explains, "My greatest artistic emotions were those I felt when suddenly the sublime beauty of the sculptures made by the anonymous artists of Africa appeared before me. These works, passionately spiritual and rigorously logical, are the most powerful and beautiful of what the human imagination has produced." See Georges Braque et al., *Braque, Matisse, Picasso. Opinions sur l'art nègre* (Toulouse: Toguna, 1999), p. 10.
27. On the subject of Picasso and primitivism, see Ott 2009, pp. 51-90; Daniel J. Sherman, *French Primitivism and the End of Empire. 1945 to 1975* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2011).
28. See Klaus Herding, *Pablo Picasso. Les Demoiselles d'Avignon: Die Herausforderungen der Avantgarde* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1992), p. 42.
29. See Benoît de l'Estoile, *Le Goût des Autres, de l'Exposition coloniale aux Arts premiers* (Paris: Flammarion, 2007), p. 233. Michel Leiris observes: "Picasso never cared about ethnography! Alright, he appreciated certain African objects but it was a purely esthetic appreciation. He did not concern himself with what it could signify." Michel Leiris, *C'est à dire. Entretien avec Sally Price et Jean Jamin* (Paris: Editions Jean Michel Place, 1992), p. 24.
30. Simon Gikandi, "Picasso, Africa, and the Schema of Difference," *MODERNISM/modernity*, vol. 10, n° 3 (2003): p. 455-480.
31. Romuald Fonkoua, *Aimé Césaire* (Paris: Perrin, 2010), p. 213.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Gérard Sekoto, "La responsabilité et la solidarité dans la culture africaine" in *Présence Africaine*, n° 27-28 (1959): p. 264.
34. See Christine Eyene, "Sekoto and Négritude. The Ante-room of French Culture," *Third Text*, 105, n° 24, issue 4 (2010): pp. 423-435.
35. Alioune Diop, "Malentendus" in *Présence Africaine*, n° 6 (1948): p. 4.
36. Philippe Verdin, *Alioune Diop, le Socrate noir* (Paris: Lethellieux, 2011), p. 127 and 157. This did not stop the journal from publishing a moving obituary in its special issue 8-9, in 1950, following the intellectual's sudden death.
37. Hassan 1999, p. 195.
38. Even if earlier radical positions can be found —for example, in the special issue on work in Africa, coordinated by the French communist writer and sociologist Pierre Naville in 1953.
39. Hassan 1999, p. 194.
40. Alioune Diop, "Notre nouvelle formule" in *Présence Africaine*, n° I-II (1955): p. 6.
41. Ben Enwonwu, "Les points de vue de l'Afrique sur l'art et les problèmes qui se posent aujourd'hui aux artistes africains" in Société africaine de culture/Unesco/Republic of Senegal, eds., *Premier festival mondial des arts nègres. Catalogue* (Dakar, 1966).
42. When Okwui Enwezor, Salah Hassan, and Chika Okeke-Agulu founded their journal on contemporary African art in the US in 1994, they chose "nka" as its title.
43. Albert Mangonès, "Architecture et civilisation négro-africaine" in *Présence Africaine*, n° 27-28 (1959): pp. 286-291.
44. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture. Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 180.
45. Elisabeth Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow: Art, Politics, and the Avant-Garde in Senegal, 1960-1995* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).
46. Cédric Vincent, ed., *Festivals et biennales – machines ou utopies?* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008).
47. See the virulent criticism by Abdallah Stouky: "The World festival of Black Arts, or nostalgia for Négritude" in *Souffles*, n. 2 (1966): pp. 41-45.

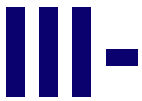


Getty vs Kenya vs Corbis

Maryam Jafri

III-

In 2012, parallel to a research that I was undertaking in African and Asian public archives for *Independence Day 1934-1975*, I was browsing the Getty Images and Corbis websites. I realized that several historical photographs from Kenya that both Getty and Corbis had copyrighted were similar and at times identical to images held by the archives of the Kenya Ministry of Information. The specific images claimed by Kenya and Getty and/or Corbis were not just any images but rather historical images of Kenya's road to Independence from Britain in 1963 — foundational images of their nation-state. *Getty vs Kenya vs Corbis* takes the overlapping images in these image banks and posits them not to speculate on the past but to tap into contemporary concerns about copyright, digitization, and access.





III-



The top image is from Getty Images, the bottom from the Kenya Ministry of Information. Both images are dated 1963, exact dates unspecified. Getty Images states that their image depicts Jomo Kenyatta being sworn in as the first Prime Minister of a newly independent Kenya. The Kenyan Ministry states that their image depicts Jomo Kenyatta being sworn in as Prime Minister during internal self-rule. On 1st June 1963, Kenya attained internal self-rule. On 12th December 1963, Kenya attained independence from the United Kingdom. Both images show the insignia of Queen Elizabeth II on the chair behind Kenyatta, adding credibility to the Kenyan Ministry's assertion that the occasion is internal self-rule, and not full independence.

The Getty image is classified under the Hulton collection. In 1945 magazine publisher Edward Hulton founded Hulton Picture Library. In 1957 he sold the archive to the BBC. The BBC Hulton Library was in turn sold in 1988 to Cable TV entrepreneur Brian Deutsch. The Hulton Deutsch Collection then acquired the Keystone archive, made up of three major British newspaper collections, and thus inherited the Kenyatta image. In 1996 Getty paid seventeen million dollars to purchase the Hulton Deutsch collection, comprising by then some fifteen million images. A few months earlier, Corbis had purchased the Bettmann Archive, the world's first commercial image bank, also comprising some fifteen million images. According to Corbis, an image from their Bettmann collection, pictured below, is the one of Kenyatta being sworn in during independence.

III-



Republic Day 1958 and Independence Day 1960 in Antananarivo

Helihanta Rajaonarison

IV-

The focus of this article initially came from another study on the different moods of state-sponsored celebrations in Antananarivo between 1958 and 1960 through photographs. The piece, entitled “*Images de fête à Antananarivo (1958-1960). Quels sont les temps forts de l’indépendance pour les Malgaches?*” [“Images of celebration in Antananarivo (1958-1960). What were the high points of independence for Malagasy?”], appeared in Goerg, (O), Martineau, (J-L), Nativel, (D), Eds., *Les indépendances en Afrique. L’événement et ses mémoires 1957/1960-2010*, Presse universitaire de Rennes, 2012, pp. 253-271.

Introduction

When 77% of the population voted “yes” in the referendum of 1958, Madagascar became a member of the French Community. Yet it should be pointed out that in the capital, the majority of voters came down against membership. This dissonance between Antananarivo and the rest of the island reflects the differences of opinion between the mayor of the city — Richard Andriamanjato, head of the AKFM¹ party and leader of the “no” votes — and the Republic’s first president, Philibert Tsiranana from the PADESM² party, later the PSD³. A large portion of the population in Antananarivo, however, was won over by the AKFM party, who never ceased to reiterate that the main architects of independence were deputies from the MDRM⁴ — namely Doctor Raseta who was elected to the national assembly in 1946, Doctor Ravoahangy, and the poet Rabemananjara — who were exiled in France following the 1947 Uprising.

After the referendum came the Congress of Provincial Assemblies of October 14, 1958, during which the autonomous Malagasy Republic was born, with Philibert Tsiranana as its president. For the occasion, Tsiranana presented Antananarivo with its first celebration of the Republic, yet the disparity of views was such that those who responded were mostly children (cf. photo 1). An official declaration of the country’s independence took place on June 26, 1960, to be celebrated on July 29, 30 and 31. However, between the two dates — on July 20 — the former deputies returned from exile. This was a major event in the history of the capital. The gap between the declaration and the celebration, interrupted by the welcome home of the exiles, is what makes the singularity of the Independence Day celebrations in Antananarivo. Photographs issued by the national press agency Taratra (ANTA), the official press organ, bear witness to these events.

IV-

By comparing the stances shown in the official photos with those offered by the witness testimonies, this study reveals the dissonance between what was shown and what was lived during the celebrations of October 1958 and July 1960 in Antananarivo. Let us first, however, look at the relationship between the regime and the photo agency that provided the source of our photographic archives.

The regime and the ANTA photo agency

The new leadership —our young Republic— was aware of the importance of photography, and made the ANTA agency (inherited from the French administration) one of its main support organs. From the very first months, in Antananarivo as in Conakry, the government began using the photo agency to its advantage (HERSANT, 1998: 203). Created in 1934, under colonization, the *Service photographique de l'information* [photographic information service] was renamed the *Agence Nationale Taratra*, or ANTA, in 1962. Responsible for providing and conserving images recording the news on the island, the agency began as of 1958 to photograph the leadership in Antananarivo and in the provinces.⁵ By virtue of the size of the collection —close to 600,000 images organized among hundreds of albums— we could find no equivalent to the images produced by ANTA in the private photographs taken, from which I attempted to form a basis for study.

Indeed, it seemed essential to be able to go back and forth between these two types of iconographic sources to get the most accurate idea of the mood of the capital. However, after several months of intense research, I was not able to gather enough, even after contacting the son of a photographer who had a studio in town.

Thus, in order to better understand the contrast between the discourse of the official photographs and the experience offered in the testimonies, I interviewed about twenty people living in Antananarivo and its surroundings, all of them Malagasy, and all present in the capital during the festivities.

IV-

The first state-sponsored “Republic Day” in Antananarivo

Officially born on October 14, 1958, the First Republic was not celebrated until Saturday October 18. In fact, October 14 was an ordinary day that passed almost unnoticed, as described by Gaby Rabesahala: “At school, I followed the deputies leaving the ballroom before reaching Andohalo square, which was empty of people! The government was introduced to the occasional passersby and to us few curious school children who were there!”⁶ Martin Ranamison, who was in the center of Analakely that day, had the same experience: “On October 14, 1958, as a young recruit, I was kept at the town hall, ready to leave for Fianarantsoa that very evening.”⁷ It was not until the following day that the government officially declared Saturday, October 18, to be Republic Day.

In contrast to what these people experienced on October 14, the official photographs show the celebrations on October 18 as a success. *The hira gasy* performance — or Malagasy folkloric dance — in Ambohitovovo Park⁸ (photo 1) drew many spectators. Seated in the first row were children, and many of them. Behind them were adults, dressed in ordinary clothes. At the back of the garden, among the trees, was a sparser crowd. The day’s events were followed that evening by village dances throughout various quarters of the city, where, for instance, young people came, more than anything else to have fun since they were not concerned by politics. The government sponsored the festivities, undoubtedly hoping to connect the capital with the event. However, the ordinary clothes worn by the crowd show that people did not deem it necessary to dress up for the occasion.

IV-



Photograph 1: The *hira gasy* at the children’s park Ambohitovovo, October 18, 1958. ANTA collection.

June 26, 1960: The official declaration of the return to independence

All the witnesses acknowledge that Mahamasina⁹ stadium, as seen in the photos, had never held as many people as on June 26, 1960, the day independence was declared. The press also confirmed this. “Thousands of Tananarivians came to Mahamasina to hear the official declaration of Madagascar’s independence.”¹⁰ And: “Several hours before the ceremony, thousands of people arrived at Mahamasina and surrounding valleys.”¹¹



Women were included in the celebrations, indeed, as witnessed by the impressive number of parasols — open and closed — that, along with the *lamba*, formed part of the outfit of the elegant woman. The *lamba*, a large wrap one drapes around the body, is worn by the Malagasy as a garment and represents, symbolically, the person wearing it. For decades men in the city had given up the *lamba*. Yet on that day, with no prompting, each one sought a Malagasy touch to his outfit by wearing this symbol of Malagasy identity (photo 2).¹² At the exit of the stadium, amid the laughter and joy, there was also whooping, whistling, and honking of horns — much expressed enthusiasm, according to the newspaper *Hehy* on July 1, 1960. The support shown by part of the Antananarivian population usually criti-

Photograph 2: A view of the crowd at Mahamasina on June 26, 1960.
ANTA collection.

cal of Tsiranana was corroborated by the opposition newspaper *Imongo vaovao*, writing: “The large crowd that gathered to hear Général de Gaulle in 1959 was composed essentially of school children and residents from the outskirts of the capital, for whom transportation had been specially chartered, and whose faces showed irritation and a lack of joy. By contrast, the crowd attending the ceremony on June 26 is definitely from Antananarivo. No one went to fetch them for 100 kilometers around; they gathered spontaneously aware of the importance of the event. And their faces radiated with joy.”¹³

However, the declaration of independence took place within an ambivalent atmosphere, such that historian Lucile Rabearimanana recalled “a lukewarm reception among Antananarivians” despite the presence of a large though disparate crowd showing mixed feelings (RABEARIMANANA, 1992: 583). Moreover, a number of residents stayed away from the celebration altogether. The same was true of opponents and Malagasy with French citizenship. Gaby Rabesahala recalls coming very early to Mahamasina as a scoutmaster, to ensure security surrounding the event. “My only motivation was to hear the Malagasy scout movement mentioned in the president’s speech, because we helped the victims of the great floods in 1959. It was the only thing I was thinking about and, of course, I remembered nothing from the speech. In fact, after the parade, I headed straight home, where there was no celebration and no one was talking about this business of independence.”¹⁴ Micheline Rasoamiaramana, an adolescent at the time, claims to have felt a detachment from what was going on: “I was a French citizen, so I was indifferent. From our home (in Ambatonakanga), I saw people heading to Mahamasina, but it had no effect on me.”¹⁵

Opponents to the regime also distanced themselves from the celebrations. For example, the newspaper *Basy vava*, a daily paper with ties to the AKFM, mentioned nothing about the event in its issue n° 816 published the day after the official declaration. These choices may explain the absence of private photos. For Gisèle Ravoniharison, who voted “no” in the referendum, photographs were reserved above all for major family and religious events.” She adds a valuable comment: “Actually, for us (my family and me), it was a holiday like any other, only with Tsiranana’s speech added to it. We were confused because it’s true we wanted independence but not like “that one” (*sic*)! The idea of taking photos didn’t even cross our minds!” Armand Randrianasolo, the son of a photographer, does not remember having seen people come to his father’s studio to be photographed on that historic day.

IV-

July 20, 1960: Antananarivo honors the MDRM deputies—heroes in the struggle for independence

The deputies convicted of a “crime against France” following the 1947 Uprising returned to Madagascar a few weeks after the declaration.¹⁶ It was with indescribable joy that the Antananarivians, supporters of the MDRM then of the AKFM, welcomed them home. Nothing official had been planned but people were out in droves, lining the streets of the capital and along the route from the airport to about 50 kilometers west of Antananarivo (photo 3).



These city dwellers took great care in their appearance—a sign of their elegance, but also, undeniably, of their desire to mark the occasion and show due respect to the “great men” they solemnly awaited. Rolland Raparivo,¹⁸ son of a member of the MDRM and of a woman who had perished fleeing with other civilians to the mountainous forest east of Moramanga, was among them. Like many other young people, Jean Rajaonarison¹⁹ went with a group of friends to salute these “heroes,” as they called them.

Photograph 3: Crowds on the edge of Lake Anosy¹⁷, July 20, 1960. ANTA collection.

While the government had not officially declared it a holiday, all activities — apart from those in the public administration — were put on hold. Office workers could not miss the event. Employees at the Department of Health in Ambohidahy were well placed to watch the motorcade go by. An orderly crowd of men lined up on either side of the cars escorting the deputies who were accompanied by official figures.

Finally, the highlight of the day's events took place that evening in front of the town hall. A large gathering, this time made up largely of young people, shouted out in a single voice: "*Misaotra e! Misaotra e!*" ("Thank you! Thank you!")²⁰ Who were they thanking? The former exiles, for having struggled for independence as early as 1946? Tsiranana, for having brought them back home? The mayor, for having organized the rally? Difficult to say. Ranamison, who witnessed the event, concedes that the images published by the papers reported a harmony among participants that was likely more emphatic than at the ceremony on June 26.²¹

The official Independence Day celebrations: July 29, 30 and 31, 1960

From the beginning of the week, singing and dancing contests held every evening on the square in front of the town hall drew young spectators from various backgrounds. On Wednesday, July 27, platforms were set up in several quarters. A banner reading "*Ahaba tratry ny fahaleovantena*" ("Congratulations for you have attended the coming of independence") was hung on the façade of the town hall. The flags of invited countries were raised along Avenue de l'Indépendance. Day after day, the atmosphere became increasingly festive.²² Special measures were taken so that employees did not miss the festivities.²³ Also, the markets stayed open longer, and the municipality issued authorizations for slaughtering animals (pigs and sheep) for families' consumption. Individuals, too, took initiatives, such as the taxi driver collective that provided free shuttles between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. Saturday, July 30, from Avenue de l'Indépendance in Analakely to Place de l'Indépendance at Antaninarenina, where a memorial stone was to be inaugurated.²⁴ All the newspapers busied themselves publishing official programs.

IV-

Despite the divergence in points of view on the terms of independence, a great majority, if not all, of Antananarivian households participated in some way or other in the public festivities. Throughout the week, droves of young people from every social background converged at the platforms. Many families, even those with modest incomes, marked the occasion by slaughtering at least one fowl.

Conclusion

Comparing the interpretation of the few photos studied with the individual accounts contributed offers an idea of the relationship between the official discourse shown in the public photos and the feelings, not to say the perception of ordinary people towards the events surrounding the state-sponsored celebrations of 1960.

