

Introduction

The Performance of Pan-Africanism:

Staging the African Renaissance at the First World Festival of Negro Arts

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We deeply appreciate the honor that devolves upon us at the First World Festival of Negro Arts to welcome so many talents from the four continents, from the four horizons of the spirit. But what honors us most of all and what constitutes your greatest merit is the fact that you will have participated in an undertaking much more revolutionary than the exploration of the cosmos: the elaboration of a new humanism which this time will include the totality of humanity on the totality of our planet Earth.

President Léopold Sédar Senghor

Opening address at the festival colloquium, 30 March 1966 (Senghor 1966b: 5)

There had never been anything quite like it...

On 30 March 1966, the Senegalese poet-president Léopold Sédar Senghor ascended the steps of the National Assembly in Dakar, which stands at the heart of the *Plateau*, the gleaming white city built by the French colonial authorities at the start of the twentieth century to act as the administrative centre of its vast West African Empire. Senegal had freed itself from French colonial rule in 1960, and here it was, just six years later, proclaiming itself as temporary capital of black civilization at the launch

of the First World Festival of Negro Arts. The festival proper would not begin for two days. Senghor was in fact at the National Assembly to launch a colloquium on ‘The Function of Negro Art in the life of and for the people’, which would run from 30 March-8 April. That Senegal should hand over its legislative chamber for more than a week to writers, performers, artists and scholars to discuss the significance of art in the emerging post-imperial world was entirely in keeping with the central role that Senghor attributed to culture and the arts.¹ Culture was not merely rhetorically significant, for Senghor apparently backed up his words with hard cash: various sources estimate that up to 25% of the national budget was devoted to the arts in the early years after independence (see Harney 2004: 49).

Held at the high point of the post-Second World War era of decolonization and in the midst of the Civil Rights movement in the United States, the Dakar festival was indelibly marked by the euphoria and idealism of the times. It emphasized Senghor’s conception of the significance of culture and the arts in defining a global role for Africa in the aftermath of empire, and, in a complex mix of pragmatic achievements and utopian objectives, it sought to forge greater links between Africans and people of African descent. Above all, the festival was underpinned by Senghor’s conception of culture as central to the development of Africa. In his speech to the delegates gathered in the National Assembly (cited in the epigraph above), Senghor hailed the ‘revolutionary’ nature of the festival which had no less a goal than the ‘elaboration of a new humanism which this time will include the totality of humanity on the totality of our planet Earth’. New political structures were all well and good but they would serve no purpose without a new conception of humanity. His speech further assumed that all of the delegates present had bought into this agenda, telling his audience, in an

¹ This was not the only occasion that saw Senghor use the National Assembly in this way. For example, in 1971, international delegates gathered there to discuss the ongoing significance of Negritude as a cultural philosophy and set of values.

expression that flattered both him and them, that ‘your greatest merit is the fact that you will have participated in an undertaking much more revolutionary than the exploration of the cosmos’. While the Soviets and the Americans raced to conquer space, the ‘black world’ was gathered together to find its soul. In essence, the festival sought to situate culture at the heart of the post-imperial world. Leaders of the former colonized countries had famously gathered in Bandung in 1955 and Senghor’s close ally, Alioune Diop, founder of the *Présence Africaine* journals and publishing house, dreamed of ‘un Bandung intellectuel pour l’Afrique’ [an intellectual Bandung for Africa] (Verdin 2010: 234): the political revolution would now be accompanied by a philosophical and cultural revolution.

Senghor’s status as political and cultural figurehead was both a boon and an obstacle for the festival. The French government’s highest-ranking representative in Dakar, Minister for Culture, André Malraux, took the floor after the President, and, using typically exalted rhetoric, was unstinting in his praise for Senghor’s vision, declaring in his much-cited speech: ‘Nous voici donc dans l’Histoire. Pour la première fois un chef d’état prend entre ses mains périssables le destin d’un continent’ [Here we are at a great moment in History. For the first time, a head of state has taken into his mortal hands the destiny of a continent] (Malraux 1966b).² Malraux’s elevation of Senghor to the status of sole creative mind behind the festival was unsurprising, given that he devoted the latter part of his career to the service of France’s own providential leader, General Charles de Gaulle. For Senghor’s friends, such praise from the French authorities constituted proof of his constructive and

