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Literary and Theatrical Circulations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi, from the Belgian Colonial Empire to the Africa of the Great Lakes.

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Abstract

This article on literary and theatrical circulations in Africa's Great Lakes region begins by retracing the history of these practices, taking several examples from the colonial period. It then analyzes contemporary modalities of the circulation of texts (via procedures such as reprising narrative patterns and adaptation), and cultural actors, in the different transnational arts networks that are more or less closely tied to the humanitarian sector, or to international cooperation. Finally, it proposes a critical questioning of the concept of artistic circulation.

Résumé

Cet article portant sur les circulations littéraires et spectaculaires dans l'Afrique des Grands Lacs commence par retracer l'histoire de ces pratiques à travers quelques exemples issus de la période coloniale. Il s'attache ensuite à analyser les modalités contemporaines de circulations des textes (via des procédés tels que la reprise de motifs narratifs et l'adaptation) et de circulation des acteurs culturels dans les différents réseaux transfrontaliers de création artistique plus ou moins liés au secteur humanitaire ou à la coopération internationale. Il s'achève en proposant un questionnement critique sur le concept de circulation artistique.

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Preamble

> "Readers are travellers; they circulate on the lands of others, nomads poaching in fields they did not write."[1]
> - Michel de Certeau

While Michel de Certeau's words refer to writing – literature, and the reading that is its corollary in terms of reception – they can definitely also be applied to other artistic genres, and notably the speech arts (theatre, song), which, to variable degrees, imply the act of reading.

This article proposes to study the protean dimension of literary and theatrical circulations between three countries in Africa's Great Lake region: the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi, today united in the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries and which formerly, until 1960, were part of the Belgian colonial empire.[2]

Introduction

The African Great Lakes is a region long beset by acute tensions and scarred by murderous violence; these crystallize often-conflictual memories around the lakes and hills of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi. Travelling the region, one discovers the astonishing porosity of the official borders, which allows for intense exchanges (both in the sense of "plentiful" and "emotionally-charged") between the inhabitants of these three countries. In the artistic milieu, this circulation of individuals--which frequently takes the form of flight and exodus, due to frequent political upheavals in the region--starkly contrasts with the density of the *divides* (distancing and side-lining in the best-case scenarios; processes of exclusion and elimination in the worst) that characterize relations between the communities living in this region.

Despite deficient state structures (and at times, due to), authors thus organize themselves within different networks to circulate their writing: poetry recitals, literary cafés, radio drama, or theatre performances. All these initiatives paint the broad-strokes of a rich and varied textual landscape. They attest to the dynamism of this landscape and translate the force of the identity issues that animate it, and the emancipating potentiality it aims to convey.

Indeed, whatever the networks through which these texts reach an audience, they all appear to pursue the same quest: to heal wounds and rebuild ties. Hence, the circulation of texts, like that of people, highlights the common themes addressed: those of war and peace, and the dynamics of conflict in general.

After a first historical section presenting artistic circulations in the region–circulations of individuals in general, and of artists and their works, in particular–this study will focus on contemporary modalities of the circulation of dramatic texts (adopting a format, reprising and adaptation). Finally, it will end with an analysis of cultural actors' strategies of circulation in the region, mainly in the humanitarian sector.[3]

I. A Brief History of Artistic Circulations in the Great Lakes Region: Some Examples

> From time to time scrutinizing the worrying horizon with a lost look, always avoiding meeting anyone, I continue my hallucinatory flight through the vast cassava fields, past mounts and valleys, heading south, washing up, crushed with fatigue, thirsty, out of breath, no doubt in Mayaga, in the heart of the steppe, on the abrupt crest of I don't

[1] "Les lecteurs sont des voyageurs ; ils circulent sur les terres d'autrui, nomades braconnant à travers les champs qu'ils n'ont pas écrits." Michel De Certeau, "Lire : un braconnage," *L'invention du quotidien, 1/Arts de faire* (Paris: Union générale d'éditions, coll. 10/18, 1980), 292.

[2] I would like to thank my colleagues Alice Corbet, Didier Nativel and Daouda Gary-Tounkara for their informed reading of this article, and for their questions and pertinent remarks.

[3] This paper was written following fieldwork in DR Congo (Lubumbashi, Kolwezi, Fungurume, Kinshasa, Goma, Bukavu) and Burundi (Bujumbura), carried out between January and April 2016. It was supported by the CNRS (InSHS - Institut national des Sciences humaines et sociales), IFRA Nairobi and IFAS Johannesburg.

> know which hill – Kibirizi, perhaps, or Matara? – where the brambles, alongside wild bushes, grown beneath the careful hand of God in a thankless land of rock and stone. […] the day after tomorrow […] I shall cross the river and, after the Kanyinya Mission and the Kirundo post in Muhinga territory, reach the Anglo-Belgian border and at last Tanganyika Territory, in complete safety. [4]

This passage is taken from a dense account, recently re-published under the title *Mes transes à trente ans (Escapade ruandaise)*. In addition to its indisputable literary interest, it testifies to the real circulation of people, artists and texts in the Belgian colonial space, despite very rigidly applied regulations. Saverio Nayigiziki, who exerted many professions, notably in the public administration,[5] was the author of this remarkable account, part of which was published in 1950 under the title: *Escapade ruandaise Journal d'un clerc en sa trentième année.*[6] It is an autofiction, as it would be described today, narrating the flight of Justin in the colonial territories and beyond, from Rwanda to Burundi to Uganda and Tanzania. A clerk in a national company, Justin fears he will be accused by his superiors of theft when a deficit comes to light in the accounts. Inspired by the author's incessant travels in a sub-region not yet known as "The Great Lakes," this narrative is thus a kind of travel tale steeped in metaphysical and spiritual musings. Although very dense and hard to classify, it was awarded the literature prize at the 1949 Brussels Colonial Fair. It was hardly to go down in posterity, however, until it was rediscovered by Jean-Paul Kwizera, editor of the 2009 edition. A few years later, in 1954, Saverio Nayigiziki published a play, *L'Optimiste,* first published in Astrida (today Butare in Rwanda), then in the journal of the Élisabethville association of writers, *Jeune Afrique, Revue de l'UAAL.*[7] Posted by the IRSAC (Institute of Scientific Research on Central Africa) in Astrida to its Élisabethville station (today Lubumbashi in the Democratic Republic of Congo),[8] he indeed emigrated to Congo and settled in the Katanga region's capital. He was, moreover, one of the first Africans to hold a function on the editorial board of the colonial journal as of 1959.

1. The Mobility and Circulations of Individuals in the Empire

In Belgium's African colonies, circulations of people between the three countries were common, but carefully controlled. These were primarily labour migrations, essentially from Rwanda and Burundi to Congo; the latter was officially the only colony, Ruanda-Urundi having the status of protectorates, attached to the colony.[9] The Katanga thus drew a large Rwandan and Burundian workforce to the U.M.H.K. (Upper Katanga Mining Union) in Elisabethville and the neighboring mining towns of the Katanga copper arc. Migrations were also observed in the public administration, as Saverio Nayigiziki's personal path demonstrates; numerous Rwandan and Burundian clerks were sent to Leopoldville (now Kinshasa) and the other regional capitals to occupy administrative posts. But they were also motivated by university training requirements.