The photos taken on the Declaration Day of June 26 reveal a solemn-faced crowd, with mixed feelings, perhaps, regarding the import of the event. The absence of private photos is proof of Antananarivians' "lukewarm reception" of the return to independence. Upon the arrival back home of the former deputies on July 20, the official images corroborate the joy expressed in the private accounts. Finally, during the celebration days of July 29, 30 and 31, the mood of the festivities — likely to attract the more modest populations of the capital — explains the success of these last celebrations; the images reflect the official discourse.

IV-

Notes:

1. ***Antokon'ny Kongresy ho an'ny Fahaleovan-tenan'i Madagasikara***, the Congress Party for the Independence of Madagascar, claimed to be the heir to the MDRM (Democratic Movement for Malagasy Rejuvenation), a party created in 1946 and banned in 1947 because the colonial authorities named it responsible for the Uprising.
2. The Party of the Disinherited of Madagascar, which brought together mostly Malagasy originating from regions outside of Merina territory.
3. The Social Democratic Party, created by Philibert Tsiranana in 1956. The PSD, the main political party of the First Republic, remained in power until the fall of the regime in 1972.
4. MDRM, the Democratic Movement for Malagasy Rejuvenation.
5. To date ANTA has collected over 500,000 images organized in 600 albums.
6. Interview n° 16.
7. Interview n° 18.
8. The children's park where the administration usually held public performances during celebrations in the colony.
9. When Madagascar was a kingdom, Mahamasina —literally meaning “which renders sacred”— was where sovereigns were crowned, as well as the army's marching grounds.
10. ***Imongo vaovao***, 1263, from June 28, 1960.
11. ***Gazety Hehy***, 936, July 1, 1960. Spacensky estimates more than 100,000 people attended (Spacensky, 1970: 342).
12. Séraphine Rasoanandrasana recalls: “Specially for the occasion, I bought myself a new mauve dress and a new *lamba*.”
13. ***Imongo vaovao***, 1263, June 28, 1960.
14. Interview n° 8.
15. Interview n° 16.
16. Granted amnesty in 1956, they were still condemned to house arrest in France. After negotiations they were later allowed to return to Madagascar (RANDRIAMARO, 2009: 465).
17. The lake is in the vicinity of Mahamasina.
18. Interview n° 15.
19. Interview n° 10.
20. ***Gazety Hehy***, 938, July 22, 1960.
21. Account by Ranamison Martin. Interview n° 12.
22. ***Idem***, 1290, July 30, 1960.
23. The newspaper ***Imongo vaovao*** (1286, July 26, 1960) reported: “Saturday, July 30, is declared a non-work day, but paid. The government asks that all employers please recompense their employees, or pay an “advance” on their salaries, at the latest July 29, in order to allow them to participate in the festivities.”
24. ***Imongo vaovao***, 1288, July 28, 1960.

IV-

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2. Christiane Andriamirado, 72, archivist-teacher, Antananarivo, September 2010
3. Désiré Andriantseho, 70, deputy fokontany (district) head, Amboditsiry, August 2010
4. Christine R., 68, laundrywoman, Antananarivo, August 2010
5. Claudine R., 69, retired laundrywoman, Ambohitrombihavana, September 2010
6. Manassé Esoavelomandroso, 68, teacher, Antananarivo, September 2009
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8. Gaby Rabesahala, 69, retired journalist, Antananarivo, October 2010
9. Ernestine Raharimalala, 74, seamstress, Antananarivo, June 2009
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11. Marcelle Rajaonarivelo, 66, housewife, Antananarivo, October 2010
12. Martin Ranamison, 73, retired general school supervisor, Ambohitrombihavana, September 2010
13. Armand Randrianasolo, 62, photographer, Antananarivo, October 2010
14. Gabriel Rantoandro, 64, teacher, Antananarivo, November 2010
15. Rolland Raparivo, 78, artist-painter, Anosy Avaratra, October 2010
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Some Sketches for a Hypothetical *Postcolonial Theories for Museums Handbook*

Marie-laure Allain Bonilla

V-

50

Since their inception, postcolonial theories have always been controversially criticized, especially for what is perceived as an inability to respond/apply to real contexts; their focus on textual analysis would lead to an ahistorical and idealistic criticism of colonialism. Postcolonial theories are nevertheless entering museums of modern art as useful tools to reconfigure their policies and their very functioning. Indeed, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, museums of modern art in Europe have had no choice but to rethink their programming and the composition of their collections in light of the ongoing globalization of the contemporary art world, the politics of cultural difference, and the need to reshape modern art history, particularly according to the demands of postcolonial theories, to include the voice of “Others.” One of the main postcolonial challenges for modern art museums today is probably to “provincialize Europe,”¹ insofar as modernity is intrinsically bound with European imperialism and coterminous with Eurocentrism. The aim of “provincializing Europe” is less to reject modernity than to inscribe ambivalence within its narratives; to renew it by integrating what has been excluded from it. This challenge has many applications, whether it be the programming of temporary exhibitions, acquisition policies, collection displays, or conference schedule.

A handbook would be a useful tool to provide some insight into what is currently being proposed by museums regarding postcolonial issues. The idea of drawing some sketches for a hypothetical *Postcolonial Theories for Museums* handbook comes from a small book entitled *Bhabha for Architects*.² The author, Felipe Hernández, offers a sketch of what a postcolonial reading of architectural history might look like, showing that Homi K. Bhabha’s concepts of ambivalence, hybridity, or Third Space could be useful in analyzing architectural case studies both past and contemporary. Why does this kind of *boîte à outils* not exist in the field of modern and contemporary art practices? Be it *for Artists, for Art Historians, for Curators* or, in our case, *for Museums*.

Rather than a “to-do list” handbook, which could be quite didactic on one hand but on the other could quickly turn into an authoritarian, moralizing initiative, the idea is to propose a reflection that builds on observations drawn from existing projects, to show what kind of practices should be followed and/or improved. Limiting the reflection to one author, as in *Bhabha for Architects*, would not be a useful method for our purpose. It would not cover all the issues at stake in postcoloniality. The initial idea was to extract some key postcolonial concepts and

V-

to see how each of them is interpreted, used, and applied by museums. But as those concepts are deeply interwoven, it would be difficult to maintain this didactic approach. Instead, the project started by looking directly at museums' activities.

Four European museums of modern art were selected for this purpose — Tate Modern, the Centre Georges Pompidou, the Stedelijk Museum, and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía — precisely because of their location in former European colonial countries, in order to examine whether or not the state of postcoloniality interacts with their vision of the museum at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The responses are very different and reflect different kinds of projects and orientations: Tate Modern and the Centre Pompidou are more turned towards a global reach, with a universalist scope, whereas the Stedelijk and Reina Sofía seem to be more engaged in local issues and the exploration of postcoloniality *per se*.

Like in Hernández's book, the introductory parts of this hypothetical handbook would explain the terminology and genealogy of postcolonial theories, as well define some key postcolonial concepts. Then, the 'practical application' section of the handbook would be divided along the three main museum activities: acquisition policies, collection display, and temporary exhibitions. For each of these sections, we choose relevant examples below to highlight a postcolonial issue. What follows is a sketch, a work in progress, that needs to be improved and that is by no way an exhaustive review of what each museum proposes.

V-

Acquisition Policies: Geopolitical Revisionism

Ideally, adopting a postcolonial acquisition policy would mean overcoming the Euro-American gaze on modern art history and beginning to acquire non-Western art, as well as art produced by migrants and non-Caucasian people. This position is clearly endorsed by the four museums, although more easily with contemporary than modern art.³ Tate Modern is one of the first museums in the world to have taken on this shift in the twenty-first century. For example, several Acquisition Committees were created according to geographical areas, such as the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, or India, with specialists from each region on each committee. The systematic inclusion of other voices seems a good initiative in order

to avoid, or at least attenuate, the persistence of a stranglehold by the West. But is it really possible to build a collection without maintaining a power relationship?

According to theorist Joaquín Barriendos, the concept of global art —supposedly synonymous with openness and free circulation— is the expression of the coloniality of power.⁴ Collecting artwork from all over the world could in fact tend to reproduce the colonialist attitude of plundering other cultures to enrich our own. Museums are caught in a paradox: on the one hand, the need to make their functions and policies evolve towards a geopolitical revisionism; on the other, the risk of imposing a new geo-aesthetical expression of the Western model. As Barriendos asks: who can legitimately reverse the historiographic discourse of Western modernity? If the answers are still to be found, Tate Modern appears quite conscious of the need to “give back”⁵ and invents ways of doing so through different programs, such as international curatorial exchanges and partnerships with local art organizations in Kabul, Lagos, or Amman.⁶

The Reina Sofía mission statement is an example of the attempt to combine a geopolitical revisionism with an emphasis on postcolonialism rather than on globalism.⁷ The rhetoric used is clearly borrowed from Édouard Glissant: “forms of relation,” “relational identity,” “multiple roots,” “Relation,” or “poetics of Relation.” The statement does not target any geographical regions in particular but rather seeks to shape an ideological framework oriented around notions of identity and locality. Édouard Glissant’s thinking provides a valid theoretical framework for a geopolitical revision along with a displacement of the very sense of place.

V-

Collection Displays: Other Histories

Linked to the need for geopolitical revisionism is the necessity of rewriting the story of modern art from a postcolonial point of view, to provide other histories, other scenarios that better represent the plurality of narratives of transmodernity and cultural difference. The idea of cultural identity as a limited and authentic object must be overcome through an emphasis on hybridity and cultural exchange. As the tip of the iceberg, the collection display plays an essential role in reflecting the museum’s position regarding these issues. While Tate Modern and the Stedelijk Museum

keep a quite classical display of their collections, whether it be organized around general themes such as “poetry and dream” or “structure and clarity,” or according to a mainstream timeline of art history, the Reina Sofía and the Centre Pompidou have recently made efforts to establish new scenarios for the display of their collections.⁸

At the Centre Pompidou, *Modernités plurielles. Une nouvelle histoire de l’art moderne de 1905 à 1970 (Plural Modernities. A New History of Modern Art from 1905 to 1970)*, is an *exhibition as manifesto* that aims to present a “new geography of modern art from 1905 to 1970,” with the ambition of reflecting the richness of what is considered to be the first European art collection worldwide in terms of both the number of countries and the artists represented. Forty-two rooms, each considered as a micro exhibition, make up this display organized both chronologically and thematically, with highlights on certain artists such as Wifredo Lam, Roberto Matta, and Wassily Kandinsky. The goal is clearly to be as exhaustive as possible and to include art from geographical areas that are usually excluded. There are rooms devoted to the anthropophagic and indigenous movements in Latin America, African and Asian modernities, Mediterranean colonial architecture, or the Indian city. This is a laudable initiative, but this search for completeness runs the risk of leading towards a universalist paradigm — something that most curators aware of postcolonial issues have tried to distance themselves from, at least since *Magiciens de la terre*. That is why critical aspects must appear within the display and not only under the form of quotations on the wall.⁹

The problem lies both in the constitution of the collection and in the way it is exhibited. For example, is it possible to display photographs taken in colonized Africa by Westerners in a room entitled “L’Afrique photographiée,” without providing any background on colonization or the construction of stereotypes, through at least a counter-display with photographs taken by African people¹⁰? In the room dedicated to Modern Africa, sculptures, masks, painted fabrics, and paintings are found but there is not a single photograph nor background of any kind. Four photographs by Malick Sidibé are mounted in an adjacent hallway, relegated to the fringes of Modern Africa.

V-



Display of the permanent collection by Catherine Grenier, *Modernités plurielles 1905-1970*, "Modern Africa" room, Centre Georges Pompidou 2014: Middle: Aniedi Okon Akpan, *Escargot*; *Lutteurs*; *Femme et enfant*, undated. In the background, from left to right: Nicolas Ondongo, *Marché en A.E.F.*, 1958; Gera, *L'Innommé*, 1982; Gera, *Untitled*, undated; Jacques Zigoma, *Retour du marché*, around 1958; Anonymous, *Mami Watta*, around 1950; Marcel Gotene, *Sans titre*, around 1960.

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Display of the permanent collection by Catherine Grenier, *Modernités plurielles 1905-1970*, Centre Georges Pompidou (February 2014). Malick Sidibé, from left to right: *Arrosage BEPC*, 27/09/1962; *Anniversaire Abib*, 27/04/1969; *Bal du lycée technique au Motel*, 26/03/1966; *Nuit du 24 novembre*, 1973.

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Aside from revealing the fact that the collection of the Centre Pompidou contains very few modern African photographs, this display betrays a lack of work within the limits of the collection.¹¹ The existence of the Modern Africa room is entirely owed to loans from the Musée du quai Branly and the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain (FNAC)¹². This example begs the question: how to interrogate the shortcomings of a collection? Is it preferable to have an African room with artworks that do not do justice to the reality of African art history but satisfy postcolonial correctness, or to produce a narration with different documents and archives to tell another story?



Display of the permanent collection by Catherine Grenier, *Modernités plurielles 1905-1970*, "Odalisques modernes" room (February 2014). From left to right: Martial Raysse, *Made in Japan-La Grande odalisque*, 1964; Pablo Picasso, *Femme nue au bonnet turc*, 1955; Larry Rivers, *I Like Olympia in Black Face*, 1970; Henri Matisse, *Figure décorative sur fond ornemental*, winter 1925-1926; Federico Beltrán Masses, *Pierrot malade*, 1929. © Marie-laure Allain Bonilla



Display of the permanent collection modified by Catherine David, *Modernités plurielles 1905-1970*, untitled room (previously titled "Odalisques modernes") (December 2014). From left to right: Larry Rivers, *I Like Olympia in Black Face*, 1970; Peter Saul, *Bwetiful & Swtong*, 1971. © Marie-laure Allain Bonilla

Display of the permanent collection modified by Catherine David, *Modernités plurielles 1905-1970*, untitled room (previously titled "Odalisques modernes") (December 2014). From left to right: Bruce Nauman, *Art Make Up*, 1967-68; Malcolm Morley, *Cradle of Civilization with American Woman*, 1982. © Marie-laure Allain Bonilla

A counterexample could be found at the Reina Sofía. For the third section of the new collection display (on view since November 2011), the curators did not try to be exhaustive or as global as possible and instead worked with the lacks and imperfections of the collection by providing further sociopolitical and historical background information, which came as a supplement and not as a substitute. While at the Centre Pompidou nothing appears on the decolonization processes and the independence movements in Africa, it is the starting point of this third section at the Reina Sofía. Entitled “From the Revolt to Postmodernity (1962-1982)”, it starts with the end of the Algerian War of Independence and the Cuban Missile Crisis. In the first room, books from Frantz Fanon and Aimé Césaire and photographs by Agnès Varda and Alberto Korda are displayed, as well as a projection of Gillo Pontecorvo’s *The Battle of Algiers* (1965) and Alain Resnais and Chris Marker’s movie *Les Statues meurent aussi* (1953). Reina Sofía thus acknowledges that the role of decolonization is unavoidable for a postcolonial reading of twentieth-century history.

Temporary Exhibitions: Knowledge-Without-Power and Relation

Even though they are ephemeral, temporary exhibitions play a crucial role in the revision of art history and the dispersion of Eurocentrism — a role comparable to that of the collection display. It is essential that historical artists who are critical of the understanding of transmodernity, such as Bhupen Khakhar, Amrita Sher-Gil, Saoula Raoula Choucair, or Lygia Pape, be exhibited as much as contemporary artists who explore the colonial heritage within modernity and postcolonial issues, such as Renzo Martens, Meschac Gaba, Paloma Polo, or Isaac Julien. An exception is made in the case of the Centre Pompidou,¹³ which remains somewhat unadventurous for the time being, while the Stedelijk Museum, Tate Modern, and Reina Sofía¹⁴ are developing a policy of solo exhibitions devoted to these artists. The same issues are at stake in collective shows. The exploration of transmodernity through the colonial apparatus reveals the obsolescence of modernity as we know it through a European lens. *The Potosí Principle: How Shall We Sing the Lord’s Song in a Strange Land?*, co-produced by the Reina Sofía and the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin in 2010, is one

V-

of the best examples to date.¹⁵ From the situation of Potosí, one of the most important cities in the seventeenth century and a symbol of the beginning of the globalization process with the exploitation of its silver mines by the Spanish, the exhibition showed that the development of modernity is correlated with colonialism as well as the role played by the peripheries in this story. By displaying ancient and contemporary art side by side, *The Potosí Principle* went beyond the simple deactivation of Western modernity and provided links with current situations similar to the one experienced in Potosí.

It is obvious that efforts are being made at the Reina Sofía to establish more horizontality in the relationships with Latin America and thus to break former power relationships from the colonial era. This can be observed in *Versiones del Sur* [Versions of the South], a series of five thematic exhibitions presented in 2000. Each of them proposed a revision of art history in the twentieth century by focusing on Latin American art.¹⁶ The curatorship was delegated to prominent Latin American curators to avoid the risk of imposing an institutional discourse and thus a European vision.¹⁷ *Perder la forma humana. Una imagen sísmica de los años ochenta en América Latina* [Losing the human form. A seismic image of the 1980s in Latin America.], curated in 2012 by Red Conceptualismos del Sur, a Latin American research group, also relates to the museum's will to welcome other voices in its own space.¹⁸ Even if it seems inappropriate to talk about agency in an institutional context, where power relationships are difficult to balance, those exhibitions can nevertheless be seen as creating the possibility for postcolonial subjects to express their agency within the core of the institution. By giving a space, physical as much as mental, to collective memory, the museum can become a space where alternative positions are expressed, and has the potential to become what Trinh T. Minh-ha calls a space of "knowledge-without-power."¹⁹

The example of *Project 1975* provides a synthesis of how postcolonial policies for the museum should be conducted.²⁰ This two-year project (2010-12) driven by the Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam (SMBA) aimed to investigate the postcolonial unconscious in contemporary art. Just like the Reina Sofía mission statement we mentioned above, *Project 1975* is also framed by Édouard Glissant's notion of the poetics of Relation. Several solo and collective shows, as well as symposiums and conferences, were organized along this perspective. The totality of *Project 1975* is a successful demonstration of the potential for museums to establish horizontal exchanges with former colonies (though more

V-

with Africa than with Surinam or Indonesia²¹), to give a voice to “others” with curatorial collaborations, to investigate postcoloniality by insisting more on locality than on globalism, to reveal the apparatus of capitalist imperialism, and to work for the constitution of a postcolonial collective memory—in this case with the purchase of almost all artworks produced for the project.