² The full text of Malraux’s speech is available from various on-line sources and is also reprinted in the festival’s ‘livre d’or’: *Premier Festival Mondial des arts nègres* (1967). The most widely available printed source is the second volume of Malraux’s memoirs, *Le Miroir des Limbes*, in a section that contains a wider account of his trip to Senegal (1976: 11-48). The opening ceremony was formally opened by Lamine Guèye as President of the National Assembly. Next to speak was Alioune Diop, as President of the Association du Festival, who then handed over to Senghor, followed finally by Malraux (Sow Huchard 2012: 123).

pragmatic approach to relations with Senegal's former imperial's masters; for his enemies, it constituted further evidence that Senghor was a neo-colonialist whose aim was to maintain French dominance after the formal end of empire.

The First World Festival of Negro Arts was a modern cultural event on an unprecedented scale in Africa and, as its official title suggests, the organizers were keenly aware of its pioneering status. The festival may not have been the first transnational black cultural gathering—the preceding decade had witnessed the celebrated Congresses of Black Writers in Paris (1956) and in Rome (1959); African writers gathered together for a congress at Makerere University (Uganda) in 1962, while that same year, an International Congress of African Culture was held in Salisbury (in what was then Southern Rhodesia)—but it was the first time that a festival on this scale celebrating black culture had been organized. That such a grandiose event should take place in an Africa gradually liberating itself from a century of colonial rule was symbolic of the growing sense of a new dawn for the continent. On a more pragmatic level, the festival would also allow Africans to discover more about each other, as well as forging greater links with the diaspora.³

The festival ran from 1-24 April 1966 (although, as we have seen, the festival colloquium began on 30 March), dates chosen to coincide with the major religious festivals of Easter and Tabaski, as well as Senegalese national independence (4 April). Over the course of three and a half weeks, more than 2,500 artists, musicians, performers and writers, including Senghor, Aimé Césaire and Léon-Gontran Damas (the three founding figures of Negritude), as well as Langston Hughes, Duke Ellington, Josephine Baker and Wole Soyinka gathered in Dakar: indeed, the list of

³ Interviewed in 2008, internationally renowned arts curator, Simon Njami, stated that one of the benefits of African visual arts exhibitions/biennales is that they allow Africans to know more about each other as 'les Africains ne connaissent pas l'Afrique' [Africans don't know Africa] (Vincent 2008d: 108).

participants reads like a ‘who’s who’ of some of the greatest black cultural figures of the early and mid-twentieth century. However, it did not go unnoticed at the time that the choice of participants largely favoured an older generation of artists, viewed as more politically and aesthetically conservative by many of the younger generation. Some of the most prominent invitees represented an era that had begun with the celebration of the New Negro, the Harlem Renaissance, the jazz age and Negritude. By 1966, however, the ideas, values and politics that had been central to the transnational black politics of the mid-century were increasingly being challenged. The festival was also quite categorically a celebration of the ‘high arts’ and not a more generic celebration of ‘culture’ (another clear sign of Senghor’s influence on its underlying philosophy): it would celebrate Africa’s cultural renaissance by celebrating the continent’s ‘Classical’ tradition.

Representatives from 30 independent African countries gathered in Dakar, and seven countries with significant African diasporic populations were also represented: the United States, Brazil, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom and France. At the Congresses of Black Writers in 1956 and 1959, the desirability of holding a similar event in Africa, drawing together writers and intellectuals, had been discussed. At the latter event in Rome, a formal resolution was taken that the recently created Société Africaine de Culture should make this happen.⁴ However, by 1966, the scale of the festival had developed far beyond these original plans to become a sprawling event spanning literature, theatre, music, dance, film, as well as the visual and plastic arts.

⁴ The Société Africaine de Culture had been founded in the aftermath of the 1956 Paris Congress at the Sorbonne. It was created by Alioune Diop as a response to the racism he encountered within the Société Européenne de Culture and it had the practical benefit that, as a non-commercial enterprise (unlike *Présence Africaine*), it could receive funding from bodies such as UNESCO (Verdin 2010: 272-73).