[4] "Interrogeant parfois d'un regard égaré l'horizon inquiétant, évitant toujours de rencontrer qui que ce soit, je poursuis ma course hallucinée à travers de vastes champs de manioc, passe monts et vallons et vais vers midi, échouer, recru de fatigue, assoiffé et haletant, sans doute au Mayaga, en pleine steppe, sur la crête abrupte de je ne sais quelle colline, - Kibirizi peut-être ou Matara ? – où les ronces, voisines d'arbustes sauvages, poussent sous la main soigneuse de Dieu dans un sol ingrat de rocaille et de pierre. […] après-demain […], je passerai la rivière et gagnerai, après la Mission de Kanyinya et le poste de Kirundo en territoire de Muhinga, la frontière belgo-anglaise et enfin la Tanganyika Territory, en pleine sécurité." Saverio Nayigiziki, *Mes transes à trente ans (Escapade ruandaise).* Texte intégral, établi et présenté par Jean-Paul Kwizera (Metz: Université Paul Verlaine-Metz, Centre de recherche "Écritures", coll. Littératures des mondes contemporains, série Afrique n°5, 2009), 72-74.

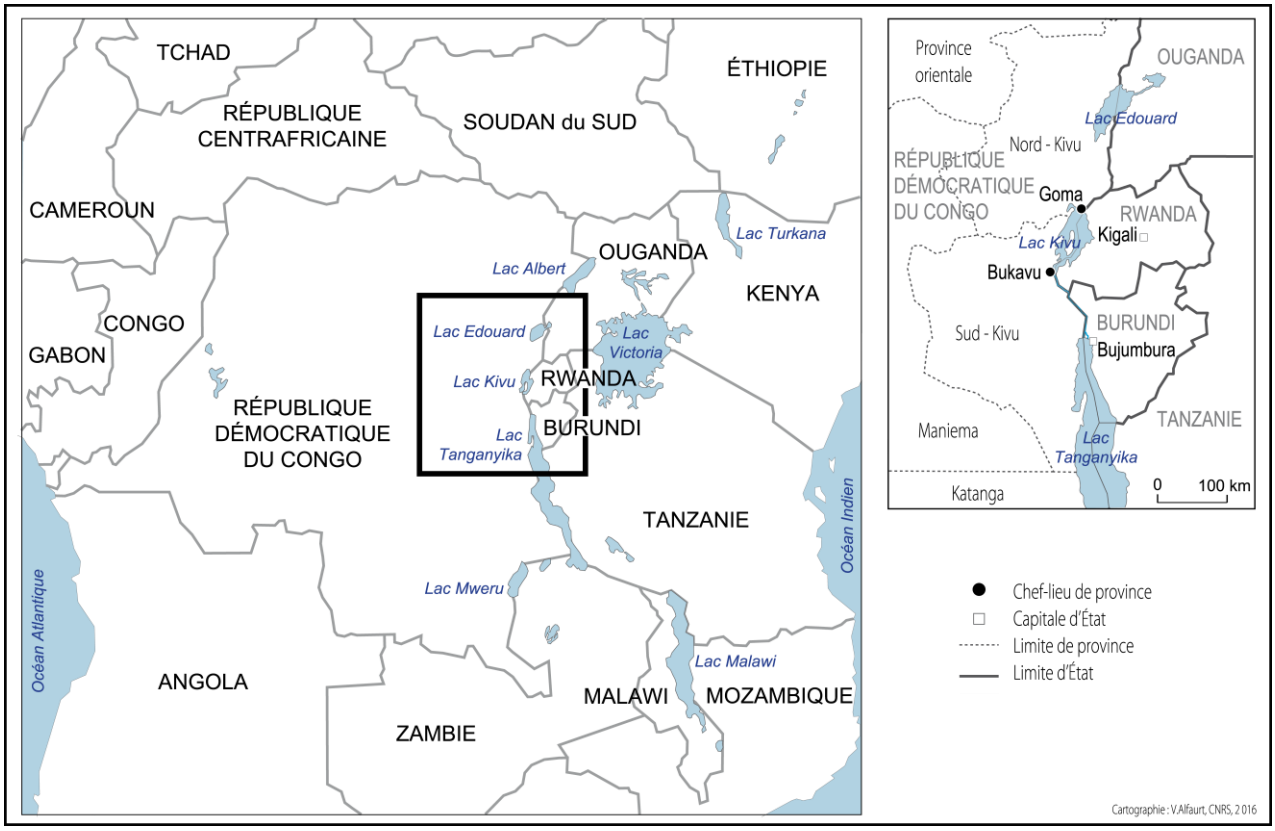
[5] He was in turn a clerk in a Rwandan mission, an employee in a transportation company in Usumbura, ran a cloth trading post in Nyanza (Rwanda), was a postal worker then auxiliary accountant in Goma (Congo), a research assistant and editor at the IRSAC (Institute of Scientific Research on Central Africa) in Astrida (Butare, Rwanda), then Élisabethville (Congo), where he also enrolled at the University of the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi.

[6] Saverio J. Nayigiziki, *Escapade ruandaise. Journal d'un clerc en sa trentième année* (*Rwandan Escapade. Diary of a Clerk in His Thirtieth Year*). Preface by J.-M. Jadot (Bruxelles: G.A. Deny, 1950) – renamed with the publication of the unabridged version in 1955: *Mes transes à trente ans. Histoire vécue mêlée de roman. I. de mal en pis. II. De pis en mieux*. (*My Trances Aged Thirty. A True Story Mixed With Fiction. I. From Bad to Worse. II. From Worse to Better.*) (Astrida: Groupe scolaire, 1955), 2 vol., 487 pages.

[7] Concerning this journal and its desire to inscribe itself in an urban modernity, with a veneer of cosmopolitanism, see: Pierre Halen, "La Première revue *Jeune Afrique* ou les ambivalences d'un projet culturel néo-colonial au Congo belge. 1947-1960", in A. Vigh, ed., *L'identité culturelle dans les littératures de langue française*. (Paris : ACCT/Presses de l'Université de Pecs, 1989), 203-216.

[8] Saverio J. Nayigiziki, *L'Optimiste*. Préface d'Emma Maquet (Astrida: Groupe scolaire Frères de la Charité, 1954), 58; Saverio J. Nayigiziki, *L'Optimiste. A three-act play, in Jeune Afrique*, (Élisabethville), 27 (1958): 17-29 ; 28 (1958): 27-35 ; *L'Optimiste* (part 3), in *Jeune Afrique*, (Élisabethville), 11e année, 29 (1958) : 24-31.

[9] Both had a provincial governor, like in Congo, but these came under the authority of the Governor General of Congo. According to the 1925 Law of Administrative Union, the two mandated territories of Ruanda-Urundi were administratively annexed to the Belgian Congo and were meant to become the fifth province of the Belgian Congo. In reality, these two countries had more autonomy than Congo's provinces. See: Joseph Gahama, *Le Burundi sous administration belge. La période du mandat (1919-193)* (Paris: Karthala/ACCT, 1983), 48-49.