These brief sketches for a hypothetical *Postcolonial Theories for Museums* handbook prove that postcolonial theories are not only entering the twenty-first-century museum under various forms, but that they can help to analyze their policies and different projects more precisely. To deconstruct the colonial foundations of museums of modern art is a difficult task that requires multiple tools. This kind of handbook could be one of them.

V-

This text is a revised version of a conference delivered during the international symposium *Collecting Geographies: Global Programming and Museums of Modern Art* organized by the Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam (SMBA) the 13th, 14th and 15th March 2014.

Notes:

1. Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).
2. See Felipe Hernández, *Bhabha for Architects* (New York, London: Routledge, 2010).
3. For example, this is obvious for African art collected by the Centre Georges Pompidou, who owns significantly more African art from the twenty-first century than from the twentieth century.
4. Joaquín Barriendos Rodríguez, "Geopolitics of Global Art. The Reinvention of Latin America as a Geo-Aesthetic Region," in *The Global Art World. Audiences, Market and Museums*, ed. Hans Belting, Andrea Buddensieg (Ostfildern, Hatje Cantz: 2009), 98-116.
5. See Chris Dercon's presentation at the symposium "What is a Postcolonial Exhibition?" organized by the Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam in May 2012: <http://smba.nl/en/events/symposium-what-is-a-postcolonia/>
6. Different programs exist such as the Unilever Series: turbinegeneration that involves schools from U.K. and all over the world to work with Tate's collection, or aforementioned the Level 2 Exchange Series, which works with local art structures and help create exhibitions.
7. See <http://www.museoreinasofia.es/en/museum/mission-statement>
8. Nonetheless Tate Modern includes some important artworks by artists formerly neglected, such as Helio Oiticica, but it is not yet a real policy to present an entirely revised display.
9. On the walls of certain rooms, quotations are printed, like proofs of the critical view of the curators but without any other visible critical aspect in the display.
10. Our analysis is based on the study of the display as it was in February 2014. It is important to note here that Catherine Grenier, the curator of this collection's display, was dismissed just few months after the opening of the exhibition, in January 2014. She was replaced by Catherine David, who subsequently changed the display of some rooms such as the entrance and main hallways, "L'Afrique photographiée" or "Odalisques modernes," just to name a few. A comparative study of these two displays would be interesting to conduct.
11. And yet Catherine Grenier seems to be acknowledging the fact when she writes in the catalogue: "Within the museum, the rereading of art history goes by the rereading of this collective memory that is the collection, and of the different steps and vagaries of its constitution." Catherine Grenier, "Le monde à l'envers?", in *Modernités plurielles 1905-1970* (Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 2013), 19.
12. On fifteen exhibited works in the Modern Africa room, none of them belong to the Centre Georges Pompidou collection.
13. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, only seven artists (from non-Western countries or from the immigration) have benefitted from a solo exhibition at Centre Georges Pompidou: Koo Jeong-A (2004), Isaac Julien (2005), Damián Ortega (2008-9), Gabriel Orozco (2011), Yayoi Kusama (2011-12), Adel Abdessemed (2012-13), Latifa Echakhch (2014-15).
14. It could be off-putting to mention every solo exhibition presented in each institution since 2000, but it nevertheless proves the richness of their programming. Reina Sofia: Siah Armajani, Kcho, Bhupen Khakhar, Atul Dodiya, Guillermo Kuitca, Gabriel Orozco, Kimsooja, Kiwon Park, Chen Chieh-Jen, Francis Alÿs, Lygia Pape, Paloma Polo, Cildo Meireles, Tracey Rose, Kerry James Marshall. Stedelijk Museum: Eylam Aladogan, Yang Fudong, Shirin Neshat, Hala Elkoussy, Amar Kanwar, Ahmet Ogü, Tala Madani. Tate Modern: Mohammed Camara, Meschac Gaba, Simryn Gill, Amrita Sher-Gil, Helio Oiticica, Nicolas Hlobo, Cildo Meireles, Latifa Echakhch, Rasheed Araeen, Tania Bruguera, Saloua Raouda Choucair, Ibrahim el-Salahi, Cao Fei, Kader Attia, Li-Yuan-chia, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, Zarina Hashmi.
15. The exhibition also toured in Bolivia at the Museo Nacional de Arte and Museo de Etnografía y Folklore in La Paz in 2011.
16. "Eztetyka del sueño" [Aesthetics of the dream] dealt with installations, video art, and performances since the 1960s. "Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin-lugar: 1918-1968" [Heterotopies. Half a century without a place: 1918-1968] focused on the period of the establishment of modern Latin American art. "No es sólo lo que ves: pervirtiendo el minimalismo" [It's not only what you see: distorting minimalism] showed works using Minimalist strategies. "Más allá del documento" [Beyond the document] focused mostly on photography and the relation between the document and the archive while "F(r)icciones" [F(r)ictions] concerned the relationship between art and text, formats, and contents in contemporary and historical works.
17. The curators were Carlos Basualdo, Gerardo Mosquera, Ivo Mesquita, Mari Carmen Ramírez, Héctor Olea, Mónica Amor, and Adriano Pedrosa. Spanish curator Octavio Zaya, known for his engagement with postcolonial issues, was also involved.
18. Red Conceptualismos del Sur is a research group on postcolonial thought formed in 2007. It aims to observe the present as much as exhuming the memory of the South.
19. Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), 41.
20. See <http://project1975.smba.nl/>

V-

61

21. SMBA did develop a project with Indonesia entitled "Made in Commons," but it is not part of the "Project 1975." "Made in Commons" is the first collaborative project to be held in the framework of the Global Collaborations program, which follows "Project 1975" and will also last two years, from 2013 to 2015.

V-

Why the Forest is the School

Pedro Neves Marques

VI-

63

Anthropophagy, the chronicled ritual of cannibalism practiced by many Amerindian tribes, forms a paradigmatic image of Brazil, if not South America; an image tying nature and culture together in that original trauma revealed on October 11, 1492, “the last day of a free America; the following day, Columbus arrived...”¹ In the region, nature and culture have never been effectively set apart, neither for the indigenous, for whose cosmologies the divide is foreign (though not necessarily inexistent) nor for colonizers past or present, for whom the savages and the land tend to mirror one another as if a multistable image. In the times of first encounters, the Amerindians were simultaneously the preferred and the most incomprehensible of savages, open to conversion and avid for mercantile exchange yet paradoxically bent on perpetuating their wars and their anthropophagic rituals hidden among the tropical foliage, “conceived, at best, as a species more natural than cultural, a kind of anthropomorphized emanation of a particularly ‘natural’ nature that constitutes an intermediary, or an avatar, between the Good ‘Savage’ of the eighteenth century and the ‘Universal Adaptor’ of twentieth century cultural ecology.”² Out of the forest, the anthropophagic Indian could only be naturalized and later negated and exploited —just like the land and its resources.

At the birth of modernity there was the cannibal. The anthropophagi allowed for the distinction between primitive and civilized, and as importantly between animal and human, a state of nature and another of culture. A secondary cannibalism was thus legitimate, that of civilized men on savage men, and along with it on their land. Justifiably, the riches of the continent were there to be reaped.

VI-

Antropofagia, the political and aesthetic movement “discovered” in the 1920s by a faction of São Paulo’s modernist vanguard, is the only Brazilian movement that consciously faced modernity’s naturalizing negation.³ And yet, it not only wished to denounce modernity’s logic but also to devour it in the way of anthropophagic Amerindian rituals, that is, to transform oneself and the other through the digestion of the enemy.⁴ In the modernists’ words, “Those who think we are against the abuses of Western civilization are mistaken. What we are is against its uses.”⁵

Antropofagia has been mostly understood simply as an aesthetic movement, undeniably influential for the twentieth-century Brazilian arts and literature —including the 1960s *Tropicália*, and the globalist multiculturalism of the 1990s. This artistic success, nonetheless,

has unfortunately trapped and reduced it to the role, or worse a style, of artistic acculturation and hybridity. As Suely Rolnik has painfully reminded her own tropicalist generation, Antropofagia too has been officialized by state power and incorporated into the nationalistic narrative of Brazil: tropical hybridity and syncretism are the necessary qualities of products for exportation “made in Brazil,” as the song by Os Mutantes goes.⁶ Marketed, Antropofagia, particularly in its Tropicália variation, becomes a caricature of multiculturalism and acculturation, often sustained by the affirmation that the Brazilian identity is *that it has no identity*. In this way, it is exemplary of a paradoxical loop, to which Félix Guattari, who visited Brazil on several occasions, often alluded not without facing resistance, whereupon difference is again subsumed under identity, not as the lived sign of a frontier of conflict and negotiation but simply as a token of capital exchange and of the reproduction of capitalist alternatives.

Pacified, Antropofagia today is mostly an autophagy, resembling more what, following a warning left in Oswald de Andrade’s 1928 inaugural *Anthropophagic Manifesto*, Rolnik has termed “low anthropophagy,”—as if politics could be enacted simply by the logic of hybridity, and worse, as if the acceptance of difference were true for the poor rather than brutally suppressed within the confines of its instrumental illusion under capital. Commodified, it becomes synonymous with a Neo-Darwinist mode of predation, precarious, and individualistic. Once again society becomes a jungle; nature the wildness tamed by bourgeois reason; and predation the social logic of capitalistic growth. Throughout, however, the cannibal must keep on being demonized as inhuman, for he is “the only one that [can] not be tolerated,” the taboo.⁷ It is as if we were back in the colonizers mind, with the cycle of oppression complete, and Antropofagia again naturalized.

VI-



Flávio de Carvalho, book cover for the first edition of Raul Bopp’s *Cobra Norato* (1931).

Why Antropofagia then? Because, to quote Alexandre Nodari, “Antropofagia is not only a *theory of culture*, but also and simultaneously a *philosophy of nature*.”⁸ Moreover, because once revisited the writings of modernist antropophagi such as Oswald de Andrade, Flávio de Carvalho, or many articles found in the original *Revista de Antropofagia* — besides the long genealogy Antropofagia built upon and the political legacy it set in motion and of which the anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro may very well be its most elaborate contemporary representative — Antropofagia was also a veritable anthropology.⁹ Better yet, a proto-symmetrical anthropology, wherein the examination, and adoption, of Amerindian predation promised the cosmopolitical transformation of our own *capitalist predation* and modern sterilization of the world. Against it, Antropofagia brought forth the Amerindian, but also nature, more specifically an Indian nature radically other to ours, or even a radically open, negotiated nature. This is why, from an antropophagic perspective, the Indian is not strictly Indian; it is also the poor and the oppressed, and thus any other living being, the Earth system itself.

In reaffirming Amerindian cosmologies, however, the modernist antropophagi ultimately cannibalized them beyond any anthropological essentialism, or, despite guilty at times, nationalism:

“From yesterday, today, and tomorrow. From here and abroad. The antropophagous eats the Indian and eats the so-called civilized; only he licks his fingers. Ready to swallow his brothers ... The Indian is, solely, a reference point in the apparent chaos.”¹⁰

VI-

For Oswald, the Indian is a misconception waiting resolution for the past five hundred years. The primitive is yet to arrive — *for us*. This is a total inversion of the naturalist ontology that placed the indigenous as the primitive form of an evolutionary humanity, wherein they would be the past and us moderns the future of the species.¹¹

“Antropofagia is simply the search for (not the return) to the natural man, announced by every stream of contemporary culture and guaranteed by the muscular emotion of a marvelous epoch — ours!

The natural man we are searching for can easily be white, wear a suit and fly by plane. Just as he can be a black or an Indian. That is why we call him ‘antropophagous’ and not foolishly ‘Tupi’ or ‘Pareci.’”¹²

Against any expectation of a Luddite mentality, Oswald de Andrade appropriates technology anthropophagically. His primitivism is rather a futurism guided by the dialectics, “thesis — natural man; antithesis — civilized man; synthesis — technological natural man,”¹³ and a communist technology founded on the idea that “the historical rupture with the matriarchal world was produced when man ceased to *devour* man, and instead made him a slave.”¹⁴

What is the nature of this devoration? Again, it is not only the commonplace appropriation of the other’s best qualities. Instead what should be emphasized is, on the one hand, its predatory or warlike quality — eating the enemy — and on the other, its *cosmopolitical* role within a system of ontological exchange of perspectives — elements highlighted both by the modernist Antropofagia and recent South American anthropology.

Since the sixteenth century, while certain travellers and philosophers saw in cannibalism the Indians’ *nature*, others saw the Indians’ religion, that is, their culture. “Here is the difference: cannibals are people who feed on human flesh; but it is a different case with the Tupi, who eat their enemies for *vengeance*.”¹⁵ The predation, capture, and digestion of their opposite, for the Tupinambá of the Brazilian coast only ate their enemies, allowed for the substantiation of the self and of the community at large: “Cannibalism coincided with the entire social body: men, women, children, all should eat from the contrary.”¹⁶ For the Tupinambá, however, the self may have meant something altogether different to our “encapsulated”¹⁷ self, for as Viveiros de Castro suggests:

“The warrior exocannibalism complex, projected a form in which the *socius* was constructed through a relationship with the other, in which the incorporation of the other required an exit from oneself — the exterior was constantly engaged in a process of interiorization, and the interior was nothing but movement towards the outside [...] The other was not a mirror, but a destination [...] Tupinambá philosophy affirmed an *essential ontological incompleteness*: the incompleteness of sociality, and, in general, of humanity. It was, in other words, an order where interiority and identity were encompassed by exteriority and difference, where becoming and relationship prevailed over being and substance. For this type of cosmology, others are a solution, before being — as they were for the European invaders — a problem.”¹⁸

VI-

The arrival of the Europeans perhaps only exacerbated this alterity — “it was perhaps the Amerindians, not the Europeans, who saw the ‘vision of paradise’ in the American (mis)(sed)encounter.”¹⁹ The anthropophagic ritual was not necessarily epistemic but it was certainly a process of familiarity with the outside— literally, in how the captive was offered women and food, became a partner in war and trading, and in how only through the enemy’s digestion would he become metaphysically human. Here, “the *socius* is a margin or a boundary, an unstable and precarious space between nature (animality) and supernature (divinity).”²⁰ Anthropophagy was a veritable *epistemology from the other side*, rather than a syncretic accumulation of difference. Following Claude Lévi-Strauss’s classic example, both the Europeans and the Amerindians were intent on verifying the other’s humanity, the former through their soul, the later through their body — but each according to their characteristic “sciences.”²¹ It was just that “humanity” had very different meanings for one and the other.



Indians and the Ahuaï tree. Woodcut from André Thévet, *Les Singularitez de la France antarctique*, 1957.

Against the ontological determinism of Western modernity, where differences cannot live but by regimentation, anthropophagy stands for a process of decolonization of self and world that can only result in a “fundamental ontological inconstancy.” The refusal of essentialism. Of purity. Let me emphasize: despite its praise of difference, Antropofagia is a critique of the *determinism* of difference, in other words, of a difference resulting from modern processes of purification, fundamentalist excisions, or capitalist divisions. “Tupi or not tupi,”²² the iconic Shakespearean pun of the *Manifesto* is misleading in its dualism. Yes, Tupi or not tupi — a becoming Indian, becoming resistance: opening oneself to the metaphysics of the other. But the pun should also read “Tupi *and* not tupi.” To be Indian but also to be boundless and unconstrained by what “Indian” might mean. Anthropophagy then, as the accumulation of identities but also as a process of becoming human, of *touching* the other’s humanity, another humanity that we would be otherwise incapable of recognizing and relate to.

In the end, the issue is not the cooption of difference by capital, differences it generates so as to open up an outside for growth and profit. What is important is how capitalism must always and by necessity open differences within society; that for capital to exist, produce, and accumulate it must institute difference and partition societies between the rich and the dispossessed, those who appropriate and those disenfranchised, those with a voice and those silenced — and this applies both for human and nonhumans. Although alterity may be at the heart of Antropofagia, it is enmity, predation, and violence that sets its politics in motion, irresolvebly for the well intentioned. Antropofagia is a war philosophy, and not simply the model for the acculturated resolution of differences. This does not mean that Antropofagia is circumscribed by a theory of war; rather, it means that the violence at the heart of anthropophagic Amerindian societies cannot be simply resolved by multiculturalism. Antropofagia is not only a matter of appropriation, but also of expropriation. Here’s an explanatory sentence from Oswald’s matriarchal utopia: “Love is the individual act par excellence, but its fruit belongs to the tribe.”²³

Clearly, this epistemological critique of modernity cannot be reduced simply to exchanges within mankind’s nature, that is, between cultures; in its full extension, it includes or excludes radically distinct ontologies: animals, plants, rocks, objects, even immaterial computational entities

VI-

and systems.²⁴ With anthropology's recent ontological turn in mind, one can thus venture that anthropophagy is a model for *crossing ontological frontiers*. Evidently, there are other models. But given its psychoanalytical imaginary — the trauma of cannibalism, repressed since modernity's primeval moment of division, humanity apart from nature, in the Age of Discovery — anthropophagy is the conceptualization of the irruption and confrontation with the nature/culture divide, possibly even a theory for its negotiation or possible collapse. This is why it forms part, along with images such as the rights of nature or Pachamama, of the cosmopolitical, ecological transformation of communizing struggles across South America, where what is at stake is much more than Marxist class struggle.