The participation of the US delegation was of particular importance to Senghor. In 1930s Paris, he and a group of fellow black students from Africa and the Caribbean had been inspired by the Harlem Renaissance and its self-confident celebration of black culture to launch the Negritude movement, which sought to promote black pride amongst France's colonial subjects. In turn, the festival's significance as an historical event was not lost on African-American visitors as disparate as the legendary jazzman, Duke Ellington, and the streetwise, radical journalist Hoyt Fuller:

The 1966 World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar, Senegal, is a really great accomplishment. [...] Never before or since has the Black Artist been so magnificently represented and displayed. (Ellington 1973: 337)

There had never been anything quite like it. From four continents and the islands of the Caribbean, thousands of people with some claim to an African heritage converged on Dakar, Senegal, the glittering little cosmopolitan city on the western-most bulge of Africa, and there they witnessed—or took part in—a series of exhibitions, performances and conferences designed to illustrate the genius, the culture and the glory of Africa. (Fuller 1966b: 91)

The poet, Langston Hughes, the elder statesman of African-American literature, was one of the most eagerly anticipated guests. He was received at the presidential palace where Senghor recited one of the visiting American's poems, which he had himself translated for the occasion (figure 2). As Arnold Rampersad states in his biography of Hughes, the African-American poet enjoyed a semi-official role as a presiding spiritual father during the festival (1988: 400-03). For Senghor, Hughes embodied the

cultural bond between Africa and people of African descent; bringing him to Dakar for the festival meant closing the circle between Africa and the diaspora that had begun to be traced during the interwar period.

In its aim to provide concrete cultural expression to the ties that would bind the African ‘homeland’ to its diaspora, the festival sought, I would argue, to *perform* an emerging Pan-African culture. Judith Butler’s work on identity as performance has marked scholarship across various fields in the last few decades. It is now a given for most scholars that identity is not fixed; rather, it is constantly played out and negotiated in a range of complex ways. Similar ideas have been prevalent in influential scholarship on identity in African contexts. For example, in the field of anthropology, influential work by Jean and John Comaroff (2009; see also De Jong 2007) has explored how ‘authentic’ African national and ethnic identities are performed and brokered in complex political, social and economic contexts. My own conception of Pan-Africanism as performance owes a particular intellectual debt to similar notions about black identity/community that have been articulated by Brent Hayes Edwards and Tobias Wofford. For Edwards, there is no pre-existing transnational blackness; rather it is something that is constantly reworked through the ‘practice’ of diaspora (Edwards 2003); while, in a persuasive article on the Dakar festival, Wofford follows Stuart Hall in examining identity as a ‘process’ or form of ‘production’: ‘The First World Festival of Negro Arts [...] can be seen as an attempt to *produce* a global community through a shared blackness’ (2009: 181; my emphasis).

The participants and audiences at the Dakar festival all brought with them their own, sometimes complementary, sometimes conflicting, notions of what black and/or (Pan-)African identity actually meant. In this sense, the 1966 event reflects Simon

Njami's conception of the arts biennale, which he prefers to the curated arts exhibition: 'Avec une exposition, on défend une thèse, avec une biennale, on en ouvre 150, et en s'autorisant des pistes contradictoires' [With an exhibition, one defends a thesis, with a biennale, one opens up 150 of them, and authorizes contradictory understandings] (Vincent 2008d: 102). Analysis of the First World Festival of Negro Arts does not reveal a single vision of Pan-Africanism, for by its very nature, the festival involved the creation of a space in which multiple version of Pan-Africanism and the African Renaissance could be performed.

Tsitsi Jaji writes in *Africa in Stereo*, her innovative exploration of trans-Atlantic musical encounters, that 'the Afromodern experience is collaboratively, coevally, and continually forged' (2014: 4), and the First World Festival of Negro Arts is a striking example of that very process at work. For just short of a month, the festival's daily performances provided a forum in which Pan-Africanism was given a series of material but ephemeral forms: as with all performances, it was never quite the same from day to day but in the shared, collective space of the festival, audiences could explore cultural and emotional connections spanning the black world. The African renaissance had been announced in countless speeches and essays and now here it was leaping off the page in a living illustration of black culture and identity.