Indeed, as the Universities of Rwanda and of Burundi were created later than the Congolese universities,[10] many left to study in Leopoldville and Elisabethville, right up until the 1980s.[11]

While the migration of people between these three countries thus mainly concerned the professional and student milieus, exchanges also took place in arts milieus too, essentially as of the late 1950s. This was the period when the colonial government began a semblance of cultural policy, at least with regard to the performing arts. Prior to this time, it had essentially backed the visual arts.[12]

2. *Changwe Yetu*, a Transnational, Collective Belgian African Creation

Nonetheless, while circulations of artists within this space were frequent during the 1950s, they mainly concerned European artists on theatre tours in the Empire, particularly in the Congo. The show *Changwe Yetu* constitutes the first example, to my knowledge, not only of circulation, but also of collaboration between Congolese, Rwandan and Burundian artists.

Changwe Yetu ("Our Festivity," in Swahili) was a kind of "big production" that basically assembled a suite of traditional performances (music and dance), followed by a shorter part, called "Modern Congo," which presented an ensemble of music hall style acts—sketches, comic acts, games (musical chairs, for example) —, and jazz-twist type pieces of music. It was thus a kind of folkloric patchwork incarnating tradition, as reinvented by Belgian orchestrators (theatre directors, producers, "local cultural operators"/sponsors). It

[10] The Lovanium University of Léopoldville was created in 1954, but the first Lovanium University Health Centre in Kisantu (Bas-Congo) dates to 1949. In 1956, the official University of the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi was created in Elisabethville. In Rwanda and Burundi, however, it was in 1960 that the Jesuit Faculty was created, which later became the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature. See: Hocine Khelfaoui, *Bref état des lieux du système national de recherche scientifique et technique de la République du Burundi*, (UNESCO report, July 2009), 14 : http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001865/186518e.pdf

[11] In the 1980s, circulations within the academic milieu became complicated because of the growing political tensions between the three countries. The tensions were notably due to the massive presence of Rwandophone and Burundophone people in the Eastern region of Kivu, who asserted their claim to be considered Congolese citizens and their ambition to administrate the territories in which they had settled.

[12] As testifies the organisation of art exhibitions, notably at the Léopoldville Museum of Indigenous Life, founded in 1936, but also political measures, such as the Decree For the Protection of Indigenous Art, signed in 1938 by King Leopold and the Minister of Colonies, E. Rubbens. Source: Archives africaines de Bruxelles, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères.

also included an interlude of what was not yet called "urban music", but which incarnated a form of burgeoning modernity in the colony. Staged in Elisabethville in 1956 on the occasion of the UMHK's 50-year jubilee, this show funded by the company was performed at the 1959 Universal Exhibition in Brussels. Staged with clearly propagandistic intentions, it was designed to celebrate the greatness of the Belgian Empire and to demonstrate its wealth and diversity.

While a few Congolese, Rwandan and Burundian groups came together for the first time on the same stage in this transnational collective creation in part destined for export, this event did not in reality constitute a real opportunity for Congolese, Rwandan and Burundian artists to collaborate. Indeed, if they cohabited in the same spaces – in Elisabethville during the creation of the show, then in Brussels – there was hardly any exchange between them, according at least to an official report concerning the behavior of the *Changwe Yetu* artists during their time in Brussels.[13]

That said, this show nonetheless constituted an emblematic event in the circulation of the people and intangible heritage of these three countries, prepared in Elisabethville (with groups and individuals from several regions of Congo and Ruanda-Urundi) and exported to Brussels, where it indeed made a strong impression.

II – Modalities of the Circulation of Texts

After this historical perspective and general reflections on the axes of circulations between each of these three countries' metropolises, we shall now look at how, precisely, different types of theatrical circulation operate in this transnational space, both within each country's borders, and from one country to another.

1. The Circulation of "Dramatic Formats": The Example of Impossible Unions

By "dramatic format," I mean a codified narration of multiple variables, but which repeat the same pattern. If there is indeed something of the industrial order in the reprise or repetition of a pattern in the Benjaminian sense, there is also, indubitably, a meaning to be sought in the recurrent activation of this pattern and its articulation in a work and within a specific socio-political context.

It is this impression that leads me to refer to novelist Henry James and his short story *The Figure in the Carpet.*[14] In a narration, the pattern is instantiated by topoi, articulated together in a sequence commonly known as a "script" or "plot." The Russian literary theorist Veselovsky, who inspired the Formalists and notably Vladimir Propp in his *Morphology of the Folktale*, defined the plot as "a mosaic of patterns."[15] The pattern here is a kind of over-arching general theme, or, it may be said, a sub-ensemble of more specific themes that enter into resonance with it, and which they activate in the narrative to fulfil a specific narrative function.[16]

Impossible union is thus the pattern *par excellence* found in dramatic formats in the Great Lakes region. Its circulation has been encouraged by a radio programme of sketches called *Jirani ni ndugu*, imagined to encourage reconciliation between warring parties. *Jirani ni ndugu*-–a phrase in Swahili that can be translated as "Your Neighbour Is Your Brother"-–is the title of a radio drama comprising an ensemble of dialogues

[13] In it, we learn, among other bits of "spicy" information, that the Barundi did not communicate with the Bahemba of Kongolo (North-East Katanga), despite, the report's author points out, their cultural proximity, and that the Ntore of Rwanda (Tutsi) openly showed their contempt of all the others, including the other Banyarwanda: Van Sinay J. (Head Territorial Agent, the Information Bureau), "Note pour M. Clément, administrateur de territoire. 3è bureau Service des affaires indigènes. Objet : comportement troupe de danseurs 'Changwe Yetu,'" Usumbura, 12 January 1959. Source: Archives africaines de Bruxelles, Ministère des Affaires étrangères, portefeuille RUDI (98), liasse 736.

[14] Henry James, *The Figure in the Carpet* [1896]. London: Heinemann. *L'image dans le tapis* (Paris: Pierre Horay, 1957) ; *L'image dans le tapis* (Paris: Éditions de L'Équinoxe, 1984) ; New edition (Paris: Le Seuil, Points, 1985) ; *Le motif dans le tapis* (Paris: Babel, 1997).

[15] Vladimir Propp, *Morphologie du conte* [1928]. (Paris: Seuil, coll. Points, 1965). This is how Claude Brémond presents it in *Logique du récit*, (Paris : Le Seuil, coll. Poétique, 1973), 13-14.

[16] Brémond adds: "In other words, the real unit, the narrative atom, is the pattern. The intrigue is a secondary creation." Brémond, *Logique du récit*, 14.

recorded on radio in serial form, and revolving around the motif of neighborly entente.

This program was initiated in Burundi, in 1997, at the time in the throes of a civil war, by the American NGO SFCG (Search for Common Ground), under the auspices of Studio Ijambo, the country's first humanitarian radio. In Kirundi, it was called *Umubanyi niwe muryango* ("Our neighbours Are Our Family") and was "played" on the radio by the troupe Geza Aho ("Enough!"). It was directed by one of the most famous Burundian playwrights, Marie-Louise Sibazuri, a pioneer of Burundian theatre, in French, then in Kirundi. She has also written a self-published novel[17] and, in recent years, become a storyteller, in addition to her official functions as Ambassador of Francophonie in Burundi. The production of these radio drama serials is as prolific as it is longstanding: in early April 2015, the troupe was up to its 909th episode, with two episodes broadcast a week. The story revolves around two neighboring families, who build very strong ties. One is Hutu, the other Tutsi, but we don't know which is which. This deliberate vacillation aims to transcend ethnic divisions and to surpass prejudices.