Here again, however, the act of anthropophagy disrupts the landscape of a *pacifying* ecology — as if the networks connecting beings to other beings would flow endlessly uninterrupted, without breaks or turmoil or oscillation.²⁵ One can say that every position in a given ecosystem is political, for everything is interconnected. Ecologically, positions may imply connectivity, even agency, and yet this does not imply by necessity a will. And the fact is that a position without a will is reduced solely to geography, rather than being, truly, a geopolitical force — one could say that, politically, it does not even suffice to be called a position. But if we follow Viveiros de Castro's perspectivism, wherein in Amerindian cannibalism what one eats is not the other's substance but its position (or perspective), then to eat the other is to negotiate ontological cuts, abysmal at times, to change and be changed by the transgression and the encounters with being on the other side. The immanence of the enemy — to confront what is alien to oneself *in oneself*.

This serves to say that this crossing can only be violent. Anthropophagic epistemology: not ontology (fixed and stable essences) but "odontology" (beings that are open and inconstant, predatory and mutable). The politics of anthropophagic violence is not in the act of eating itself, but in the ontological transgression eating implies, the "exchange of perspectives" — "Tell me what you eat, and I'll tell you who you are," said the gastronome Brillat-Savarin in the eighteenth century. Evidently, the degree of violence depends on the breadth of a given society and the mechanisms and the intensity of its relations with the exterior.

Openness to the outside and the inconstancy of being, together with trans-speciesism and the variability of the human — although not necessarily the universality of humanity — are central, albeit potentially

VI-

counterintuitive, ideas of what Viveiros de Castro has termed “cannibal metaphysics.” Another metaphysics defined along three vectors that, together, propose a reversal of Western anthropology:

interspecific perspectivism
ontological multinaturalism
cannibal alterity

The subject is too complex to expand on here.²⁶ Suffice to stress, in relation to the revitalization of Antropofagia I’m proposing, a main premise behind perspectivism: “Whatever is activated or ‘agented’ by the point of view will be a subject.”²⁷ In contrast to naturalism, where the subject creates the point of view and objects are created by that point of view, in Amerindian perspectivism it is the point of view, the perspective, that creates the subject. As for multinaturalism, its consequences are radical and open to political investigation. In contrast with the multiculturalism of the moderns, for whom there is one nature and a multiplicity of cultures, multinaturalism states inversely the multiplicity of nature and the universality of culture. There is one culture and many natures, instead of one unifying nature and diverse cultures. As a variation, or intensity, of animism, in each and every multinaturalist world there is humanity, universally yet differently for each specific being because experienced through the idiosyncrasy of each human embodiment. From a perspectivist point of view, “each living species is human in its own position, or better... *everything is human for itself.*”²⁸

This is not to say that everything *is* human, or that the nature/culture divide is inexistent within a cannibal metaphysics, for as Viveiros de Castro reflects, “The nature/culture distinction needs to be criticized, but not in order to conclude that such a thing does not exist (there are already too many things that do not exist).”²⁹ Rather, it is *mankind* (the species, conflated with the condition) that does not represent the human but rather the reverse: humanity not as man’s definition but of the world’s diversity. Mankind is the reactionary idea that arrives in order to suppress difference and the plurality of cosmologies built on the variability of what the human is or may mean. A complete inversion of modern thought, and in particular of how our sciences are structured, to how our epistemology captures and classifies —predates— the outside world.

VI-

Is it possible to separate mankind from the human? If so, this is a project at the core of Antropofagia. But then again, is this humanity? Perhaps a strange humanity no longer dominated by speciesism, and no longer bound to what we formerly thought of as human. This would be "a world many would call anthropomorphic, but one that nobody could call anthropocentric, given that what man provides here is the *un*measurability of all things, at the same time as he is measured and mediated by all of them. A world, then, that is *metaphysically* anthropophagic, where alterity is anterior to identity, relation superior to the terms it relates, and transformation interior to form."³⁰



Indigenous people watch as the Brazilian Congress deliberates on the introduction of Indigenous Rights in the 1988 Brazilian Constitution. Photo: Castro Júnior, ADIRP.

Under current global economic changes, what is at stake is either the constitution of Brazil and South America simply as a simulacrum of Western capitalism —reproduced by the very much active industrial determinism and the silencing of the continent's multiplicity— or, in contrast, the production of a new, multinatural, communalist, Earth-bound economics. In this respect, Antropofagia may be either forgotten as a commodified strategy, or expand beyond its current frontiers to join the continent's struggles. It is this second route that imagines Antropofagia not as a topical moment in time —the vanguard— but as a typically South American cosmopolitics. I make mine Alexandre Nodari's words, "perhaps only today has anthropophagy, understood as a philosophy, reached a degree of legibility, even if its scope (art, myth, the savage mind) has long been established. Perhaps this spatial territorialization (an artistic philosophy) and temporal anachronism (almost a century of delay) are accidents constituting anthropophagy as a proper political concept."³¹ An anthropophagic anthropology, or "the permanent decolonization of thought."³²

Oswald de Andrade already noted:

"The proletariat has evolved. It is no longer what Marx wrote in the lancinating pages of *Capital* ... What is the proletariat today? A revolted *humanity* is gathering on its *blurry frontiers*, reclaiming the redistribution of surplus value."³³

Is it fair to see in these blurred frontiers a communism beyond man? The communism of species? The possibility of a trans-speciesist egalitarianism —which is the same as saying, of those beyond the limits? It may be that cannibal metaphysics points neither to inhumanism nor to the return of the humanist project— a dualism that has come to the fore in recent years, precisely at the moment when, due to technological acceleration and the complexity of info-biochemical systems, the dissolution between formerly rigid ontological frontiers, between what is agented or not in society, begins to find a place in our thought.³⁴ If there is any "humanist" project in Antropofagia, it is one that cuts across this divide to state: the end of discontinuity is possible only with the end of capitalism —the difference capitalism forcibly implants in society. "Man (I mean the European man, heaven forbid!) was searching for man outside of man. And with lantern in hand: philosophy. We want man without the doubt, without even the presumption of the existence of doubt: naked, natural, anthropophagic."³⁵

VI-

Notes:

1. Raul Bopp, "The Life and Death of Antropofagia" (1965-1966), (excerpt) in *The Forest and The School/ Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, ed. Pedro Neves Marques (Berlin: Archive Books, 2014) 135-150.
2. In a by now iconic work of anthropology, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro has, drawing from 16th century chronicles, termed this feature "the inconstancy of the savage soul." See Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *The Inconstancy of the Indian Soul: The Encounter of Catholics and Cannibals in 16th-Century Brazil*, translated by Gregory Duff Morton (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2011). As for the naturalization of the Amerindians, see Anne-Christine Taylor's essay "O Americanismo tropical: Uma fronteira fóssil da antropologia," from which the above citation derives, originally in *Histoires de l'anthropologie (XVI^e-XX^e siècles)* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1984) 8. The translation is mine. A further note should be added: Unsurprisingly, to this day this too is the fate of the land, negated by the illustration of its tropical pristineness, wild, luxurious, diverse, unique, yet acknowledged only for its promotional, capitalist value; a backdrop for operas. This is why the state celebration of the tropical landscape and its destruction by the industrial development of the nation — the Trans-Amazonian highway, the Belo Monte hydroelectric power plant, the monoculture, and the logging—are able to coexist. This is also why the biopatenting of biodiversity — again the intertwining of nature with the indigenous in the commodification of their knowledge— may very well be the end result of the naturalist inventories of American flora during the Enlightenment.
3. "This new philosophy, 'which was not invented, nor imported, but discovered right here,' predominant, the hunger of an imagination marching in search of new forms." Soquilles Vivacqua, *Revista de Antropofagia*, 2nd "dentition," n° 7 (May 08, 1929). The translation is mine.
4. Ibid.
5. Oswald de Andrade, "Anthropophagy and Culture," in *The Forest and The School/ Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, 125-127. Originally in *Revista de Antropofagia*, 2nd "dentition," n° 9 (May 15, 1929).
6. Suely Rolnik, "The Politics of Anthropophagy in the Transnational Drift," in *The Forest and The School/ Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, 537-558.
7. Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, "Images of the Indians of Brazil: The Sixteenth Century," (excerpt) in *The Forest and The School/Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, 81-95. Originally published in *Estudos Avançados*, vol. 4, n° 10 (1990).
8. Alexandre Nodari, "The Transformation of the Taboo into Totem': Notes on an Anthropophagic Formula," in *The Forest and The School/ Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, 409-454.
9. To think this genealogy is one of the objectives behind the recent anthology I have edited, *The Forest and The School/Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, the introduction of which this article is a much shortened, but hopefully effective, revisitation.
10. Antônio de Alcântara Machado, "Give Way," in *The Forest and The School/Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, 112-113. Originally published in *Revista de Antropofagia*, 1st "dentition," n° 1 (May 1928).
11. On this history and the singular role performed by the Amerindians in its development, see Hélène Clastres, "Primitivismo e a ciência do homem no século XVIII," *Discurso*, nr. 13 (São Paulo: USP, 1980) 187-209.
12. Poronominari, "An Adhesion we are not Interested In," (excerpt) in *The Forest and The School/ Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, 128. Originally published in *Revista de Antropofagia*, 1st "dentition," n° 1 (May 1928).
13. Oswald de Andrade, "The Crisis of Messianic Philosophy," (excerpt) in *The Forest and The School/ Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, 151-177. Originally published in 1950.
14. Ibid. The italics are mine.
15. Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, "Images of Indians of Brazil: The Sixteenth Century," 81-95.
16. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *The Inconstancy of the Indian Soul*, 100.
17. "Ptolemaic Capsule," a "physical capsule of which the radius of action cannot go beyond an horizon of lynching," is the term used by the anthropophagic movement for the humanist legacy of enlightened Reason. See Oswald de Andrade, "Anthropophagy and Culture," in *The Forest and The School/Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, 125-127.
18. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *The Inconstancy of the Indian Soul*, 46-47. Editor's italics.
19. Ibid., 30.
20. Ibid, 29.
21. The anecdote, which has proven of great importance to multinaturalist anthropology, can be found both in *Tristes Tropiques and Race and History*: "In the Greater Antilles, a few years after the discovery of America, while the Spaniards were sending out Commissions of investigation to discover if whether or not the Indians had a soul, the latter spent their time drowning white prisoners in order to ascertain, by long observation, whether or not their bodies would decompose." Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Race and History* (Paris: UNESCO, 1952) 12.

22. I owe this distinction to Brazilian sociologist Laymert Garcia dos Santos, who pointed it out to me in São Paulo, 2011.
23. Oswald de Andrade, "The Crisis of Messianic Philosophy," 151-177.
24. For the later see, Philippe Descola, *Beyond Nature and Culture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013).
25. The pun with the term "pacification" used by the military in South America to refer to the inclusion (and preservation) of the indigenous is obviously intended.
26. See in particular Eduardo Viveiros de Castro's recently translated *Cannibal Metaphysics* (Minneapolis: Univocal, 2014).
27. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "Exchanging Perspectives: The Transformation of Objects into Subjects in Amerindian Ontologies" in *Animism*, ed. Anselm Franke and Chiara Marchini Camia (New York/Berlin; Sternberg Press, 2010), 229. However, in this respect, Viveiros de Castro is not alone, and other authors should be mentioned, such as the anthropologists Tânia Stolze Lima and her book "Um peixe olhou para mim: O povo Yudjá e a perspectiva" (UNESP, 2005), Aparecida Vilaca and her book *Strange Enemies: Indigenous Agency and Scenes of Encounters in Amazonia* (Duke University Press, 2010), as well as Carlos Fausto's recent *Warfare and Shamanism in Amazonia* (Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
28. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "Some Reflections on the Notion of Species in History and Anthropology," interview Álvaro Fernández Bravol, *emisférica*, vol. 10, N. 1 (2013).
29. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "Perspectivism and Multinaturalism in Indigenous America," in *The Forest and The School/Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, 313-372.
30. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "Transformation in Anthropology, Transformation of Anthropology," in *The Forest and The School/Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, 559-587.
31. Alexandre Nodari, personal exchange, 2012.
32. Viveiros de Castro, *Métaphysiques cannibales* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2009) 92.
33. Oswald de Andrade, "The Crisis of Messianic Philosophy," 151-177. The italics are mine.
34. Examples abound at a vertiginous pace. From climate change to molecular computation, or think simply of Isabelle Stengers's examples from physics: the invisibility of the neutrino implying not only the existence of "life" beyond our sensorial capacity — only induction can prove it — but also the confirmation of an exterior, exact technological agency, human in origin but not human bound, and "spirited" not with greater but other epistemological mechanisms, other logics, different affects.
35. Oswald Costa, "The Anthropophagic Descent," in *The Forest and The School/ Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, 114-116. Originally published in *Revista de Antropofagia*, 1st "dentition," N. 1 (May 1928).

VI-

La Croisière Noire

Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa

VII-

76

[Extract from the Croisière Noire exhibition: Documents gathered by the Citroën-Centre-Afrique expedition]

CATALOGUE

EXPÉDITION

CITROËN-CENTRE-AFRIQUE
2^e MISSION HAARDT - AUDOIN
DUBREUIL

ART NEGRE
CONGO BELGE

[page 11]

- 165..... Arc de chasse Diri avec
..... carquois et flèches,
..... origine Bangba.
166..... Arc Matshaga avec carquois et
..... flèches. Chefferie Okondongwe.
167..... Assiette en terre de la race
..... Mongelima. Nom Anbandjese.
168..... Assiette des pêcheurs Bakangos.
..... Nom Ebraïe Babra.
169..... Assiette N'gié. Race Bamanga.
170..... Bouclier des indigènes
..... Mangbeles Mangbetous et
..... Mangelima, avec couteau de jet
..... et une peau d'animal. N'Gabo.

[page 12]

- 171..... Bouclier Pua.
172..... Bracelet de cheville.
173..... Bracelet en perles de cuivre.
174..... Broche servant à la cuisson des
..... aliments. Nom Nezozo.
175..... Casserole indigène en courge.
..... Nom Bagandi.
176..... Ceintures de femmes en perles
..... de fer et de cuivre. Territoire
..... M'Gombari. Nom Kobobo.
177..... Ceinture de femme en dents de
..... chien. Nom Biatjese.
178..... Ceinture de femme Balamba
..... en perles, avec longues
..... pointes d'acier.
179..... Ceinture d'homme en osier.
..... Nom Kudu.
180..... Ceinture indigène en peau

Over the past year, I have begun to explore the archive of a largely forgotten event once popularly known as *La Croisière Noire* (tr. 'The Black Journey'), that occurred between the years 1924 and 1925.

Described variously as a 'raid', a 'race', an 'expedition', a 'cruise', a 'mission, a 'journey', a 'quest', an 'adventure' and, on one notable occasion, as 'the bloodless conquest of a continent'¹, *La Croisière Noire* was the name given to the 'trip' organised by French car manufacturer André Citroën, during which a team of seventeen white European men drove eight specially designed off-road motor vehicles ('auto-chenilles') 30,000 km across the African continent from Béchar (formerly Colomb-Béchar) in the French colony of Algeria in the north-west to Antananarivo, capital of the French colony of Madagascar in the south-east.

The stated aim of *La Croisière Noire* was to conduct 'scientific' research and to provide medical and humanitarian 'assistance' to indigenous Africans. However it was also a publicity stunt intended to transform Citroën into a global brand, and simultaneously to function as a triumphant display of French colonial might. *La Croisière Noire* was also a military mission whose objective was to prepare ground support routes for the French airforce, and thus the 'expedition' was an early and highly illuminating example of the military-industrial-media-entertainment complex in action.

The widespread dissemination and the international impact of visual and textual representations of this 'adventure' is of particular significance to me. *La Croisière Noire's* team of participants included not only an artist (the Paris-based Russian Alexandre Jacovleff), but also an entire film crew, led by the celebrated director Léon Poirier, who took with them one of the world's first slow-motion cameras. Upon their return, members of the team and others wrote accounts of *La Croisière Noire* that were best-sellers in France and abroad. Exhibitions and film screenings presented the thousands of artefacts, specimens and images that the team had brought back to a large and hungry public. The 'mission' was even assigned its own prominent exhibition space at the International Colonial Exhibition in Paris in 1931.