Researching Pan-African Festivals

The present volume seeks to explore the multiple ways in which the Dakar festival performed this African renaissance, providing the reader with an overview of the festival's main strands, its aims and objectives, and also its many legacies, not least the series of mega-festivals that would follow over the ensuing decade. It seems remarkable that no single volume has previously attempted to do justice to the scale

and ambition of the festival. Certainly, in the decades immediately following the event, it was habitually relegated to passing (albeit often glowing) references in biographies of Senghor as the high water mark of Negritude. However, beyond the enumeration of its main participants and the use of quotations from Senghor's key speeches at, or in advance of, the event, the festival itself was rarely the subject of in-depth analysis.⁵ It was as though the simple fact of the festival having taken place was enough to illustrate what it had meant. Equally, for critics of Senghor, of whom there were many from the mid-1960s onwards, the festival was assumed to have been the straightforward celebration of Negritude that its proponents said it was. This critical reaction to the idealism of the festival can at times seem like a response to the euphoria expressed during an exuberant and drunken party: on the one hand, a vague, warm glow at the memory of the elation felt during the event whilst details are lost in a drunken haze; on the other, these high hopes evaporate in the cold light of day when all that remains is a financial hole in the party-goer's pocket and an unpleasant hangover. As Cédric Vincent has written of the memory of all the Pan-African festivals of this era: 'leur héritage reste flottant et stéréotypé, lié à la prégnance de leur aura plus qu'à la qualité mémorielle. Curieusement, leur histoire reste à écrire' [their legacy remains fluid and stereotyped, linked more to the extent of their renown than to the richness of public memory about them. Curiously, their history remains to be written] (Vincent 2008b: 17).

Over the past two decades, however, a growing number of scholars have begun to explore the archival traces of the 1966 festival and to assess its significance in greater detail. Given the sheer scale of the event, their analyses, rather than attempting

⁵ A striking but by no means exceptional example of this is Jacques Louis Hymans' biography of Senghor, which does not discuss the Dakar festival at all in the main body of the text. However, in an appendix featuring a chronology of Senghor's career, he writes 'Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar: apotheosis of négritude' (1971: 262).

an overview of the entire festival, have quite understandably focused on providing sustained examination of specific aspects: the art exhibitions (Snipe 1998; Harney 2004; Fiquet and Gillimardet 2009; Wofford 2009), dance performances (Castaldi 2006; Neveu-Kringelbach 2013a); theatre (McMahon 2014); musical performances (Jaji 2014); the literature/cinema programme (Murphy 2012; 2015); the participation of the US delegation (Ratcliff 2014). Their research has typically involved the careful excavation of various archival sources: the Senegalese national archives hold 48 box files of material from the overall festival organizing committee (yet another sign of the desire on the part of the Senghorian state structures to ensure the legacy of the festival). Other major archival sources include: the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (New York), which holds the papers of the US organizing committee; the University of Pennsylvania holds the personal papers of the great classical singer, Marian Anderson, honorary chairman of the US committee; while the Moorland-Springarn Research Center at Howard University in Washington holds the papers of Mercer Cook, the US ambassador to Senegal from 1964-66.⁶ In addition, the festival organizers produced a range of material to mark the event—including several books, at least three LP records (figure 1) and even a set of commemorative stamps—that sought in part to act as an interpretive framework in which it was to be understood.⁷

⁶ Cédric Vincent's contribution to this volume (Chapter 1) lists a further series of important archival sources in relation to the *Negro Art* Exhibition, which was a central component of the Dakar festival. See also Chapter 10 on the value and limitations of official archives.

⁷ Five 'official' texts were published either shortly before or shortly after the festival, although somewhat confusingly two of them, published in 1966 and 1967 respectively, appeared under precisely the same title, *Premier Festival Mondial des arts nègres*. The 1966 text, produced in advance of the event, is the festival programme, which features a series of essays on black and African culture (by the likes of Senghor, Engelbert Mveng and Lamine Diakhaté), as well as tourist information for visitors. The 1967 text, often referred to as the 'livre d'or du festival' is a very handsome coffee table book with very little text but lots of photographs from the festival, and a full list of prize winners under the event's various categories. *L'Art nègre: sources, evolution, expansion* (1966) is the official catalogue for the exhibition held initially at the Musée Dynamique and subsequently at the Grand Palais in Paris. The text of the *Spectacle féerique de Gorée* was produced

The festival also spawned several documentary films—including *The First World Festival of Negro Arts* by the celebrated African-American filmmaker William Greaves, *African Rhythms*, shot by a Soviet film team and *Le Sénégal au Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* by Paulin Soumanou Vieyra (although the latter film appears to have been ‘lost’).⁸ Greaves’ film is without doubt the best known of the three and, for many, it constitutes the primary (perhaps sole) visual record of the festival that they have encountered;⁹ however, as we shall see below, it offered a somewhat partial vision of the event.