This dramatic family saga format, with its archetypal characters, who are in turn divided and united by conflicts, was thus exported to Congo in 2006. Nearly ten years later, it continues to be popular there, under the name of *Jirani ni ndugu.* The slogan is still used by the NGO to introduce its participatory theatre method everywhere it is involved. This common usage is based on the simple principle that this slogan can be adapted to any context, provided that problems between neighbors, in the broadest sense of the term, are at the heart of the conflict, whatever it may be, and taken in the strictest sense of the term.

Jirani ni ndugu has thus become the typical format of the popular drama serial, and is very widely broadcast in the Great Lakes region. Like all drama serials, its development and characters are quite codified. The storylines weave together a series of variants from one town to another, but are articulated around the motif of impossible union, and used to encourage peaceful cohabitation. In this respect, Marie-Louise Sibazuri's serial may be considered a Burundian version of Romeo and Juliet, as suggested by the journalist and writer Roland Rugero.[18] Developing the *topos* of impossible love between two young people of enemy ascendancy, he indeed classifies it as a soap opera.

While Sibazuri is unanimously considered the leading dramatist of star-crossed love, that overlooks several of her Rwandan predecessors who, due to circulations relating to their work or to political constraints (exile, mainly), have put on such plays. One might mention, for example, Jean-Marie Vianney Kayishema, a literature professor and playwright in exile in Burundi in the 1980s, who highly successfully staged his play *Pitié pour la Reine*[19] ("Pity For the Queen") in Bujumbura. This was another type of impossible love fiction: the story of a woman in a relationship with one man, but promised to another. This universal variant of the thwarted union motif traverses literature from Europe (Tristan and Isolde come to mind, to cite but one of the most famous) to Africa, where, through the prism of sentimental fiction, it has served to illustrate the conflict opposing two groups. Portraying conflict at the most immediate level possible–the family–indeed makes it possible to suggest a metaphor of divided or enemy social groups or communities. This variant of the impossible union pattern was often used in theatrical and novelistic fiction from the 1980s to 1990s, notably in Congo.[20]

[17] Marie-Louise Sibazuri, *Les seins nus* (Canéjan: Copymédia, 2013).

[18] Interview with Roland Rugero, Bujumbura, 5 April, 2015.

[19] Jean-Marie Vianney Kayishema, *Pitié pour la Reine* (1974), an original play, Inter-African Theatre Contest, 1974, Selection piece. Cited by Colette Scherer (ed.), *Catalogue des pièces de théâtre africain en langue française conservées à la Bibliothèque Gaston Baty* (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne nouvelle, coll. Cahiers Gaston Baty, n°3, 1995), 41. See the extract published in Sembura, ferment littéraire des Grands Lacs, *Pour une culture de paix dans la région des Grands Lacs Africains. Anthologie 2* (Kigali Fountain Publishers Rwanda Ltd, 2014), 169-175.

[20] Éric Tandundu Bisikisi, *Quand les Afriques s'affrontent*. (Paris: L'Harmattan, coll. Encres noires, 1984), 380, on mixed relationships (European and African). On the Kasaïens/Katangais conflict: Katsh M'Bika Katende, *La joue droite* (Kinshasa: CEDPT, 2009), writings from 1990/2008 ; Ilunga Kayombo, Bernard, *Contre vents et marées* (Kinshasa: Médiaspaul, 1996) ; and: Lomomba Elongo, *L'instant d'un soupir* (Paris: Présence africaine, coll. Écrits, 1984), 286 p. For the last decade, we may cite: Guillaume Bukasa, *De la Haine naîtra l'amour* (Goma: Théâtre Alfajiri, 2013), (self-published), and Willy Mushagalusa, *Beti, la haine ou l'amour. Récit* (Lubumbashi: éditions de l'Espoir, 2005).

The Romeo and Juliet story could already be read much earlier in this region, penned by Saverio Nayigiziki in his play *L'Optimiste*, written in 1954.[21] The impossible union motif unfolded here in the Great Lakes through the fictionalization of tensions between the Hutu and Tutsi. This play, written when he was in Congo, was later performed in Rwanda, Burundi and Congo.

Another pattern that is frequently articulated in dramatic texts is that of treason, and more specifically the figure of the traitor to his or her community of origin. The following case of theatrical work created around the figure of the traitor is an example of the specific circulation of texts comprised by adaptation.

2. Adaptation and *Reprise* in Theatre

Adapting a text in itself supposes a displacement, as it involves taking a pre-existing text and turning it into something else; another text. The displacement is all the more tangible in the case of adapting a text to the theatre, as it involves a development in a particular space that is a stage. What takes place, henceforth, is a transportation of the original text––narrative and ideas––into another language and space.

I use the term adaptation here to designate two distinct operations in using a text: [22] the *mise-en-scène* of a play quite simply, and the reworking of an existing foreign text to turn it into another text that resonates singularly in the geographic and historic context that this text will address.

While adaptation taken at its most elementary level––the simple fact of putting on a foreign author's play – is symptomatic of a completely ordinary artistic gesture, it can, in fact, be particularly significant. This choice indeed testifies to a circulation of narrative and thought that is worth questioning by placing it anew in its specific context of appropriation. It is, for example, interesting to reflect how, in 2010 Congo (a period described as "post-conflict"), the staging in Kisangani of Athol Fugard, John Kani and Winston Ntshona's *The Island*, resonates (or not) with the experiences of the audience to which it was presented.[23] *The Island,* a play co-written by three South African playwright-directors, depicts the incarceration of two political prisoners on an island (inspired by Robben Island), condemned to forced labor by day, and who rehearse *Antigone* by night. The play, which takes place in the confines of a cell, revolves around these two prisoners' complex relationship, set to a backdrop of dictatorship and tyranny. It was above all the casting of this play that was eminently symbolic and emblematic of the sub-region's political context, as the two prisoners were played by a Rwandan and a Congolese actor. Given the very fraught diplomatic situation between the two countries, this play staged in Kisangani––a town in eastern Congo, mid-way between Kinshasa and Kigali––was intended to be a determining political act in favor of dialogue between people and populations.

While *The Island* circulated in a wide geographic perimeter, the impression of a socio-political proximity appears to have been widely shared by Congolese authors, at least if one is to consider the recurrence of references to South African and Apartheid, especially in late 1979 and during the following decades (1980-1990).[24] What was taking place here was what Michel Espagne calls a cultural transfer: "[…] a phenomenon of reappropriation and of re-semantization of an imported cultural good, taking into account what this process reveals about the host context."[25]

[21] Nayigiziki, *L'Optimiste,* 1954.

[22] See the article by Armelle Hesse-Weber, which highlights the ambiguity of this term and multiple operations it can designate (modelization, translation, re-writing, imitation): Armelle Hesse-Weber, "Adaptation théâtrale de textes étrangers : histoire et enjeux", *Horizons-Théâtre* 3 (2014) : 8-20.