These national and international exhibitions, together with the multiple screenings of Poirier's celebrated film, themselves served as inspiration for a raft of European artists and designers, who went on to create their own *Croisière Noire*-inspired works. There

- d'okapi. Territoire M'Gombari.
 181..... Ceinture en peau de buffle, avec
 couteau et gaine.
 Chefferie Kodiamala.
 182..... Ceinture en peau d'un petit
 animal, nommé Niemere, dont
 la queue est terminée par une
 touffe de plumes rouges.
 Chefferie Okondongwe.
 183..... Chaise Mangbetou. (Kiti).
 184..... Chaise N'gula.
 185..... Chaise Kangaba (en bois
 N'gula). Race Bamanga.
 186..... Chaise Logo. Race Bamanga.
 187..... Chaise Lokomege.
 188..... Chaise à 4 pieds
 Lokomogo Mangelima.
 189..... Chapeau du chef Ikondongwe,
 avec touffe de plumes rouges
 Nom Paprali.
 190..... Chapeaux des indigènes
 Mangbetous Mangbeles;
 Aborambo.
 191..... Chapeau en paille, avec touffe de
 plumes. Venant d'une
 femme de chef. Nom Boni.
 192..... Chapeau en peau de léopard,
 garni de plumes. Nom N'Buapu.
 193..... Chapeau Alikolopu en peau de
 singe brun.
 194..... Chapeau Hanopo en peau de
 singe noir.
 195..... Chapeau Kobupu en peau de
 singe roux.

[page 13]

- 196..... Chapeau N'Bolopo en peau de
 singe aboyeur.
 197..... Chasse-mouches en poil
 de buffle.
 198..... Clochettes en fruits séchés pour
 danses. Nom Taselli.
 199..... Cor Akpa, fait d'une défense
 d'éléphant.
 200..... Corne d'antilope, servant aux
 indigènes à donner des
 lavements. Nom Akoka.
 (Race Bamanga).
 201..... Couteau tout en ivoire, avec
 poignée représentant un oiseau.
 202..... Couteau tout en ivoire, dont le

were highly successful ranges of tie-in merchandise for both adults and children of every social class. The luxury fashion house Louis Vuitton, for example, who had both helped to design the Citroën auto-chenilles and custom-made all of the team's trunks and travelling equipment, created (among other things) a range of specially designed perfume bottles to mark the occasion.²

I am still in the very preliminary stages of my research, and am thus reluctant to offer much in the way of assertion or argument regarding *La Croisière Noire*, its archive and its legacies at this time. I will restrict myself, if I may, to offering some initial thoughts about a handful of the complex and fascinating images and texts that I have so far seen. The ones I have chosen all relate to or derive from the time that the *Croisière Noire* team spent in the Belgian Congo Colony in March 1925.

A



This is the first image I would like to discuss. It is one of a series of images taken at Bengamissa colony on 17 March 1925. I have not yet read the unexpurgated diaries of the 'expedition' team, but there is no mention of the occasion upon which this photograph was taken in the published Haardt/Audouin-Dubreuil account of the 'trip'.³

It was the caption — 'The collection of objects at Bengamissa' — that first gave me pause, for this choice of words appears to accord the status of object to the many human beings in the image. But on reflection, I have come to believe that the composition itself treats its human subjects as objects all on its own. Because this is not a group portrait: it is the objects, not people, that are foregrounded. And the many objects concentrated in the centre of image — swords, shields, drums, machetes, and so on — these are not objects created for display, they are created to be used. But this composition places them beyond use. It takes them out of their owners' hands. And thus

- manche es surmonté d'une tête
..... de femme égyptienne.
- 203..... Couteau M'Bili des indigènes
..... Madi, territoire Amadi. Sert pour
..... dot de femme.
- 204..... Couteau Nomativo M'bili. Sert
..... pour dot de femme.
- 205..... Couteau Zobia-Zobia avec fil de
..... cuivre. Arme des indigènes
..... Mangbetous.
- 206..... Couteau Zobia-Zobia de guerre,
..... courbe, manche en bois, des
..... indigènes Mangbetous.
- 207..... Couteau Zobia-Zobia de guerre,
..... courbe, manche en bois garni
..... de fer des indigènes Mangbetous.
- 208..... Couteau Zobia-Zobia de guerre,
..... courbe, Mangbetou avec
..... manche ivoire.
- 209..... Couteau Zobia-Zobia. Arme des
..... indigènes Medjes.
- 210..... Couteau Zobia-Zobia avec
..... manche en ivoire.
- 211..... Couteau Azande.
- 212..... Couteau servant à fabriquer
..... les flèches.
- 213..... Couteau Sapi, s'attachant à
..... la ceinture.
- 214..... Couteau servant aux femmes
..... indigènes à fabriquer les negbes.
- 215..... Couteau Matshaga.
- 216..... Couteau de chef Kabaka (tuteur
..... du chef Gasa). Race Mangbetou.
- 217..... Couteau Bounga.
..... Race Bamanga.
- 218..... Couteau Kamaïdi.
..... Race Bamanga.
- 219..... Couteau de jet. Nom Pwinga.
- 220..... Couteau de chasse.
..... Nom Gongokupe.
- 221 Couteau Lebando.

[Page 14]

- 222..... Couteau Monboteur.
- 223..... Couteau Lebutu.
- 224..... Couteau Polome.
- 225..... Couteau Kese Lokelles.
- 226..... Couteau Poruma Manglimas.
- 227..... Couteau indigène courbe, avec

the people in the image — whom I presume to be the owners of the objects— are also put out of action. They have been disarmed. Immobilized. Fixed.

B



This is version of the same scene, 'expedition' leader Georges-Marie Haardt and a man named "Matton" are described as 'examining the objects collected at Bengamissa.' the Africans in the background of the image do not appear to have moved.

C



Later, the following year, at the *Croisière Noire* exhibition at the Palais du Louvre in Paris, France, Auguste Heng's bust of Nobosodru, 'first wife of Tuba, a Mangbetou chief,' is mounted on the wall like a hunting trophy, surrounded by spearheads, in what appears to be the gift shop.⁴

There are a number of images in the archive of *La Croisière Noire* that depict other images being produced. The stills camera often records the artist Iacovleff drawing or Poirier's crew filming human and animal subjects.⁵

- manche en ivoire (genre
..... Zobia-Zobia).
- 228..... Courge servant à puiser l'eau.
..... Nom N'gala.
- 229..... Costume complet de Gala des
..... femmes Mangbetous. (Un
..... morceau de tissu en fibre teint en
..... rouge, un nebiri, une ceinture
..... en métal et un chapeau en paille
..... avec plumes).
- 230..... Costume de travail des femmes
..... Mangbetous, se composant
..... d'un negbe, d'une ceinture en
..... paille et d'un nebiri.
- 231..... Crécelle ou Nezeze. Instrument
..... de musique Mangbetou.
- 232..... Cuillère en bois Mangbetou.
..... Nom Eprapra.
- 233..... Emballage ayant servi au
..... transport du tam-tam de
..... marche Kwo-Kwo.
- 234..... Emballage ayant contenu des
..... mortiers Biu.
- 235..... Epingles à chapeau en ivoire
..... (pour chapeaux de chefs).
- 236..... Epingles à chapeau en bois.
- 237..... Entonnoir en paille.
- 238..... Gaine de couteau Kele.
..... Nom Faka.
- 239..... Gargoulettes.
- 240..... Garnitures de femmes Matshaga
..... Mangbetous (negbes et nebiris).
- 241..... Gobelet en courge. Nom Kaba.
..... Race Bamanga.
- 242..... Gourde servant à récolter le vin
..... de palme.
- 243..... Gri-gri à 7 motifs.
- 244..... Hache Azande. Nom Bono.
- 245..... Herminette des indigènes
..... Matshaga pour le travail de
..... la terre.
- 246..... Hotte des femmes indigènes
..... de la forêt équatoriale.
..... Nom N'Ze.

[Page 15]

- 247..... Instrument de musique en
..... ivoire, avec caisse de
..... résonance en peau de serpent,
..... genre guitare.
- 248..... Instrument de musique, genre

This is a photograph of Alexandre Iacovleff drawing a portrait of Libakoua, chief of a village near the River Télé two days after the so-called 'collection of objects' at Bengamissa:

D



To the right of Iacovleff, who is busy at his easel in the centre of the image, is one of the Citroën auto-chenilles and its crew, all of whom appear to be absorbed with tasks or deep in conversation. Surrounding them are (I think) this village's inhabitants, all of whom are standing still, looking on, watching Iacovleff at work. Only one man, standing to the left of the image, looks in the direction of the camera.

I take this to be another view of the same scene:

E



From this perspective, behind Chief Libakoua, we can now see that the scene is being captured in two media at once: to the left of Iacovleff, who is drawing, we can now also see the film director Léon Poirier and his camera operator Specht.

Again there is a contrast in the activities of the figures in the image. The Europeans are at work. The Africans are being captured.

- crécelle, servant d'accessoire
 pour la danse.
- 249..... Instrument de musique avec
 caisse de résonance en peau,
 et dont le corps en bois est
 surmonté d'une tête de
 femme Mangbetou.
- 250..... Instruments de musique de
 gens d'eau de la race
 Bamanga. Nom N'Gombige.
- 251..... Instruments de musique à
 l'usage des indigènes de
 l'Afrique Centrale.
- 252..... Instruments de musique avec
 caisse de résonance en peau,
 surmontée d'un corps en bois
 en forme de demi-cercle, et
 sur lequel son tendues
 trois cordes.
- 253..... Instrument de musique:
 tambour et tambourin portatifs
 de guerre.
- 254..... Insigne du chef Kodiamala,
 fait d'une peau de chat
 sauvage avec plume rouge.
 Cet insigne se porte à
 la ceinture.
- 255..... Insigne de noblesse en queue
 de léopard. Nom Biupu.
- 256..... Ivoire ouvragé, dont les motifs
 de palme.
- 243..... Gri-gri à 7 motifs.
- 244..... Hache Azande. Nom Bono.
- 245..... Herminette des indigènes
 Matshaga pour le travail de
 la terre.
- 246..... Hotte des femmes indigènes
 de la forêt équatoriale.
 Nom N'Ze.

[Page 15]

- 247..... Instrument de musique en
 ivoire, avec caisse de
 résonance en peau de serpent,
 genre guitare.
- 248..... Instrument de musique, genre
 crécelle, servant d'accessoire
 pour la danse.
- 249..... Instrument de musique avec

A few days later, when the convoy of auto-chenilles reaches the Belgian colonial town of Stanleyville (now Kisangani), the town's 'European colony' invites Iacovleff to mount an exhibition of the drawings he has made during the 'journey' so far.⁶

To date I have come across four photographs of this exhibition.

F



In this one, we see a bare-chested African man wearing a plumed hat, standing in profile, looking up at Iacovleff's portrait of him, which is mounted on the wall above his head. For months I assumed that this was Chief Libakoua who appears in the images above; but it turns out, in fact, to be Chief Louao of the Wagenia tribe.⁷ We cannot see his face, but based on this photograph of Louao, that I found a few weeks ago in Fabien Sabatès' book, *La Croisière Noire* Citroën, I surmise that Chief Louao's portrait is the one on the left.⁸

G



On the same page in this book is another version of the photograph of Chief Louao examining his portrait. This version reveals the image to contain Iacovleff himself, dressed in a pale linen suit and dark tie, also looking up at the drawings that he has made.

- caisse de résonance en peau,
 et dont le corps en bois est
 surmonté d'une tête de
 femme Mangbetou.
 250..... Instruments de musique de
 gens d'eau de la race
 Bamanga. Nom N'Gombige.
 251..... Instruments de musique à
 l'usage des indigènes de
 l'Afrique Centrale.
 252..... Instruments de musique avec
 caisse de résonance en peau,
 surmontée d'un corps en bois
 en forme de demi-cercle, et
 sur lequel sont tendues
 trois cordes.
 253..... Instrument de musique:
 tambour et tambourin portatifs
 de guerre.
 254..... Insigne du chef Kodiamala,
 fait d'une peau de chat
 sauvage avec plume rouge.
 Cet insigne se porte à
 la ceinture.
 255..... Insigne de noblesse en queue
 de léopard. Nom Biupu.
 256..... Ivoire ouvragé, dont les motifs
 sont taillés dans un
 défense d'éléphant.
 257..... Jatte de courge, servant aux
 indigènes Mangbetous, de la
 Chefferie Gasa, territoire de
 Rungu. Le Chef se coiffe et
 cache ses cheveux avec
 ce lacet.
 258..... Lacet fabriqué par les
 indigènes Mangbetous, de la
 Chefferie Gasa, territoire de
 Rungu. Le Chef se coiffe et
 cache ses cheveux avec
 ce lacet.
 259..... Lance d'apparat. Nom Likonga.
 260..... Lance de chasse.
 Nom Beigugu.
 261..... Lance de guerre. Nom Basso.
 262..... Lance de guerre Azande pour
 guerrier de marque.
 263..... Lance de mariage Aboma.

[Page 16]

H



What is recorded here, therefore, is not one encounter but two: one is of Chief Louao with his figurative representation, the other is the encounter of Chief Louao and Iacovleff, who created that representation. (Which are actually reencounters, seeing as this is not the first time that they have met, and, based on his behaviour elsewhere, it is likely that Iacovleff may have shown Chief Louao his drawing when he completed it.)

The drawing that was the product of their previous meeting is what mediates these re-encounters. The men appear to address themselves to the pictures on the wall, not to one another.

This is Iacovleff's published account of this moment: 'Louao, chef Waguenia [...] Son regard, à la vue de son double sur le papier, s'émerveille. Il cause longuement à son image et lui adresse, avec déférence, maints saluts et souhaits [...]'⁹

Haardt and Audouin-Dubreuil describe Chief Louao as 'a great talker,' but there is no published record of any words he spoke to them, or to Iacovleff either on that day or on any other.¹⁰

I have found one other photograph that depicts Chief Louao's presence in the Stanleyville exhibition space. Based on how this group of photographs have been numbered, I am guessing that this photograph was taken before the one we have just been looking at.

I



- 264..... Masques en bois pour danses.
 265..... Mortier Biu. Nom Kino et son
 pilon: Nom Sowale.
 265 bis . Nattes en raffia. Travail
 exécuté par les indigènes de
 l'Afrique Centrale.
 266..... Pagaie des pêcheurs Bakango.
 267..... Pagaie des indigènes
 Mandalima à Bengamissa.
 268..... Panier indigène. Nom Ligogo.
 269..... Paniers Imbe Babra.
 270..... Peigne indigène.
 271..... Pipe des indigènes Bangbas.
 272..... Pipe Liboka.
 273..... Pipe des pêcheurs Bakango.
 274..... Pipe Yenganbule.
 275..... Plat en bois. Nom Kolombe.
 276..... Plat en terre avec manche en
 bois. Nom Pvralla Babra.
 277..... Poignard (deux petits
 poignards assemblés).
 278..... Porte-coran des Arabisés.
 Nom Malofao.
 279..... Porte-monnaie en bois.
 280..... Pot en terre des races Medjes.
 281..... Poteries Mangbetous,
 forme vase.
 282..... Poteries Mangetous avec
 têtes indigènes.
 283..... Rasoir indigène. Nom Lombo.
 284..... Récipient à eau. Nom
 Nembonbo. Bangba.
 285..... Récipient en terre cuite, servant
 à la cuisson des aliments.
 Nom N'Doty. Race Bamanga.
 286..... Sabots sandales des Arabisés de
 la région de Niangara.
 Nom Akandange.
 287..... Sabots du chef Gasa. Race
 Azande. Nom M'Bitei.
 288..... Sabre. Nom Bounga.
 289..... Sel pour achat de femme.
 290..... Sifflet. Territoire de M'Gombari.
 291..... Table fabriquée par les indigènes
 Mangbetous.

[page 17]

- 292..... Tam-tam avec poignée
 représentant des têtes de
 femmes Mangbetous.
 293..... Tam-tam de marche Mangbetou.

This image shows Iacovleff presenting his drawings to Adolphe de Meulemeester, then governor general of the Belgian Congo Colony, who is accompanied by the 'expedition' leaders Georges-Marie Haardt and Louis Audouin-Dubreuil. Like Iacovleff, these white European men are wearing suits. De Meulemeester and Haardt, in the centre of the image, have their backs to Chief Louhao is standing in profile to the right, looking towards the light source (presumably a window), beyond the frame to the left, his feathered cap mirrored in miniature by the blooms in the small vase on the table before him.

Chief Louao is not included in this audience. He is waiting. Perfectly still.



In this photograph, the last one in this series, a group of twelve Africans, mostly male, mostly in European dress, are standing in the exhibition space. They are standing in a group with their backs to the camera, facing the wall on which the drawings have been mounted. But they do not all appear to be looking up or around at the drawings: the angles of their heads suggest that many of them are simply looking straight ahead. Their arms are, for the most part, held stiffly by their sides.

The posture of these people and the way that their bodies have been arranged suggests to me that this might not be a photograph of people viewing at an exhibition. For me, the people in this image are figured not as exhibition viewers but as objects of contemplation. They have not assembled here to look, but rather to be looked at.