The 1966 Dakar festival was followed by a series of major Pan-African cultural festivals: the First Pan-African Cultural Festival held in Algiers (Algeria) in 1969; Zaïre 74, a music festival held in conjunction with the Mohammed Ali-George Foreman fight, the *Rumble in the Jungle*, that took place in Kinshasa (then Zaïre, now Democratic Republic of the Congo) in 1974;¹⁰ and the Second World Festival of Black Arts and Culture, better known as FESTAC, the belated successor to the 1966

in a slim volume in 1966. Finally, the colloquium proceedings were published by Présence Africaine in 1967 under the somewhat cumbersome title, *1er Festival mondial des arts nègres, Dakar 1er-24 avril 1966. Colloque Fonction et signification de l'art nègre dans la vie du peuple et pour le peuple, 30 mars-8 avril, 1966*. As for the festival LPs, *1er Festival mondial des arts nègres, Dakar 1966* was released by Philips in Paris and contains material from the *Spectacle féerique de Gorée*, traditional West African court music and choral arrangements sung by the Leonard de Paur choir; *Premier Festival Mondial Des Arts Nègres: Contributions Musicales Des Nations Africaines*, also released by Philips, contained (as its title suggests), songs by artists from 12 different African nations; finally, another LP also entitled *1er Festival mondial des arts nègres, Dakar 1966*, was released by Barclay and featured songs performed by the Ensemble Instrumental Traditionnel du Sénégal.

⁸ Greaves’s film can be obtained from his website: www.williamgreaves.com/catalog.htm (consulted on 21 December 2015). The Soviet film exists in two versions, one longer than the other and each featuring different material. It is sometimes found under the title, *African Rhythmus* (see, for instance, the copy held by the New York Film Festival), but this may simply be the result of a typographical error that has slipped into the records. Details of Vieyra’s filmography can be found at: www.psv-films.fr (consulted on 21 December 2015). In the course of their research, the PANAFEST archive team also discovered two further documentary films about the festival, one Italian, the other Romanian: *Il Festival di Dakar*, by Sergio Borelli (1966 Italy, 50 mins); *Rythmes et Images: Impressions du Premier festival mondial des arts nègres*, by V. Calotescu and C. Ionescu-Tonciu (1968, Romania, 20 mins).

⁹ For an overview of Greaves’ career, see Knee and Musser (1992).

¹⁰ See Dominique Malaquais’ incisive analysis of *Zaïre 74* for one of the few, in-depth scholarly engagements with the festival (Malaquais 2008).

Dakar festival, held in Lagos (Nigeria) in 1977. (See Chapter 10 for a discussion of a research project attempting to archive these events.) These other major Pan-African festivals of the 1960s-70s have been marked by a similar absence of sustained critical analysis, with the signal exception of Andrew Apter's groundbreaking monograph, *The Pan-African Nation: Oil and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria* (2005), which examines the politics of FESTAC '77.¹¹ Apter explores how the postcolonial Nigerian state, flush with oil revenues, attempted to project a Pan-African culture that was truly global but that positioned Nigeria as the centre of this culture: 'Nigeria's black and African world was clearly an imagined community, national in idiom yet Pan-African in proportion, with a racialized sense of shared history, blood and culture' (6). Apter had embarked on his project assuming that FESTAC would constitute the antithesis of the great colonial exhibitions but soon found a more complex set of relationships between the exhibitionary practices of the colonial and postcolonial periods: '[FESTAC's] [a]rtistic directors and cultural officers invented traditions with precolonial pedigrees. [...] [I]n a fundamental sense, the customary culture which FESTAC resurrected was always already mediated by the colonial encounter, and in some degree was produced by it' (6).