[23] Athol Fugard, John Kani and Winston Ntshona, *The Island* [1973]. Performed in Kisangani in 2010, in an artistic collaboration between the Théâtre de Poche from Brussels and the Groupe Taccems from Kisangani.

[24] For example: Katsh M'Bika Katende, *Nkosi Sikelele'i Afrika* (unpublished, 1978) ; Latere Ama Bulie, *Pitié pour ces mineurs* (Kinshasa : Bobiso, 1977), Zamenga Batukezanga, *Un boy à Pretoria* (Kinshasa: Saint-Paul-Afrique, 1990) ; Bernard Ilunga Kayombo, *Contre vents et marées* (Kinshasa: Médiaspaul, 1996), but also more recently: Jano Bakasanda, *Féérie australe pour Nelson Mandela,* (Lubumbashi: éditions Talenta, 2008).

[25] "[…] phénomène de réappropriation et de re-sémantisation d'un bien culturel importé, en tenant compte de ce que ce processus révèle sur le contexte d'accueil." Michel Espagne, "Les transferts culturels": http://geschichte-transnational.clio-online.net/transnat.asp?type=artikel&id=576&view=pdf&pn=forum

The Belgian-Congolese collaboration between the Théâtre de Poche from Brussels and the Groupe Taccems from Kisangani also gave rise to an adaptation of Ahmadou Kourouma's novel, *Allah Is Not Obliged*, which recounts the life of a child soldier. The transfer of the novel's motif to the stage testifies to a specific kind of adaptation that implies a *re-writing*. This kind of circulation of text is akin to what Alice Carré, Marion Rhéty and Ariane Zayteff define as a "*reprise*": "[…] a *reprise* is defined in relation to what precedes it. It is from this that it draws both its identity (it is defined in relation to, for, or against, or elsewhere), and its process of creation (usage, transmission, appropriation of pre-existent material or documents)…". [26] In Congo, reprising and adapting texts from the classical repertoire and inserting them into the local context is often a deeply political undertaking. It seeks to inject a distance from the local context evoked in order, ultimately, to better espouse the context by universalizing the text's discourse. Following A. Carré, M. Rhéty and A. Zayteff, we may ask how works thus created, thus recomposed, "[…] invite us to reconsider the traditional categories and classical fractures between […] ideology (how the work takes up and repeats the ideological elements of its period) and utopia (how it breaks away from these and produces a rearrangement within the reprise)."[27]

In both cases, adapting a text to the stage consists of bringing it closer to us, of re-territorializing a text which, precisely through circulation, is decontextualized, for supposedly universal. This is thus what the Congolese playwright Katsh M'Bika Katende undertook in deciding to rework a dramatic text from the European theatrical repertoire, articulated around the figure of the traitor, keeping a significant part of it intact. In 2010, he wrote a play, unpublished to date, [28] which he entitled *Karini,* and which, as the cover states, is "based on" Emmanuel Roblès' play *Montserrat* (1948).[29]

Montserrat was the work that, in 1948, confirmed the reputation of Emmanuel Roblès, an Algerian *Pied-Noir*, in France. The play was successfully staged the same day in Paris and Algiers. *Montserrat* is presented as a fictionalization of the Bolivarian revolution. The play tells the story of Montserrat, a Spanish officer, who sides with the Venezuelan revolutionaries and who notably protects Bolivar by refusing to divulge his whereabouts. In prison, he is joined by six people whom the Spanish threaten to kill if Monserrat refuses to talk. In this harrowing closed space, each character in turn strives to convince the hero to talk and to save their lives. Before this tragic dilemma, Monserrat chooses not to talk, but will learn, just before his execution, that revolution has broken out and is well underway.

Firstly, it must be pointed out that for decades now, this play is apparently one of the most studied and performed in the DRC, be it at university on French civilization and literature courses, or at the INA (National Institute of Arts). However, it only garnered enthusiasm in France when it first came out in 1948, that is, in the immediate post-war context. Today, it is relatively unknown and on the whole not valued[30] (although still performed).[31] The solemn tone of this tragedy is visibly hardly fashionable in France, while it is still highly appreciated in Congo.

Katsh M'Bika Katende's adaptation of *Montserrat* principally consisted in modifying the names (patronyms and toponyms), cutting several exchanges, and adding a few elements specific to

[26] "[…] la reprise est définie par rapport à ce qui précède. C'est de là qu'elle tire à la fois son identité (elle se définit par rapport à, en pour, en contre, ou en ailleurs), son processus de création (utilisation, transmission, appropriation de matériaux ou documents préexistants) …". Alice Carré, Marion Rhéty and Ariane Zayteff, "Le fantôme, le monument le combustible", introduction to the special edition, "La reprise," *Agôn. Revue des arts de la scène* : http://agon.ens-lyon.fr/docannexe/file/2806/intro.pdf

[27] "[…] invitent à reconsidérer des catégories traditionnelles et des fractures classiques entre […] idéologie (comment l'œuvre reprend et répète les éléments idéologiques de son époque) et utopie (comment elle s'en arrache et produit un réagencement à l'intérieur de la reprise)," Carré, Rhéty, Zayteff, "Le fantôme, le monument le combustible."

[28] Text kindly made available to me by the author.

[29] Emmanuel Roblès, *Montserrat* (Paris: Le Monde illustré, 1948 ; Paris: Le Seuil, 1954).

[30] As demonstrates, for example, this review of a 1997 performance: "This year, in 1997, *Montserrat*, then. A play by Emmanuel Roblès that is beautiful, but a bit old-fashioned, a bit repetitive, which Thierry Chantrel did well to cut somewhat. To be completely honest, if I'd been given the scissors, I would have been even more brutal in the pruning"; Vincent Cambrier, "*Montserrat d'Emmanuel Roblès, Le Big Bang à Avignon (par la compagnie Sortie de Route de Lyon)* : Trahir ou mourir", 20 July 1997, *Les Trois Coups:* http://www.lestroiscoups.com/article-3567217.html

[31] By Manuel Olinger at the Vieux Saint-Etienne in Rennes in 2003; at the Pamiers Théâtre de l'œil in 2000; by Pierre Sourdive and the Théâtre de l'Équipe in Paris in 2004.

the contemporary Congolese context (the news of women being buried alive; the Aids epidemic). But he kept approximately 90% of Emmanuel Roblès' text. It is thus less an adaptation as a *transposition* of the *Montserrat* text to eastern DRC, and that mainly through the substitution of proper names. This hero figure clearly appealed to the author, who turned him into the icon of the repentant Rwandan, the Spanish conquerors having become Rwandan "invaders" in his version.[32]

These archetypal tragic figures articulated around a structural and irreducible conflict––star-crossed lovers torn apart by social divisions, and the traitor to his/her community (be it the family or the nation)––clearly reveal the industrial character of the circulation of such dramatic formats. Yet they also point to the social stakes that underlie their activation, and are at the heart of a considerable number of texts. Indeed, if the exporting of the radio drama serial *Jirani ni Ndugu* from Burundi to the Democratic Republic of Congo is part of a process of industrialization of theatre production (its cross-border quasi duplication), and thus of this latter's formatting, the fortunes of this dramatic format in the region––like that of the motif of the traitor--translate the stakes of these texts and the symbolic weight that their authors confer on them. Whether they opt for the theme of impossible union, or that of the return of a traitor, these themes appear to bring to the stage the reconciliation of adverse parties, torn apart by conflict. In so doing, they thus unanimously express the ideal of a theatre of redemption.