It must be acknowledged that Iacovleff, who was adamant that he was not an ethnographer, was fairly assiduous about naming his subjects and believed that he genuinely particularised them in his work.¹¹ Haardt and Audouin-Dubreuil too, in their written ac-

- Nom Kow-Kow.
 294..... Tam-tam des races Azande.
 Niangara.
 295..... Tam-tam de marche de la
 chefferie Ganzi. Race
 Mangbetou. Nom Kow-Kow.
 296..... Tambour Bamango.
 Nom Kembele.
 297..... Tambour de guerre portatif.
 Nom Bobo.
 298..... Tambour des Arabisés N'soma.
 Race Bakassu.
 299..... Tamis des races Mongolima.
 Nom Anbandjese.
 300 Tissu en écorce de faux-figuier,
 fabriqué par les indigènes
 de la forêt équatoriale, pour
 servir de pagne aux femmes.
 Nom de l'arbre: N'Gombé.
 301 Trompe en bois, recouverte
 d'une peau de buffle.
 Territoire Gombari.
 302..... Trompe en ivoire, recouverte
 d'une peau de serpent.
 303..... Vase en paille (petit).
 304..... Vase servant aux N'gula. Rouge
 de bois dont se couvrent les
 indigènes pour les danses.
 305..... Chasseur indigène avec fusil
 et couteau.
 306..... Eléphant en ébène.
 307..... Boy.
 308..... Femme Basalissu. Bamanga.
 Race Azande.
 309..... Femme indigène portant une
 charge sur la tête.
 310..... Fétiche taillé dans le bois du
 parasolier, et représentant
 une femme Zobi.
 311..... Groupe d'un singe et de
 deux oiseaux.
 312..... Homme Basalissu. Bamanga.
 Race Azande.
 313..... Indigène Bas Congo.
 314..... Indigène et ses tatouages.
 315..... Indigène à l'affût.
 316..... Masques.

[Page 18]

count of the 'black' 'journey', take the time to provide the names of the most important individuals they encountered. But objectification nevertheless appears to be a key and recurring feature of the construction of representations of Africans from the Belgian Congo Colony in the visual archive of *La Croisière Noire*.¹² Image makers repeatedly treat them not as people but as things.

And so now, when I look at this photograph, which shows how Georges-Marie Haardt hung Iacovleff's drawings on the wall of his reception room, therefore, I do not only see portraits: I see trophies.¹³

K



317..... Porteur de bananes.

318..... Sorcier.

Notes :

- A. The collection of objects at Bengamissa. Photograph from the album "Expédition centre Afrique", 1924-1925, vol. 8, p. 701. © Quai Branly museum
- B. MM. Haardt, Matton examining objects from the collection at Bengamissa. Photograph from the album "Expédition centre Afrique", 1924-1925, vol. 7, p. 700. © Quai Branly museum
- C. La Croisière Noire exhibition, Palais du Louvre, Pavillon de Marsan, 1926. Photographer Unknown. © Citroën Communication
- D. M. Iacovleff, making a portrait of chief Libakoua. Photograph from the album "Expédition centre Afrique", 1924-1925, vol. 8, p. 708. Congo belge. © Quai Branly museum
- E. Painting and cinematograph in a village of the equatorial forest. Belgian Congo. Photograph from the album "Expédition centre Afrique", 1924 - 1925, vol. 8, p. 709. © Quai Branly museum
- F. Louao, chief wagénia contemplating his portrait at the Iacovleff exhibition. Photograph from the album "Expédition centre Afrique", 1924-1925, vol. 7, p. 692. © Quai Branly museum
- G. "Louao", chief wagenia. Photograph from the album "Expédition centre Afrique", 1924 - 1925, vol. 7, p. 686. © Quai Branly museum
- H. "The Iacovleff exhibition in Stanleyville: the painter, the model and his portrait. Source : Fabien Sabatès, *La Croisière Noire Citroën 1924-1925*, Paris, Eric Baschet Éditions, 1980.
- I. Iacovleff exhibition in Stanleyville. Photograph from the album "Expédition centre Afrique", 1924-1925, vol. 7, p. 692. © Quai Branly museum
- J. M. de Meulemeester, General governor of Belgian Congo, M.M. Haardt, Audouin, Iacovleff. Photograph from the album "Expédition Centre Afrique", 1924-1925, vol. 7, p. 691. © musée du Quai Branly
- K. Reception room in Georges-Marie Haardt's apartment, 1927. Photographer unknown. Caroline Haardt de La Baume (ed.), *Alexandre Iacovleff: L'Artiste Voyageur*, Paris, Flammarion, 2000, p 192.

1. 'The Members of the Mission: The Leaders', *The Citroën Bulletin* (Special Issue: The Citroën Central Africa Expedition), n° 25, March 1926, (no pagination).
2. It is actually through Louis Vuitton that I first heard about *La Croisière Noire*. In December 2013, they invited me to take part in a group exhibition with the title 'African Odysseys' at Espace Culturel Louis Vuitton, that took as its starting point the company's participation in the black 'cruise.' 'African Odysseys' was initially scheduled to open in Paris in October 2014, but it was cancelled by LVMH senior management last summer so as not to clash with the long-awaited opening of the controversial Frank Gehry designed Fondation Louis Vuitton in Bois de Boulogne. The exhibition has subsequently been rescheduled to open at Le Brass in Brussels in Belgium, in April 2015. From the outset I expressed a keen interest in contributing a work that explored the archive of *La Croisière Noire*. The team at Espace Culturel Louis Vuitton were extremely supportive of this, and generously flew me to Paris in April 2014 so that I could conduct initial archival research. They enabled me to visit the archives at Citroën, Louis Vuitton and Musée du Quai Branly and also to meet Ariane Audoin-Dubreuil, the daughter of Louis Audoin-Dubreuil, deputy leader of the 'mission', who has researched her father's archives extensively and published books on his life and work. Over the course of the year, I have become increasingly interested in developing a work that explores the area of overlap between the archive of *La Croisière Noire* and the archive of Louis Vuitton. This is not easy because LVMH have refused me permission to reproduce any of the images or exhibit any of the objects in their company archive. At the time of writing, with just a few months to go, the nature of my participation in the exhibition is still under negotiation.
3. Georges-Marie Haardt & Louis Audoin Dubreuil, *The Black Journey: Across Central Africa with the Citroën Exhibition*, London: Geoffrey Bles, 1928. Translator uncredited.
4. 'Reconstitutions Ethnographiques', *Exposition de la Croisière Noire: Documents Rassemblés par l'Expedition Citroën-Centre-Afrique*, Palais du Louvre: Pavillon de Marsan, Paris, 1926. p. 27.
5. According to the author(s) of *Exposition de la Croisière Noire*, the photographs were taken by different members of the 'expedition'. Ibid, p. 26.
6. *The Black Journey*, op.cit., pp.186
7. Ibid.
8. Fabien Sabatès, *La Croisière Noire Citroën 1924-1925*, Paris: Eric Baschet Éditions, 1980.
9. Alexandre Iacovleff, *Dessins et Peintures d'Afrique. Croquis et notes de voyage*, Paris, Lucien Vogel-Jules Meynial, 1927.
10. *The Black Journey*, op. cit., p. 186.
11. "En me mettant en route pour traverser l'Afrique, je n'avais pas pour but la documentation. Je ne désirais qu'avancer vers une autre phase de mon développement d'artiste...Je suis si peu l'homme qui est allé faire poser des nègres pour revenir en disant: 'Voilà ce qu'ils sont.'" Alexandre Iacovleff, quoted in Caroline Haardt de La Baume (ed.), Alexandre Iacovleff: *L'Artiste Voyageur*, Paris: Flammarion, 2000, p. 155.
12. Zoomorphism — that is, the attribution of animal form or animal characteristics to anything other than an animal — is a key feature of the written representations of Africans in this archive. But there unfortunately is no space to discuss this here.
13. Reception room in Georges-Marie Haardt apartment, 1927. Photographer unknown.

Be-side(s) work, friends and traces 2014-2009

Em'kal Eyongakpa

VIII-

- Franklin -

Like

Em'kal Eyongakpa
every material thing &
September 24, 2013



on my birthday I decided to face my fear of going to European museums to see African masks and amputated jujus... I went to Linden museum in stuttgart. It was a hard one as I faced the Obasinjom, mgbokandem & Ngbe elements from my cross river basin exhibited as art... I wondered if curiosity/insanity/ignorance brought them there... it was a hard to imagine how I would feel... what fragments of a cross river cosmology would mean to me... I recorded a conversation and the night couldn't take away the aftertaste ... I am not a traditional freak but 5000 amputated sacred objects in their depot..

52



Like Comment Stop Notifications Promote Share 5 Shares

unprocessed processes # letters from etokobarek (europe)

Forgive yourself dearest priest
 finally had a chat with your God yesterday
 while smoking pipes & admiring hour glass
 we recounted tales of feeble minded strands



scribes of a long forgotten clan...
 a solemn tomorrow burried your scrolls,
 cross river basin, crossed rivers,
 cross river cosmology...
 seseku Eyongarrebity Nsoako explored.

wata culture, wata kulture,
 multikultural melting pot...
 wata conditioned kultural states,
 changing hats...different tongues
 crossing rivers, crossed rivers,
 products crossing water ways,
 wata kulture, wata kulture...
 white shirts, dutch wax,
 wata gods, wata masks,
 changing hats, different tongues.
 1233 full moons gone,
 people come, people went.

people come, people go...
 what they bring stay forever,
 products come & products come,
 crossing rivers, products come...
 these products or the products of these
 products stay for ever..

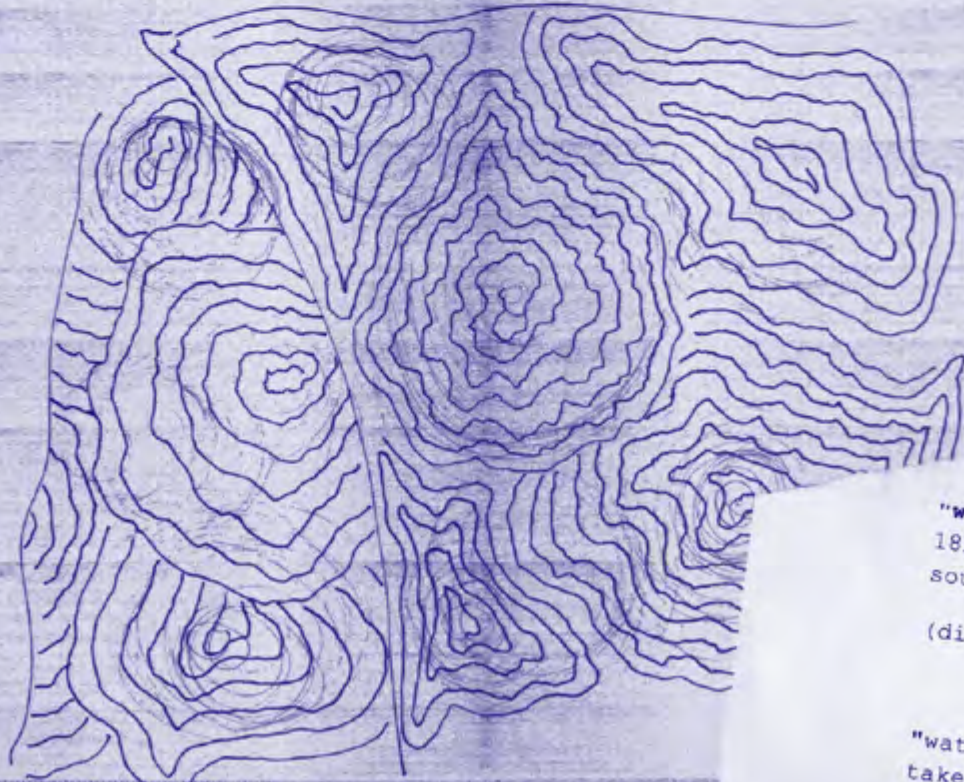
Bakweri, Douala, Boki, Kenyang,
 Calabar, Anyang

wata culture, wata kulture,
 multikultural melting pot...
 wata conditioned kultural states,
 changing hats...different tongues
 crossing rivers, crossed rivers,
 products crossing water ways,
 wata kulture, wata kulture...
 white shirts, dutch wax,
 wata gods, wata masks,
 changing hats, different tongues.

songs of ancient clans still raped...
 scrolls of long forgotten clans
 todays grave.

Eshobi na bayangi...
 kesham, Okpambe, Takamanda, obonyi

three fap ten full moons gone,
 people come, people go.
 water ways bound to stay.



"wata kulture"
 18h??, 19-09-2013
 sound collage/ in
 (dimension/ durat

"wata kulture" ins
 takes on the influ
 central African coa
 shirts) from Calabe
 one move
 stand void of such

unprocessed processes # letters from etokobarek

Khaka
September 26, 2013

18h49
19-09-2013

scribes of a long forgotten clan
a solemn tomorrow buried your scrolls.
cross river basin, crossed rivers, cross river cosmology.
seseku Eyongarreybity nsoako later explored.

wata culture, wata kulture, multikultural melting pot.
wata conditioned kultural states...changing hats, different tongues
crossing rivers, crossed rivers, products crossing water ways...
wata kulture, wata kulture, white shirts, dutch wax
wata gods, wata masks, changing hats, different tongues.

1233 full moons gone...
people came, people went.

people come, people go...what they bring stay forever.
products come & products come...crossing rivers, products come..
these products or the products of these products stay for ever..

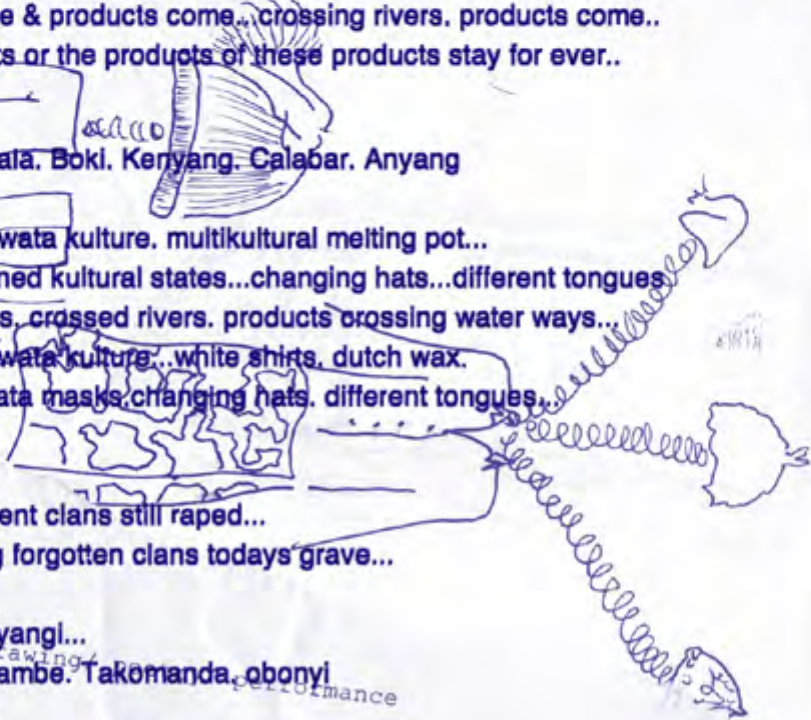
Bakweri, Douala, Boki, Kenyang, Calabar, Anyang

wata culture, wata kulture, multikultural melting pot...
wata conditioned kultural states...changing hats...different tongues
crossing rivers, crossed rivers, products crossing water ways...
wata kulture, wata kulture, white shirts, dutch wax.
wata gods, wata masks, changing hats, different tongues.

songs of ancient clans still raped...
scrolls of long forgotten clans today's grave...

Eshobi na bayangi...
kesham, Okpambe, Takomanda, obonyi

three fap ten full moons gone.
people come, people go...
water ways bound to stay.



Wata Kulture ...
white shirts / dutch wax ...
wata gods, wata mask ...
Ans hats
F Longuans



Em'kal Eyongakpa

July 26

05h04

26-07-2014

like a poem on the sands by the sea shore,
 like a handwriting of the gods on the wall...
 on your wall...
 like a prophecy of a king, ordained by the gods,
 a prophecy blurred by that very state we spoke of,
 that state dulled by digital media fumes.

A thought of a last supper,
 amidst a communion of un-clouded intentions,
 in words,
 words only spoken far from algorithmic-smart ears,
 like a juju-backed council of light engineers,
 our egos drowned in that unifying black...

As sacred whispers linger on...
 I forgive myself for being distracted,
 a miniscule fraction of a lunar cycle later,
 still combing my mind...& definitely not high off space...
 here with me is aged wine...
 for if more clarity comes at dawn,
 let there be something to blame...
 @ now, in solitude,
 everyglass I raise tonight...
 I raise to the life of a humble warrior,
 to mummified moments,
 to the light you shared.

though greedy enough to mourn...
 I'll drink to Life...your life...all life...

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#memoriam #Bakary Diallo

Trajet
Marcher de la Rijks à Amsterdam
Alexanderplein

0027

Amsterdam, Europaplein.

Amsterdam, Bos en Lommerplein.

Em'kal Eyongakpa changed his profile picture.
July 25 - Edited ↻

-11/2011-bamako encounters,
>05/2012-dak'art.
>11/2013- sesc videobrasil,
>24/06/2014-amsterdam;
I je suis devant la station!...je vien te chercher bro!
>>> rest of the day at studio, lot of art/ family talk,
we almost missed dinner, a day filled with undocumented letters to the future,
>>>night walks to the house, communal dinner with another brother,
25/06/2014: after your interview, we visit kemang's studio...
eish you never change, you don't still drink wine...it's okay>>>home
26/06/2014:my regards to your wife and princess, enjoy Ouagadougou!
see you soon, black gate closes as I watch you walk your king walk...
>>>inbetween virtual messaging>>>01h06, 25-07-2014>>>nooo! not another joke...
be nice>>>hey bro! you're busy?...lost your password?...travelling?...
if you're crossing let the ride home be easy... see you soon anyway, can't be an idiot!

Em'kal Eyongakpa

October 22, 2013

"united chiefdoms of Africa" Goddy Leye

united chiefdoms of Africa...
Goddy leye

Like Comment Promote Share

Like Comment Promote Share

8 12

Em'kal Eyongakpa

February 22

first quarter of 2014...
mass occupation of heaven...