My approach to the First World Festival of Negro Arts is greatly indebted to Apter's work. Although the context in Dakar in 1966 was in several respects rather different to mid-1970s Nigeria—Senegal was a small country, with no oil boom to boost its economy or self-esteem—it witnessed similar attempts to perform a Pan-African culture that was predicated upon problematic colonial-era notions of racial and ethnic identity. This volume also builds on the work of Tsitsi Jaji and Cédric

¹¹ Mériem Khellas's short book (2014) on the 1969 Algiers festival contains fascinating information on the event. Despite the ongoing lack of monographs, there is a growing number of edited publications, articles and book chapters on these major Pan-African festivals: see Vincent (2008a); Coquery-Vidrovitch (2013).

Vincent who have revisited the Pan-African festivals of the 1960s-70s and explored the cultural and political energies that they managed to harness. For, despite their very real differences, each of the four major Pan-African festivals of this era shared the fact that they were driven by a vision of the providential nation state as the source of all legitimacy, even as the events themselves promoted a dissolution of the national within the transnational vision of Pan-Africanism.

The aim of this introduction, and of the volume more widely, is to trace the problematic aspects of the festival's *performance*, as well as the ways in which the event mobilized a set of utopian energies that still have resonance today. In so doing, the volume seeks to move beyond the type of dichotomous responses to the Dakar festival that were outlined above, which sought to short-circuit analysis by claiming the event to be either a success or a failure. In addition, the current publication is the first sustained attempt to provide not only an overview of the festival itself but also of its multiple legacies: from the subsequent mega-festivals in Algiers (1969), Kinshasa (1974) and Lagos (1977) to the 'festivalization' of Africa from the early 1990s onwards, which has seen culture become more explicitly tied into a discourse of economic development through the promotion of cultural tourism, although as will be argued below, the temptation to read this evolution as a shift from the idealism of the 1960s-early 1970s to a greater political and economic pragmatism should be resisted. The remainder of the introduction will provide an overview of the festival organization and situate the event within the very specific political climate of the period. It will give a taste of the full range of arts that were showcased during the festival and to examine the involvement of the important US delegation, which was so central to Senghor's vision for the event. In addition, it begins the exploration of some of the major questions that are at the heart of subsequent chapters: What is the role of

culture in a post-imperial world? How exactly does culture contribute to ‘development’? Does any of the utopianism of the 1960s survive in the contemporary world in which festivals have become central to the culture industry?

The volume is divided into two sections, ‘Contexts’ and ‘Legacies’. In the first section, Chapters 1-5 engage with different aspects of the festival: the ‘traditional’ art exhibition (Vincent), dance (Neveu-Kringelbach), theatrical and other performances (Quinn and Bush), and the way the festival was mediated for various audiences via the contemporary black press (Jaji). (Vincent’s chapter is the first in this section precisely because of the importance of the exhibition on *L’Art nègre*.) The intention is not to provide exhaustive coverage of the event as a whole (which would have been an encyclopaedic undertaking). Instead, these chapters offer in-depth analysis of the debates surrounding different artistic forms, and explore the ways in which the postcolonial nation state mobilized culture as part of an attempt to imagine post-imperial forms of belonging and identity. Together, the different contributions reveal the tensions and continuities between different artists and works of art enlisted to act as expressions of Pan-Africanism and Negritude; they also reveal the clear hierarchies involved in the selection of these ‘negro arts’.¹²

The second section analyses the festival’s legacies: in the first instance, this involves analysis of the 1969 Algiers festival (Anderson) which was specifically conceived as a radical response to the Dakar event, and the 1977 Lagos festival which, although explicitly billed as the successor to the First World Festival of Negro Arts, sought to distance itself from many aspects of its predecessor, an event it read in large part through the critical lens of the 1969 Algiers colloquium (Apter) at which

¹² From the 1980s onwards, Negritude largely fell out of fashion as a topic of academic exploration but there has been a resurgence of interest in the subject over the past decade, which has led to some highly innovative new approaches to the subject (see, for example, Wilder 2005 and 2015; Thiam 2014).