The processes of circulation of texts thus constitute forms of reading the texts, of displacements arising from their appropriation, as Michèle Petit demonstrates in her limpid essay, *Éloge de la lecture. La construction de soi.* [33] They are thus experiences of subjectivation on the part of individuals, of the artists, who mobilize these texts, and whose personal cursor is analogous with the founding act of the novel: "the departure of the hero or heroine who, through his or her uprooting, forges an identity."[34]

III – The Circulation of Cultural Actors

1. Artists, Conveyors Belonging to Networks?

Many of these artists and cultural actors from Congo and Burundi, whose artistic activity is eminently transnational, have singular trajectories that make them conveyors in the quite broad sense that Bernard Lamizet describes: "Conveyors, ultimately, are the actors who give meaning to mediation, who reinvest meaning in our sociability there where we are tending to lose it, those, too, who give meaning to the desire that we are carries of and that we don't always know how to read or recognize […] Conveyors, to put it in a nutshell, are third parties."[35]

Several critics have tried to identify conveyors' modalities of action and to define their characteristic roles and functions within a given interaction.[36] However, the distinction made by Bruno Latour between two categories of conveyors – mediators and intermediaries – does not seem pertinent to me in the Congolese artistic field. When intermediary designates "[…] that which conveys meaning or power without transformation; defining its inputs suffices to

[32] Bolivar, leader of the Venezuelan revolutionaries, becomes Jean Musumbu, a true character and head of a Mayi-Mayi rebel movement (of the Raia Mutomboki, or "committed citizens"), which was still recently active in eastern Congo, on the pretext of defending the region's civilians from "the Tutsi offensive." On this subject, see notably: Pierre Englebert, and Denis Tull (eds), *Politique africaine* 129, "RDC. Terrains disputés" (Paris: Karthala, 2013).

[33] (*Eulogy of Reading. Self-Construction*). Describing the experience of reading, Michèle Petit writes: "From time to time, a page or a phrase read them, gave them their news. These phrases, these snippets of texts, function as insights, as sudden awareness of an interior truth, highlighting a hitherto obscure part of the self. They give the reader back fragments of a buried or worrying domain that they can at last inhabit. And if such a phrase mattered, it is because it enabled them to recognize themselves, not so much in the sense of recognize in a mirror, as in feeling a legitimate right to have a place, to be what they are, or more still to become what they were without realizing." Michèle Petit, *Éloge de la lecture. La construction de soi* (Paris: Belin, 2012), 71.

[34] "[…] le départ du héros ou de l'héroïne qui, par son déracinement, forge son identité," Vladimir Propp. *Morphologie du conte* (Paris : Le Seuil, coll. Points, 1966). Cited by Petit, *Éloge de la lecture,* 41.

[35] "Les passeurs finalement, ce sont les acteurs qui donnent du sens à la médiation, qui viennent redonner du sens à notre sociabilité quand elle a tendance à le perdre, ceux, aussi, qui viennent donner du sens au désir dont nous sommes porteurs et que nous ne savons pas toujours lire et reconnaître […] Les passeurs, pour le dire d'un mot, ce sont les tiers." Bernard Lamizet, "Le miroir culturel: les passeurs" (161-177), in *Passeurs culturels dans le monde des médias et de l'édition en Europe (XIXe et XXe siècles),* edited by Diana Cooper-Richet, Jean-Yves Mollier and Ahmed Silem (Paris: Enssib, 2005), 161-162.

[36] Louise Bénat-Tachot and Serge Gruzinski, eds. *Passeurs culturels. Mécanismes de métissage* (Paris : éditions Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2001). And Bruno Latour, *Changer de société, refaire de la sociologie* (Paris: La Découverte poche, coll. Sciences humaines et sociales, 2007).

define its outputs,"[37] mediators "[…] transform, translate, distort, and modify the meaning or the elements they are meant to convey."[38] Yet it seems to me that all these conveyors necessarily operate a displacement in their creative processes, which consist of adapting a text, and thus the distinction is not relevant here.

Rather than seeking to categorize these individuals by distinguishing the formal characteristics of their mediation, I would opt for a different approach. This consists of analyzing their circulatory practices in order to update the strategies they use to inscribe them in a space traversed by networks and other channels of circulation, and thus to guarantee access to forms of social recognition. Beyond the individualistic interest relating to self-construction through social recognition, the circulatory dynamic set in action *via* their integration in networks also, according to them, partakes of their ambition to transcend the deathly borders that divide their region.

The networks that enable artists to create are proliferating in the region. They are of two kinds. On the one hand, are networks of opportunities for funded artistic creation. These include, for example, the monthly meetings of clusters in the humanitarian sector in Kivu, notably in Goma and Bukavu, or the RACOJ meetings (Network of Congolese Youth Associations), itself firmly backed by the international organizations. On the other hand, a non-negligible number of interconnection networks for cultural actors also exist: Arterial and Sudplanète (Southplanet), which are continent-wide social networks to which many artists and cultural operators subscribe. There are also more local networks too, such as the Pôle Culturel Est (backed by Africalia, a Belgian public arts cooperation body), the Cellule de Coordination Théâtrale Est launched by the Goma cultural center, and Yole! Africa, the network of DRC cultural operators (supported by the Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles, another arts cooperation public body).

The proliferation of these arts networks has a notable impact on artists' career management. Asserting their rooting in the local, artists also negotiate their integration into this globalized world space, characterized by connections between actors and only accessible on that condition. Their interest in participating in such networks is obvious: it is a lucrative one. The value of being part of the global space is less directly profitable in terms of benefits and gains. It may prove to be so in the long run, however, as it is above all a question of guaranteeing their visibility, of being "in," of being open to opportunities for funded travel (in the framework of festivals, for example), of real artistic collaboration on a specific project, of artist residencies, and so forth.

Thus, many artists are extraordinarily connected to social networks. They unanimously share the idea–propagated by the initiators of these connected networks; namely, international organizations––that the more artists are connected virtually, the more chance they will have of really being so. They also believe that simple access to this type of communications guarantees fruitful exchanges that are capable of countering the deadly and destructive logic of the conflicts ravaging the region. The initiators of these networking projects – that certain local cultural operators lucidly identify as the international funders' magic wand, thus as an *a priori* exogenous operation–thus work with the aim, via this digital activism, of participating in these countries' development, or better still, recovery from crisis. In that, they are perfectly inscribed in what the media sociologist Laurence Allard calls "globalized techno-philanthropy"[39] or "philantro-capitalism." She is skeptical of the effectiveness of these practices, at least with regards their initiators' ambitions, who see them as effective processes of unity and cohesion, and thus as potentially

[37] "[…] ce qui véhicule du sens ou de la force sans transformation : définir ses entrées, ses inputs suffit à définir ses sorties, ses *outputs*," Latour, *Changer de société, refaire de la sociologie*, 58.

[38] "[…] transforment, traduisent, distordent, et modifient le sens ou les éléments qu'ils sont censés transporter,", Latour, *Changer de société, refaire de la sociologie*, 58.