Amiri Baraka, Stuart Hall, Frédéric Bruly Bouabré....

Live on...

Em'kal Eyongakpa

Like Comment Promote Share

Bate Besong "Obasinjom warrior"
may you Live on!

Obasinjom Warrior: Poems After Detention, Bate Besong

Like Comment Promote Share

Em'kal Eyongakpa

March 17

Like Comment Promote Share

Em'kal Eyongakpa

July 15, 2013

02:22 15-07-2013

leaving A31...black jacket with hoodie for you...sure own!

Like Comment Promote Share

On this earthday I celebrate Lapiro De Mbanga's life not only as one of the most prolific and consistent voices of ordinary Cameroonian people in the recent past but also as a visionary who made me see the unifying aspects of creolisation in a complex case like in the Cameroons. Let one of the greatest poets in Cameroon's recent past sail unto eternity.

Like Comment

Em'kal Eyongakpa

December 6, 2013

on this earthday...if I had one wish, it might be BK raw uncut footage from the other world with close up's on Biko, Sankara, Lumumba's spirits

#politicsandna... 20-2013

Em'kal Eyongakpa

woke up to voices from my dreams...

"how goes the congo? how goes the crossroad of the heart land?"

still negotiating babylon grids in crow kingdom...

ujukhal! yours...Khalitopian own

Chief Ayamba Ette Otun!

Comment Promote Share

Like Comment Promote Share

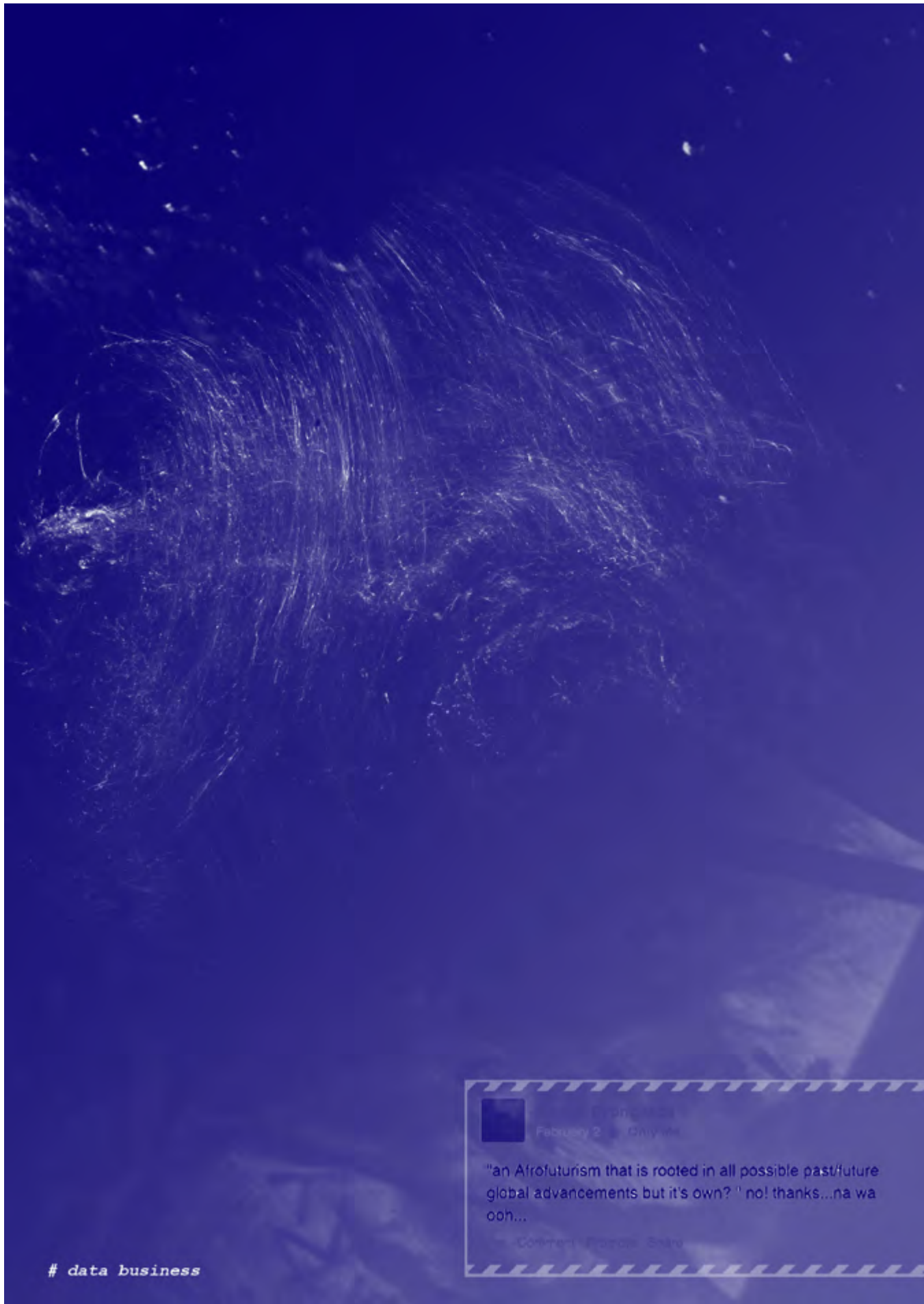
Em'kal Eyongakpa

November 22, 2011


still negotiating babylon grids in crow kingdom...

ujukhal! yours...Khalitopian own

11:58 KST(KhalISHRINE TIME) ensemble...



data business

 **Evangelina**
February 2 at 01:46

"an Afrofuturism that is rooted in all possible past/future global advancements but it's own?" no! thanks...na wa ooh...

[Comment](#) [Retweet](#) [Share](#)

Connected Africa? Photographic communities in the digital age*

Érika Nimis and Marian Nur Goni

IX-

95

In this brief essay we examine the latest developments in contemporary photography on the African continent alongside those in our own research activities. New technologies and the development of the social web —pervasive now with the phenomenon of blogs and online communities shaped by discussion forums, as well as the advent of social networks at the end of 2006— have indeed profoundly affected the way we work.

Our research also depends increasingly on the web to contact and communicate with a growing network of artists and researchers; to collect information leading us to explore new fields of research; to download documents of every kind (images, online articles); and lastly to disseminate our own thoughts and tools, namely through the research blog Fotota we launched in April 2013 on the academic platform Hypothèses. Fotota focuses on the new challenges facing photography in Africa in the digital age.

The reflections that follow are based on empirical evidence gathered from the Fotota project, but also from our work as researchers connected to the Internet.

1994-2014

In 1994 there arose an international recognition of African photography, with among other things the first *Rencontres de la photographie africaine* in Bamako and the monographic exhibition on Seydou Keita at the Fondation Cartier in Paris. In the years that followed, several events served to validate African portraitists in the North, giving their images a new social life.¹ Parallel to this increased visibility (initially the result of efforts by the Western contemporary art world and hence² confined to only a few names: Seydou Keita, Malick Sidibé at the Fondation Cartier in 1995, Samuel Fosso), there was a boom in digital technology. Indeed, an interesting parallel can be drawn between these two phenomena. Yet can we go so far as to claim that the digital revolution accompanied the promotion of African photography? Yes and no.

In fact, in the first phase of its construction “as object of study and its recognition as object of art” (Werner, 2000), African photography, which up until then had remained outside the history of photography, was consecrated by traditional, physical sites —museums, galleries, festivals (and “paper” publications)— and their networks. Furthermore,

IX-

it was only after the “physical” participation of these photographers in festivals such as the Biennale de Bamako (and the production workshops that followed) that a new generation of photographers emerged and subsequently created collectives in various African cities, to continue the exchanges.



IX-

So it was at these “real” events that the first seeds of “photographic communities” in Africa³ were sown, even though in many African countries often there already existed photographer associations meant to manage the profession. These communities, created by the youngest generations (born after the independences), at first worked on a city scale. Among the most well known are the collectives “Depth of Field” in Lagos, “Gabon Igo- lini” in Libreville, and “Génération Elili” in Brazzaville. These communities also worked on a regional scale, and promoted documentary and artistic photography that was not confined to portrait photography — a genre in a way become de rigueur on Western picture rails since the “discovery” of Keita, Sidibé and Fosso. The access to online social networks that spread through these photographic communities around 2007 (Mercier, 2012) allowed them to develop, expand and share information and images on a scale and frequency that went far beyond how they had operated until then.

Photograph posted by Ananias Léki Dago on his Facebook page on June 26, 2014 with the caption: “Memories... Bunch of photographers, Bamako 1994, 1st edition. Can you find me in the picture?”

Towards a greater autonomy?

In the space of twenty years the visibility of African photographs and their producers increased significantly: a new generation of photographers has taken its career in its own hands, through blogs or an active presence on social networks. The age of intermediaries, indispensable before the explosion of these new technologies, seems to be over now, even though one still must rely on curators for access to other professional communities.

Similar changes can be observed in biennales and other festivals, from the Bamako biennial, led and produced by France, to the Addis Foto Fest, whose artistic director, photographer Aida Muluneh, seeks to produce the exhibitions on site as much as possible; and the LagosPhoto Festival, already well-established in the world of international festivals.

The festivals in Addis (created in 2010) and Lagos (created in 2009) are indeed extremely successful in terms of communication, thanks to the Internet and social networks. The former posts a lot of information daily via Facebook —calls for submissions, articles on photography— to its community of friends, particularly those “local photographers” for whom no formal training is available in the Ethiopian capital.⁴ As for the LagosPhoto festival, just observing its activity on the Internet reveals the full command it has of web-based tools and the debates abuzz in the world of photography since the “digital revolution.” By June 30, 2014, the Facebook page of this young festival had been “liked” 15,301 times, compared to that of the *Rencontres internationales de la photographie d’Arles*, one of the oldest festivals in the world, which was “liked” 11,100 times by the same date.

Some of their events also exploit the potential of the Internet, such as the workshop entitled “Negotiating Your Photography Presence Online” held at the festival in 2013, or the “Mastering the selfie” Etisalat Photography Competition —a selfies-themed contest held at the festival’s 5th edition in October/November 2014.⁵

IX-

A mixed overall picture

Thanks to this information, we can measure the progress made since 1994 —every week now bringing its own bunch of new projects, shared images and brand new “friends” in a community to which we also belong. Yet a closer look reveals that it is often, with a few exceptions, the same photographers from a short list of countries who are active and visible on the web and who travel to and participate in the exhibitions, workshops and festivals. By posting on our research blog Fotota weekly and monthly press reviews —taken from web publications we keep up to date with mainly via Facebook— we can observe, with little surprise, that South African photographers have the upper hand, with almost one-third of publications dedicated to them between January and May 2014 (26 out of 72).

This observation leads us back to our original hypothesis (according to which the digital revolution accompanied the promotion of African photography); to put it into perspective, and to recognize that if there does in fact exist one or more connected photographic communities in Africa sharing, exchanging and “liking” each other’s projects, it is also true that an overwhelming majority of photographers aspiring to become artists remains excluded from these exchanges, as much the virtual as the real ones.

Thus the picture of African photographic communities is much more varied than it appears at first glance. A similar observation can be made regarding the development of new technologies on the continent, judging by the numerous works dedicated to the digital divide in Africa, where access to the web is still far from homogenous.

Let’s take the example of Niger, a country nearly absent from these networks. The recent passing of photographer Philippe Koudjina (1940-2014) —once the star photographer of Niamey during Independence, yet who never rose to the recognition of Keita or Sidibé— was reported only in his country’s daily paper, *Le Sahel*.

By way of comparison, the death that same year of another “doyen of African photography,” Nigerian J.D. ‘Okhai Ojeikere (1930-2014) who had indeed found a place within contemporary art circles, was widely reported in the Western media such as, for instance, *Libération*, RFI and the BBC.

IX-



Moreover, while some borders have dissolved thanks to the web (at least for some) — with easier access to new markets and new opportunities⁶ — the same cannot be said about real borders, those between countries, whether between African states or, more notably, between Africa and the European “fortress” where the circulation of African nationals has become more and more difficult.

In an exchange with professor of literature Emily Apter at Columbia University (“Translation, Checkpoints, Sovereign Borders”) reposted on the blog *Africa Is A Country*,⁷ the philosopher Souleymane Bachir Diagne said, in an astute play on words, that his Senegalese passport was a passport that did not pass ports... Thus many are the artists — such as the Nigerian photographer Abraham Oghobase who was not able to attend the prize-giving ceremony in London in May 2014 for the Prix Pictet, for which he was a finalist — who are refused visas that would allow them to participate in events held in Europe. An article in the *Financial Times*⁸ took up the story of this unexplained refusal to grant a visa, establishing a parallel between the opaque administration of our democratic states and the “transparence” [the authors’ emphasis] of the artistic act that often “puts a finger where it hurts.”

IX-

Philippe Koudjina. Image taken from the monograph dedicated to the photographer in the “Afriphoto” collection (Africultures / Filigranes éditions, #13, 2007, page 16).

Our virtual research practices

Let's now look at our own practice as precarious researchers who, due to a lack of means, can only rarely travel to the places where these international workshops, biennials, festivals and other exhibitions are held — events nevertheless essential for our field work. Quite often we must resign ourselves to visiting and participating in them, as it were, in a virtual manner: by proxy, via our "Facebook friends." This is how for instance we "visited" the most recent Dakar biennial — Dak'Art — in May 2014.

For the sake of hyperbole, we could even compare our connected and virtual research practices to those of "armchair anthropologists" in the second half of the 19th century who, "[r]ecognizing] in the photographic image an ideal tool for their research,"⁹ worked mainly from documents gathered on the ground by commissioned travellers (hence the copious instructions written to them by learned societies so that they would bring back photographs useful from a scientific point of view), or from illustrated journals inviting one to discover the world from one's sitting room.¹⁰

This evocation of the past should compel us to be vigilant with regard to the treatment of our virtual sources, that we may factor in the inevitable misinterpretation accompanying the fragments of information adrift on the digital ocean, bound to be caught up in issues whose causes and consequences we do not fully grasp.

Also, won't this new virtual order — a relative one, as we have seen above — lead to an increased dependence on face-to-face encounters,¹¹ as shown by the proliferation of all kinds of conferences (workshops, collective shows and other biennials)? And don't these "physical" events, as well as the encounters that ensue, ultimately just allow to better connect to a network through which the disseminated information, projects, contacts and visibility can later be turned into profit?

In an article published in 2012, the Congolese photographer Baudouin Bikoko went so far as to compare "African photography" to an unrefined product, easily exportable abroad but whose producers are incapable of controlling the chain of transformation, or evaluating fair compensation for their work — hence the role played by intermediaries in a system that Bikoko qualifies as "nebulous." Can the "non-intermediary" approach, available only via new technologies and social networks, really provide an efficient way to counter this "nebula"?¹² We still lack sufficient hindsight to answer this question.

IX-

IX-

* This essay was taken from a contribution to the panel entitled "Art contemporain: quelles pratiques pour quelles circulations?" [Contemporary art: What practices for which circulations?] presented on July 1, 2014 at the 3^e Rencontres des études africaines en France.

Notes:

1. This new social life actually started a few years earlier, in 1991, with the New York exhibition "Africa Explores: Twentieth Century African Art" by Susan Vogel, at which a few of Keita's photographs were presented (albeit anonymously).

2. Nathalie Moureau and Dominique Sagot-Duvaouroux, "La construction du marché des tirages photographiques," *l'Building a market for photographic prints* **Etudes photographiques** n. 22, Sept. 2008.

The history of photography as it is written today is opening itself more to photographs from the South, whereas up until the 1990s it had been limited to the Euro-American space. In **Photography Today**, published by Phaidon Press, writer Mark Durden, tracing photography from the 1960s to the present in its relationship to art history, cites Burkina Faso-born photographer Saïdou Dicko, thus showing the elasticity of a network no longer confined exclusively to African photography. See Gemma Padley, "Photography Today," **British Journal of Photography**, May 31, 2014, <http://www.bjp-online.com/2014/05/photography-today/>

3. See for example the interview by Héric Libong of Ananias Léki Dago in "Les Rencontres du Sud à Abidjan: naissance d'une collection" [*Abidjan Rencontres du Sud: The Birth of A Collection*], **Africultures**, December 2000, <http://www.africultures.com/php/index.php?nav=article&no=1665>. In the introduction, the journalist mentions the photographers who participated in the first edition of this festival launched by the Ivorian photographer: "These ten or so thirty-something photographers, benefitting from Ananias Dago's impetus, correspond to the tendencies that he and other photographers from Senegal, South-Africa or Madagascar have exhibited around the world since the mid-Nineties, and in particular since the first Rencontres de Bamako."

Other passages in this interview provide an idea of what initially the "African photographic community" might have been:

Héric Libong: *How did the Rencontres du Sud come about?*

Ananias Léki Dago (photographer and founder of Rencontres): I thought it dangerous that photography be limited to one or two people in Côte d'Ivoire. I thought about how to promote what is described as creative photography, in which the photographer adopts an aesthetic approach, a personal view of day-to-day scenes. In Abidjan, I know several who have things to show, despite the difficulties they meet. Only they aren't used to exhibiting. And as they belong to no networks, they are not short-listed for events such as the Rencontres de Bamako, and don't have the means to go there either.

(...)

Héric Libong: How do you feel about the fact that most of the images of the South are taken by photographers from the North?