Négritude was loudly denounced. The focus then expands to a wider consideration of the ‘festivalization’ of African culture that has occurred in recent decades (also referred to as ‘festivalism’, with detailed analysis of a specific local cultural festival held in Senegal (De Jong) and a wide-ranging discussion of contemporary black and African arts festivals both in Africa and the West (Harney). The final chapter seeks to draw conclusions regarding the significance and legacy of the four major Pan-African festivals mentioned above in light of the findings of the French-led research project, *PANAFEST Archive* (Malaquais/Vincent), based at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris.¹³ This concluding chapter reflects on questions central to each of the chapters in this volume: what is the archive of ephemeral events such as the First World Festival of Negro Arts and how should scholars confront the challenge of tracing their legacy?

Culture and the Festivalization of Africa

The emergence of a body of scholarship on African cultural festivals must be seen within the context of the ‘festivalization’ of Africa (and much of the rest of the world)—part of what has been termed a general ‘spectacularization’ of culture (Vincent 2008b: 12)—as festivals have become key elements in continent-wide policies of cultural and touristic development. The great transnational festivals held in Africa in the 1960s-70s often appeared exciting, radical and utopian, seeking in their own different ways to imagine new communities/identities and to challenge the global order. Can that utopianism survive when festivals are seen as part of a set of leisure, tourism and development agendas?

¹³ The project website can be found at: www.iiaac.cnrs.fr/article477.html (consulted on 21 December 2015).

As has been the case elsewhere in the world, the rise of a festival industry has not met with unanimous approval. The Ghanaian writer, Ayi Kwei Armah, long resident in Senegal, wryly commented on the (eventually aborted) plans to host a Third World Festival of Negro Arts in the country in the mid-1980s:

This is the kind of news that raises the hope that some day Africa's creative and productive artists will see through the festival game and leave the parasites alias bureaucrats to organize, to participate in, and finally to make their petty personal profits from such wasteful demonstrations of intellectual bankruptcy—on their own. In short, such news is bad news. (Armah 2010 [1985]: 133)

Armah here takes aim at what he views as the African nation state's inability to foster genuine artistic creativity. However, the festivals of the past two decades are just as likely to have been either commercial endeavours or to have been driven by NGOs, for whom cultural diversity emerged as a key element of international programmes combating poverty from the 1990s onwards (Andrieu 2013: 123).¹⁴ These events also tend for the most part to be on a far smaller scale than the mega-events of the 1960s-70s, which allows them to engage more with local communities rather than acting as top-down initiatives of a remote state (see Douxami 2008: 81-82). Ferdinand De Jong (Chapter 8) refers to the cultural performances at local festivals as 'masquerades of modernity', which demonstrate that 'the independent Senegalese state and its subjects have reclaimed the format of the colonial exhibit for a modernist agenda by deliberately forgetting the colonial origins of its cultural archive'. The cultural festival is now simply a part of the modern Senegalese/African landscape.

¹⁴ One of the most important critics of festivalization or festivalism is Peter Schjeldahl (1999).

The decision finally to host a Third World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar in December 2010—following just over a year after a fortieth anniversary edition of the Algiers Pan-African Cultural Festival—illustrates the hybrid form taken by the contemporary ‘mega-festival’. A certain critical and artistic faith in Pan-Africanism has endured but, equally, these events can, and have, been interpreted as exercises in nostalgia, which attempt to incorporate the idealism of the past into the contemporary global cultural market. The 2010 festival was branded as ‘FESMAN 2010’, taking its name from the initials of the French title, ‘Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres’; and this abbreviation was probably modelled on FESTAC, acronym of the 1977 Lagos festival. It seems highly likely that the FESMAN title was part of a marketing exercise designed to create an easily recognizable brand name. (FESMAN was not a term used at the time in conjunction with the 1966 festival, either in the festival documentation or in responses to it but the effect of the ‘FESMAN’ label post-2010 has been for it to be deployed retrospectively in relation to 1966.¹⁵)

The rapid development of the global culture industry has been the subject of powerful analyses by various commentators over the past decade and more, and the role of cultural festivals within this framework of culture as commodity has been increasingly examined.¹⁶ Africa is gradually finding a place within the scholarship that has come to constitute the emerging field of festival studies: for example, Lindiwe Dovey’s *Curating Africa in the Age of Film Festivals* (2015) explores the evolving role and status of African film festivals; a major research project, *PANAFEST Archive* (mentioned above and discussed in Chapter 10), seeks to

¹⁵ Several of the contributors to this volume have used the term ‘FESMAN 1966’ to refer to the First World Festival of Negro Arts. This is not something that needs to be ‘corrected’, for, although the terminology is, strictly speaking, anachronistic, the use of the ‘FESMAN’ label for the 1966 event is becoming common usage and is likely to remain so.