[39] http://www.mobactu.fr/wp-content/uploads/LAllard-Smart-power-philanthrocapitalisme-et-t%C3%A9l%C3%A9phonie-mobile.pdf

revolutionary (in terms of hoped-for changes and improvements).

Notwithstanding, their existence is effective and artists use them widely. Their management of networks differs depending on whether they work in towns whose artistic scenes are entirely dominated by the humanitarian paradigm, or in towns that can boast a well-known and longstanding artistic history that pre-dates the installation of the humanitarian sector, such as Kinshasa, for example. The networks mobilized are not the same from one town to another. The flexibility that characterizes artists' use of networks and their reticular circulation corresponds to an ensemble of practices, ranging from gauging opportunities to the negotiation of entry and/or of investiture by peers who already belong.

2. Pendular Modulations

In towns where the humanitarian paradigm has integrated an already established theatre landscape, it is particularly interesting to observe the ways in which artists handle, integrate and appropriate this "new" parameter, and the ways in which they negotiate its usage in their own practices.[40] It seems to me that these tendencies respond to what, after Jean-François Bayart and Fariba Adelkhah, Sophie Moulard calls artists' "pendular mobility."[41] Based on the trajectories and practices of Senegalese hip-hop musicians, she shows how artists gain notoriety and above all recognition on a local *and* international level, without renouncing one or the other instance of legitimation, but by negotiating each and every one. While many African artists find themselves readily assigned by the public and critics to one *or* the other (local or international/global, and, in the scope of an arts scene invested by this humanitarian paradigm, by the creation/commission alternative), the hip-hop musicians, like certain theatre artists in Congo and Burundi, manage to easily navigate from one sphere to the other, thanks to their use of networks.

Thus, certain artists already well-established in their artistic milieu–in Lubumbashi, Kinshasa or Bujumbura – before and outside of any NGO intervention, do not hesitate to work with them or to answer their calls for projects. In so doing, their intention is not to remain within their sphere, but to also enter another sphere. That is the case with the Troupe des Intrigants in Kinshasa. In its 30-year existence, it has managed to impose itself on the local scene, but also internationally, thanks, notably, to its cooperation with a Swiss theatre. But, over the last fifteen or so years, since the humanitarian sector made a massive return to the country, the troupe has very regularly responded to NGO tenders. It accepts commissions for plays, then, yet without abandoning its own creative work, even if this is necessarily slowed down.

In so doing, this practice gives the troupe access to a different kind of audience that did not have access to its work beforehand: the most disadvantaged sectors of the population targeted by the NGOs. The troupe is indeed mandated to go out to meet them to discuss the practical problems they face on a daily basis. The company Marabout Théâtre directed by Nzey Van Musala in Kinshasa functions in the same way, as does the Troupe Lampyre in Bujumbura. These companies enjoy a good reputation in both the local intellectual milieu and on international African performance markets (in which they have gained visibility through their participation in festivals); they do not, however, for the needs of the cause, hesitate to sign contracts for artistic commissions created for development purposes. Their motivation in doing this is essentially lucrative. Their aim in answering NGOs' remits from time to time is to manage to guarantee the financial viability of their own creations. Indeed, this kind of contract assures them the rapid acquisition of significant

[40] The humanitarian paradigm's predominance in the artistic field progressively took hold as of the late 1990s, and notably after 2001 (after the death of Laurent-Désiré Kabila), when humanitarian aid workers returned to the country and bilateral and international cooperation agreements were reinstated.

[41] Sophie Moulard, "Le regard entre deux rives : la migration et l'exil dans le discours des rappeurs sénégalais," *Cahiers d'études africaines,* 213/214-1/2, Cécile Canut, ed., "La migration prise aux mots" (2014) : 213-224. And Jean-François Bayart and Fariba Adelkhah (eds.), *Anthropologie du voyage et migrations internationales*, (Paris: Fonds d'analyse des sociétés politiques, December 2006).

revenues in return for preparatory work that is often lighter and briefer than that required to create their own shows.

They thus manage to navigate from one sphere to the next, to move from one network to another, via an ensemble of willingly asserted choices on the one hand, and concessions, compromises and adjustments on the other. They thereby constitute what I would call "pendular modulations destined to guarantee them maximum opportunities. This opportunistic practice might well be interpreted as characteristic of the urban "survivor,"[42] an emblematic figure of contemporary urban culture in Africa. Referred to as a "sapeur" or "harraga" in the migratory context, the urban "survivor" is a kind of cunning adventurer, a contemporary avatar of the trickster figure, an archetypal character in tales, as described in the African context by anthropologists Evaans-Pritchard or Denise Paulme.[43]

Far from being contradictory, this practice of reticular mobility and the modulations in the trajectories of these artists testify, on the contrary, to their strong capacity to adapt, to accommodate the requests, forms and ways of doing that are specific to each of the two spheres, and to their remarkable ability to understand and to integrate this "globalized techno-philanthropic" system. It also gives another perception of the real state of an African artistic field that thus proves to be less divided than it might at first seem between art presented as "creative" art, on the one hand, and "humanitarian" art on the other.[44] Artists often prove themselves to be agile actors with an acute awareness of the stakes of power that both their positioning in the field and their spatial movements induce in order to fulfil their artistic ambitions and those relating to their professional integration.

Conclusion

Observing literary and theatrical activity in Africa's Great Lakes region through the prism of circulations leads to the following conclusion: despite the violence that tears communities apart and scars the territories affected, thought and exchanges are only partially hindered by geopolitical realities as transnational creations see the light and indeed circulate across borders.

Yet does this positive evaluation of the reticular and circulatory dynamics at play in the Great Lakes region suffice to suggest the existence and the affirmation of a literary "region" that emanates from this colonial past? Might we more cautiously suggest that such a literary space (in the geographic sense of the term) is gradually emerging? Or does it only exist as a potential, as the regular circulations related to the diverse opportunities cited here might more plausibly suggest?

Furthermore, once we have analyzed the modalities of circulation of people and texts, what does this reading of the activity of an artistic field through the prism of the circulatory and reticular dimension of people and works ultimately tell us? Beyond, that is, the reassuring confirmation that life goes on in spite of everything, that people live and artists create come what may, whatever the conditions?

If all is circulation between a multiplicity of networks, and each new text considered a displacement (a *reprise* in relation to what preceded it), then we can question the heuristic pertinence of the very notion of circulation. As we can that of a conveyor from elsewhere, who in this perspective becomes an artisan of these

[42] Also see on this subject: Abdou Salam Fall. *Bricoler pour survivre. Perceptions de la pauvreté dans l'agglomération urbaine de Dakar* (Paris: Karthala, coll. Hommes et sociétés, 2007).