Ananias Léki Dago: I don't think that we should reject everything per se. Some Europeans have produced very good works on Africa. But for me and for several photographers of the 1994 trend, this was a catalyzer. And there comes a time when you have to impose Africa's own vision of itself.

4. The reason why photographer and cultural entrepreneur Aida Muluneh launched the NGO "Desta for Africa": <http://www.dfaplc.com/index.php/about-dfa>

5. See <http://www.lagosphotoapp.net> visited June 30, 2014, from which we include this extract: "While self-portraiture shares a long and entangled history with photography and art, the selfie represents a new type of image-making, relying on how the photograph is disseminated and commented on. In an Internet age of ever-present virtual connectivity, selfies allow us to negotiate how we wish to be represented to the world and become a meeting point between our evolving notions of personal and shared space.

On the fifth anniversary of LagosPhoto, The Etisalat Photography Competition 2014 proudly presents Mastering the Selfie. Photographers are asked to submit selfies based on monthly themes leading up to the festival, exploring the community and life around you. Submitted images will be uploaded to the LagosPhoto Mobile App, powered by Etisalat, where the public can view and vote on the entries. The project will culminate in an exhibition during the LagosPhoto Festival and the creation of an online archive, with prizes for winning photographs. Particular attention will be placed on artistic creativity and expanding the selfie outside of established norms."

6. See for example Stephen Mayes' article, "Toward A New Documentary Expression", Aperture blog, not dated, <http://www.aperture.org/blog/toward-new-documentary-expression/>

7. Elliot Ross, "The passport that does not pass ports," *Africa Is A Country*, March 5, 2014, <http://africasacountry.com/the-passport-that-does-not-pass-ports/>

8. Peter Aspden, "So much for cultural openness," *Financial Times*, May 23, 2014, www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/2/b5d721f2-e18d-11e3-9999-00144feabdc0.html#axzz32co5JTmn

9. Pierre-Jérôme Jehel, *Photographie et anthropologie en France au XIXe siècle*, Masters' thesis, Université Paris VIII, Saint-Denis, 1995, http://www.a-m-e-r.com/mots-regards/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/photo_anth19e.pdf

10. In his article “Des rapports de la photographie avec les Beaux-Arts” [On the relationship between photography and the Beaux-Arts] in the *Bulletin de la Société Française de Photographie* (Paris) in 1860, Antoine Claudet wrote that photography allowed one to discover the world “by the fireside (...) without running the risks to which (...) daring and audacious artists expose themselves to, travelling across countries and oceans, loaded down with their heavy, cumbersome photographic equipment.” (p. 277)

11. “Créer une photographie à l’image du continent,” an interview led by Marian Nur Goni with Selim Harbi Mohamed and Loutsono Désiré Kinzenguelé, with participation from Fatoumata Diabaté and Jumoke Sanwo, *Africultures*, Feb. 2014, www.africultures.com/php/index.php?nav=article&no=12082#sthash.kLyglje3.dpuf

“Selim Harbi: To set up a solid network, first of all we had to know each other personally, know who does what and how...in order to better visualize the future and see how we could work together and organize ourselves to create mobility, and more events — conferences, festivals, joint work sessions — on the African continent to do with photography.”

12. Baudouin Bikoko, “*Une nébuleuse entoure la photographie africaine*” [“A nebula surrounds African photography”], *Africultures*, 88, Perspectives africaines en photographie, L’Harmattan (June 2012): pp. 162-171. In the article, Bikoko relates all the difficulties, miscomprehensions and ambiguities that come with this first phase of appreciation of photography from Africa, in the relationship between cultural operators and photographers. The web 2.0 and social networks in the first instance, and then new photographic devices, would, in part, change everything.

IX-

Qalqalah: The Subject of Language

Sarah Rifky

X-

In keeping with time, before I tell you a story and talk about the future, let us travel back to a moment in the past. Let us travel back to January of 1977 in Cairo. The capital is on fire and the Egyptian Bread Riots are rippling through the city. They are tearing the liberal policies of Sadat's *infitah* to pieces. In a small apartment in Giza, a woman, a poet, not particularly religious, wakes up from her sleep... Placing one hand on her bump of five months, she whispers a few words to dispel nagging spirits... In her sleep, she was visited by the prophet...peace be upon him. In the dream he said, "Give your child a good name." A good name does not necessarily mean a name with a good meaning, but more importantly a name that would ensure a good and prosperous future. The first act of language, is always giving a name. The child is born and named: she is called Qalqalah.

It is worth of noting that Qalqalah grows up to become an artist, but this account is not about that. We are interested in what happens a long time after. In 2048 Qalqalah is turning seventy-one. She is an unusual woman in all respects. It all started with the unusual name she was given. Qalqalah, a very Arabic sounding word, is not a name; it is a motion in language, a phonetic vibration, a bounce or an echo, over certain letters of the Arabic scripture that make up the words "QT bgd" — which almost translates into English as "a cat for real."

Although it is easy to understand how Qalqalah came to be an artist, in the context that she found herself in, in the type of family that brought her up, no one can historically determine exactly when art, as a vocation, as we understood it in 2014, became obsolete... Some argued that everyone had become an artist, or no one was, but it doesn't really matter. When did art as art cease to exist? It is vaguely said to have been around the 2030's, shortly after the economy had finally and completely collapsed. The collapse was more of a systematic meltdown, felt and accepted, and didn't come with a bang or a boom or a clear event. The fact of the future was that the economy, predicted for so long to collapse, had collapsed. Finally. The unimaginable had finally arrived, and with it the order of the world radically changed, much faster than anyone could have possible imagined.

Qalqalah now lives in the United Arab World, a conglomerate of corporations, where as a citizen she takes up her place as a linguist, serving the greater good of UAW (often pronounced by Arabic speakers as: WOW,

X-

which also signified the letter “waw”). The waaw is the 27th letter of the Arabic alphabet, of the *abjadiya*. It represents the number six and belongs to the element of air. It symbolizes the mystical promise of total assent, and it denotes the universal aspect of the whole according to some mystics. Already in the 11th century, Ibn al-Arabi gives quite some attention to waw in a booklet dealing with the letters “waw” “meem” and “nuun”. We find out that “waaw”, a letter, is the first perfect number. By other sheikhs we are told that ‘waaw’ corresponds to the quality of dying when you still are alive, which of course, is a part of the message.

Ten centuries later, in the 21st century, linguists and translators have found a good place in the new social scheme of UAW. This is an unexpected turn to things, who would have thought that linguists and translators would be well-compensated jobs in this future which I speak to you in present tense? Not only that, but to work with words, and words as numbers, are skills that are held high-regard in the era of new corporations. Qalqalah had been lucky: as a young person she hadn’t opted to study languages, but she was naturally attune to many, having grown up with six. Qalqalah’s parents were *both* poets, and she had briefly married into a family of bookkeepers, of librarians, from the former Kingdom. In her old age Qalqalah regrets never having children, like many of her generation, but she thinks of every word she speaks as giving birth to “new meaning.”

In the winter of 2048, Qalqalah is invited to attend a closed meeting at the prestigious University of the Future Post-Sense (UF-PS). The university is situated in a former parliamentary building of a place that was formerly known as Bern in Switzerland. The overhaul of the school into a sort of think tank was part of the larger education reform movement on a continental scale, and was meant to secure those schools and universities didn’t shut down with the economic collapse of the early thirties. Previous universities realigned themselves to new corporate bodies with the promise that they would bring in returns on investment pretty quickly.

This is a time were philosophy is prized for bringing in fast results and where ideology is incubated, as it has failed to simply emerge in the previous decades, despite ongoing political tumult and hyper-action. The closed convention Qalqalah is invited to is one in a series that are taking place worldwide. She often declines such invitations where she finds herself bored with the lack of imagination of present scholars and research-

X-

ers... In her seventh decade of life, she finds that pretty much anything that was worth saying has already been said in years before. The effect of recycling language is tiresome to her ears. Qalqalah has lived through a lot. Organizers of such conventions are often younger avid types that have no memory of a past, but sense something akin to nostalgia for it.

It is true of people born in the 2000's that they have a different experience of memory: they are an entirely different type of human altogether. Save for those who were born into families of time separatists and idealists who had tried to extract themselves from the system and which were very few, the new generations had very narrow attention spans, and contrary to what one would imagine made up human life, no real connection to narrative. Whereas in decades before, the premise of being human was based on a continual history, narrative mimesis and the ability to retell one's life in stories, suddenly narrative has caught up, it is instant, and it disappears as soon it speaks.

Organizers of the convention are interested in Qalqalah, as she is a first hand witness to the early waves of uprising and recounted revolutions and occupy movements in the early tens and twenties of the century. She had lived through regional wars and was part of the dissident movements that caused the collapse of the nation-state system in the Eastern hemisphere in the late twenties and early thirties. Not that much good had come out of that. But like many people at this time Qalqalah has trouble recollecting memories of her past. Suffering from attention disorders, narrative fatigue and spiritually struggling with psychotic breaks means that Qalqalah isn't as lucid, as we are today, in 2014. Or maybe one could say she is more lucid, just in a way that disagrees with post 1950's psychiatry. For the Bern-convention, she is tasked with piecing together something that resembles a political narrative, a type of history, of the political cracks in time since the 2010's. She struggles to remember a distant past beyond the hyper-capital conglomerate of the new United Arab World.

The conference in Bern draws on conscious and unconscious thought and behavior, paving the economy towards a post-linguistic future. Qalqalah is suspicious of institutions, yet thrives on language. She has an innate understanding that there is no future post-language.

X-

On the fringes of the conference, she finds herself amongst a self-proclaimed group of “monolingual activists” from the Indo-European worlds. She attends their meetings and embarks on a set of impossible questions about the future of a region. Is a political paradigm shift possible through a rediscovery of other languages? Is speaking more than one language a form of treason masked as knowledge?

Speaking so many languages, it is impossible to think, she thinks. To think in her native Arabic father-tongue, Qalqalah has to unlearn her other glosal skills. She has an inkling that if she sets out to investigate linguistic facts and little known secrets of the Arabic language, in its chronographic dimension, it would be possible to approach the future differently. Arabic for a fact does not have future tense. Or rather, its future is derivative of the present. Qalqalah is caught in a conundrum of questions, for what does it mean for a language not to encompass a future in speech, she wonders. In end effect, we have to ask ourselves what the political consequences are of introducing new forms and tenses to old languages.

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Marie-laure Allain Bonilla

Marie-laure Allain Bonilla holds a PhD in Art History entitled *Visualizing Theory: Uses of postcolonial theories by curatorial practices of contemporary art since the 1980's* (Rennes 2 University). She is currently a teaching fellow at Rennes 2 University where she lectures on Contemporary Art History in a Curatorial Master. Her current research goes in two complementary directions: a rereading of Eurocentric early 20th century's art history and the museums' acquisitions' policies in the global era. In this perspective she is for instance involved in the scientific framing of *Collecting Matters*, an international workshop organized by Kadist Art Foundation Paris in June 2015.

Lotte Arndt

Based in Brussels, Lotte Arndt has been teaching at the art school l'École d'art et design de Valence since 2014. In 2013, she finished her PhD entitled *Postcolonial negotiations in Paris based on cultural magazines referring to Africa* (Paris, Berlin), and was researcher in residency at the art school *l'École supérieure d'art de Clermont Métropole* (2013-2014). Currently she coordinates the artistic research project "Karawane" that accompanies the making of Vincent Meessen's and Katerina Gregos' Belgian pavilion at the next Venice Biennale (in collaboration with *l'erg*, école de recherche graphique, Brussels). She is part of the artists and researcher group *Ruser l'image*, and publishes regularly on topics regarding the postcolonial present and artistic strategies in pursuit of subverting Eurocentric institutions and narratives.

Em'kal Eyongakpa

Em'kal Eyongakpa (b.1981, Cameroon) lives and works between Yaoundé, Cameroon and Amsterdam, Netherlands. Drawing on dreams and observations, he approaches the experienced, the unknown as well as collective histories through a ritual use of repetition and transformation. He works with photography, video, sculpture, text, sound and performance. His interwoven installations not only obscure the boundaries between employed media but could also distort the notion of the real and the illusory. He has exhibited at Saavy contemporary and NBK, Berlin (2014), Sesc_Videobrasil, Sao Paulo (2013), Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester (2012), 10th Dak'art biennale, Dakar (2012), IFC yaounde, (2012), Doual'art, Douala (2011) among others. From 2013-2014, he was a resident artist at the Rijksakademie Van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam. He is currently in residency at Kadist Art Foundation, Paris where he will have a solo exhibition from May to July 2015.

Maryam Jafri

Maryam Jafri is an artist working in video, performance and photography, with a specific interest in questioning the cultural and visual representation of history, politics and economy. Informed by a research based, interdisciplinary process, her artworks are often marked by a visual language posed between film and theatre, literature and philosophy, and a series of narrative experiments oscillating between script and document, fragment and whole. In 2015, she presents her exhibition *The Day After* at Bétonsalon – Centre for Art and Research (Paris) and will be part of the Belgian Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennial and of the Göteborg biennial.

Saadat Hasan Manto

Saadat Hassan Manto (11 May 1912 – 18 January 1955) was a short story writer of the Urdu language, a translator, a film and radio scriptwriter and a journalist. He chronicled the chaos that prevailed, during and after the *Partition of India* in 1947, with a dark sense of comedy. He is best known for his short stories, "Bu" (Odour), "Khol Do" (Open It), "Thanda Gosht" (Cold Meat), and "Toba Tek Singh". He published twenty-two collections of short stories, one novel, five collections of radio plays, three collections of essays, and two collections of personal sketches. Manto was tried for obscenity six times; thrice before 1947 in British India, and thrice after independence in 1947 in Pakistan, but never convicted.

Pedro Neves Marques

Pedro Neves Marques (b.1984, Portugal) is a writer and visual artist, living in New York, USA. He is the editor of *The Forest and the School/Where to Sit at the Dinner Table?*, an anthology on Antropofagia and cosmopolitics in Brazil (Archive Books and Akademie der Kuesnte der Welt – Koln; 2014), and of the short-stories book *The Integration Process* (Atlas Projectos; 2012). He has exhibited at e-flux (New York, with Mariana Silva), Sculpture Center (New York), The Pipe Factory (Glasgow), MK Gallery (Milton Keynes), 12th Cuenca Biennial (Ecuador), Casa do Povo (Brazil), EDP Foundation (Lisbon, with André Romão), Serralves Foundation (Porto), DocLisboa International Film Festival, and IndieLisboa Film Festival, among others.

Erika Nimis

Erika Nimis is an Associate Professor in Art History at UQAM (Montreal, Canada). She is specialized in History of Photography in West Africa and published three books and many articles on the subject. She collaborates with different art magazines among which, *Ciel Variable* (Canada), *Africultures* (France) where she co-edited in 2012 a special issue titled "African Perspectives on Photography" with Marian Nur Goni, with whom she co-writes a research blog on the same topics, named [FOTOTA](#).

Marian Nur Goni

Marian Nur Goni is preparing a PhD on the history of photographic practices in the Horn of Africa from the 19th century to the present at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris). She also does research on diverse topics such as the historiography of African photography, contemporary African photography and photo festivals in Africa, and the representations of Italian colonial history in contemporary art. In 2012, she and Érika Nimis co-edited "African Perspectives on Photography," issue 88 of the journal *Africultures*. Following this experience, they jointly run "Fotota," a research blog devoted to African photography, its current challenges, readings and discourses.

Helihanta Rajaonarison

Helihanta Rajaonarison is a Lecturer, a professor and a researcher in the History Department of the Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Antanarivo University. Her PhD thesis in socio-cultural history investigated the social uses of photography in Antanarivo from its beginnings in 1856 to the 1950s.

Sarah Rifky

Sarah Rifky is a writer and curator living in Cairo, Egypt. She is co-founder of *Beirut*. Rifky was co-curator of the Jogjakarta Biennale XII (2013), curator of Townhouse (2009-2011) and curatorial Agent for dOCUMENTA(13) in Kassel, Cairo and Alexandria (2012). She co-managed MASS Alexandria, with Wael Shawky (2010-2012) and taught Art History and Theory at the American University in Cairo (2010). She is co-editor of *Positionen: Zeitgenössische Künstler aus der Arabischen Welt* (2013) and author of *The Going Insurrection* (2012). She is a regular contributor to *Art in America*, *Art Agenda*, *Bidoun*, the *Exhibitionist*, and others. She is an avid storyteller, teacher and lecturer of art.

Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa

Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa studied Literature at Cambridge University and Fine Art at the Slade School of Fine Art, in Great Britain. She is a 2015 Fellow of Künstlerhaus Buchsenhausen (Austria), where she is working on the history of European utopian settlements in East Africa. Emma works in a range of media, including installation, video, photography, printmaking and drawing. Recent/upcoming exhibitions include: *Artificial Facts* (Kunsthau Dresden, Germany), *Giving Contours to Shadows* (Savvy Contemporary/Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Germany) and *KLA ART 012* (Kampala Contemporary Art Festival, Uganda), and possibly also *African Odysseys* (Le Brass, Belgium). Emma also researches art education. She has recently been appointed Director of Research at the Nagenda International Academy of Art & Design in Namulanda, Uganda.

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Qalqalah is the name of a polyglot heroine invented by curator and writer Sarah Rifky, who gradually loses her memory in a not-so-distant future where notions of language, art and economy as we know them today have collapsed. This text is republished in the first issue of **Qalqalah**.

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