[43] "In almost all African animal tales features a character who is defined by his mode of action: trickery. Banking on the failings of characters he knows well – stupidity, greed, vanity, cowardice – he ridicules an adversary who should have easily crushed him, for he is an insignificant creature […] A deceiver, the term holds no pejorative nuance, lying is not condemnable in itself […] the African deceiver […] wanting to imitate others' behaviour without having the means to, inevitably gets his comeuppance," Denise Paulme, "Typologie des contes africains du décepteur", *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 5-60 (1975) : 569-600. In her rich essay *Mobilités d'Afrique en Europe. Récits et figures de l'aventure* (Paris: Karthala, coll. Lettres du sud, 2012), Catherine Mazauric reformulates this to analyze the figure of the "candidate for migration": "The relationship between illegal migration narratives and adventure novels as a genre can be founded, in that it rests on that, with other categories of adventure, on the figure of the migrant apprehended as an adventurer: characters living by their wits and relatively devoid of scruples (the trickster of oral literature), bandits (the "harragas"), "sapeurs" too, in the sense that this term has taken on in the Congo basin. " (pg. 125)

[44] On this subject, see my forthcoming article: Maëline Le Lay, "Un théâtre belgo-congolais ? Le champ théâtral congolais: de la domestication à la coopération (1930-2010,)" *Revue d'Histoire du Théâtre* (forthcoming).

circulations. Beyond their tautological character, these latter thus appear flattened into a horizontality that knows no borders, and thus no obstacles generating processes of domination and exclusion. One may well wonder whether the inflationary use of the spatial metaphor in vogue at present–as a number of researchers astutely point out as they question the validity of the recurrent mobilization of the notion of network and the circulatory prism–runs the risk of obscuring the power struggles at play in the social fields, and singularly the artistic field that interests us in the scope of this study.[45] In order to avoid this pitfall, it is important to pay careful attention to the individual trajectories of artists, but also to the different forms of their creations.

In short, it is important to be sure to accompany the mappings of observable artistic circulations with an analysis of the micro-historic type in order to restore the depth of the processes of creation at play in the artistic field, whether these take place through circulatory dynamics or, on the contrary, in a more static way, anchored in a local context, like in Katanga, for example.[46]

That is what, it seems to me, the postmodern approach of processes of textualization does not exactly enable us to do. Under the influence of theorists such as Edward Soja or Yuri Lotman, this approach indeed operates a change of paradigm from the historicization of literature to its analysis through the spatial metaphor alone. The extraordinary success in literary studies and in the humanities in general of Édouard Glissant's theories on the poetics of the trace and of the rhizome, for example, testifies to this; in them, he opposes to the model of the root, celebrating the "relation" instead and in place of sedentariness and of structure,[47] and calls for an archipelagic thought of the diverse as opposed to the "monumentalism"[48] of history.

In his essay *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Fredric Jameson seeks to go beyond the old antinomic and simplistic refrains of "modernism versus postmodernism," and "historicity versus spatiality" by theorizing a kind of intermediary way. He sees the spatial turning point as one of postmodernism's characteristics.[49] Recognizing the rut that the crisis of historicity has got us into,[50] he proposes a model of political culture that "will necessarily have to raise spatial issues as its fundamental organizing concern."[51] He thus proposes an aesthetic of cognitive mapping: "'Cognitive mapping' was in reality nothing but a code word for 'class consciousness of a new and hitherto undreamed of kind, while it also inflected the account in the direction of that spatiality implicit in the postmodern (which Ed Soja's *Postmodern Geographies* now places on the agenda in a so eloquent and timely fashion)."[52]

That is also what Michel Lussault calls for when, questioning what geography does to the world(s), he starts from the principle that "space must no longer be considered as the just the vector for action, but as an actor in its own right."[53] For, he continues, "[…] space is not a simple material

[45] See notably: Jean-Pierre Gaudin and Denise Pumain, "Quelques métaphores, au miroir des analyses spatiales : réseaux de villes et réseaux de pouvoir," *Revue européenne des sciences sociales*, XXXVIII-117, "Métaphores et analogies. Schèmes argumentatifs des sciences sociales," (2014): 105-119. "The ambiguity produced may be all the greater in terms of urban networks as the metaphor of the network is related, more broadly, to a simply relational perspective, that of exchange and circulation, which remains indeterminate on the question of domination" (pg. 107).

[46] Katanga is a province of the Democratic Republic of Congo situated in the South-East of the country. Although the region is situated at a crossroads between two Africas, sharing its borders with Southern Africa (Zambia and Angola) and East Africa (Tanzania and Burundi, via Lake Tanganyika), its artistic field is characterized by a form of conservatism in terms of aesthetic choices and the trajectory of its actors. See Maëline Le Lay, "*La parole construit le pays." Théâtre, langues et didactisme au Katanga (République démocratique du Congo)* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2014).

[47] Édouard Glissant, *Poétique de la relation. Poétique III* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990).

[48] Analyzing Glissant's theory of the poetics of the "relation", of the "diverse", and of the "trace," Christine Chivallon writes: "The 'Trace' then becomes the expression of this diversity that has escaped from the writing of history and its monumentalism", in: Christine Chivallon, "Between History and its Trace: Slavery and the Caribbean Archive," *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale*, 24-1, (2016): 67–81.

[49] He writes: "[…] postmodernism theory, however, infers a certain supplement of spatiality in the contemporary period and suggests that there is a way in which, even though other modes of production […] are distinctively spatial, ours has been spatialized in a unique sense, such as space is for us an existential and cultural dominant […], a structural principle standing in striking contrast to its relatively subordinate and secondary […] role in earlier mode of production. So, even if everything is spatial, this postmodern reality here is somehow *more* spatial than everything else," Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London/New-York: Verso, 1991): 365.

[50] He writes: "The crisis in historicity now dictates a return, in a new way, to the question of temporal organization in general in the postmodern force field, and indeed, to the problem of the form that time, temporality, and the syntagmatic will be able to take in a culture increasingly dominated by space and spatial logic. If, indeed, the subject has lost its capacity actively to extend its pro-tensions and re-tensions across the temporal manifold and to organize its past and future into coherent experience, it becomes difficult enough to see how the cultural productions of such a subject could result in anything but 'heaps of fragments' and in a practice of the randomly heterogeneous and fragmentary and the aleatory. These are, however, very precisely some of the privileged terms in which postmodernist cultural production has been analyzed (and even defended, by its own apologists)," Jameson. *Postmodernism*, 25.

[51] Ibid., 51.

[52] Ibid., 418.

[53] "L'espace ne doit plus être considéré comme un support de l'action mais comme un acteur à part entière" : Michel Lussault, "Ce que la géographie fait au(x) monde(s)", *Tracés. Revue des sciences humaines* 10 (2010), 241-251 : https://traces.revues.org/4854

expanse on which it suffices to optimize points, but a complex and multifaceted social resource with which actors operate."[54] Spatially organizing realities thus equates with cognitively ordering space – be it a geographic territory or the area of a text's creation, involving an original text followed by transformation phases – and thus with representing this space, visually and verbally.

Hence, what the circulatory prism contributes to the study of artistic production in a given space is firstly an invitation to re-situate this dynamic within a historic perspective to better grasp the meaning and sociopolitical stakes. It can also offer a valuable tool for analyzing artistic processes, particularly in a transfrontier region characterized by a common, or similar, cultural and linguistic core, and by the exchange of people and ideas, beyond age-old rivalry or contemporary clashes.

Translated by Melissa Thackway

[54] "Car l'espace n'est pas une simple étendue matérielle sur laquelle il suffirait d'optimiser des points, mais une ressource sociale complexe et protéiforme avec laquelle les acteurs opèrent" : Michel Lussault, "Ce que la géographie fait au(x) monde(s)," ibid.