¹⁶ See, in particular, Amirou (2000), Yúdice (2004), Picard and Robinson (2006), Georgi et al. (2011), Fléchet et al (2013).

excavate a new archive for the First World Festival of Negro Arts, alongside the other three great Pan-African festivals of the 1960s-70s; while Akin Adesokan and the team around the South African-based magazine and on-line platform, *Chimurenga*, have done outstanding work in making visible the archive of FESTAC 77.¹⁷

It would be a mistake, however, to read the evolution of African cultural festivals as a straightforward shift from idealism to consumerism. Festivalization does not merely present culture as a commodity. As Sarah Andrieu has argued, all African festivals tend to view culture and development as inextricably linked, and they continue to play a key role in the construction of local, regional and national identities (Andrieu 2013; see also Doquet 2008 and Djebbari 2013). Also, despite the retrospective idealization of the 1966 festival in particular, the Pan-African festivals of the 1960s-70s all had one eye firmly fixed on the emerging culture industry as an important source of revenue, and, indeed, cultural tourism has been one of the main legacies of these events. Many of the official publications produced by the 1966 Dakar festival organizers emphasized the opportunities for performers, delegates and visitors to enjoy the sights and sounds of Senegal during the event or perhaps to enjoy a holiday afterwards. This emphasis was not lost on attendees. Hoyt Fuller wrote that ‘the Festival was also a gamble at stimulating tourism’ (1966c: 102), although he was sceptical about its likely success: ‘Dakar was thrilling during the Festival but what it is like when there are no celebrations is what will make all the difference to tourists’ (1966c: 102).¹⁸

¹⁷ For the project website, see: www.chimurengalibrary.co.za/festac-77 (consulted on 19 February 2016). The team has also worked closely with the Tate Modern in London on a project entitled *Across the Board*, examining artistic practices in Africa and the diaspora: www.tate.org.uk/download/file/fid/37959 (consulted on 19 February 2016).

¹⁸ A central plank of the festival’s tourism strategy appears to have been the promotion of the southern region of Casamance as a site in which an ‘authentic’ African culture could still be found. Festival organizers held cultural events and organized tourist excursions in Casamance before and during the main festival in Dakar, and produced a small brochure to accompany these events. See Archives Nationales du Sénégal, FMA016. Malraux was the most famous festival invitee to avail of the

Recognition of the festival organizers' desire to promote tourism is not to deny that they also had their other eye firmly placed on the larger historical picture: after centuries of Western domination, through slavery and colonialism, Africa was now free, with figures of all political stripes proudly proclaiming that an African renaissance was at hand, and these festivals constituted self-conscious performances of that renaissance. As Aedín Ní Loingsigh's work demonstrates, we should not view the festival's idealism and its pragmatism as dichotomous: 'the development of a viable Senegalese tourist industry capable of catering to the transnational market of FESMAN was seen as a powerful means of representing the nation as a modern economy' (2015: 80). Moreover, Senegal's ability to host a major international event was seen in itself as proof of the renaissance the festival was seeking to perform. By the same token, later festivals from the 1990s onwards, although bound up in a discourse that promotes the culture industry as central to economic development, still serve as complex sites for the expression of multiple identities (local, national, transnational).

Culture and Development

On one level, then, the discourse on development surrounding the Dakar festival envisaged the growth of what we would today refer to as the culture industry. At a more profound level, however, the major Pan-African festivals of the 1960s and 1970s also gave culture a utopian status that posited it as central to the identity and unity of the former colonies, and crucial to their development as independent nations.¹⁹ The persistence of the perceived link between culture and development

opportunity to engage in cultural tourism in Casamance, an experience he wrote about in his autobiography (1976).

¹⁹ This does not mean, however, that there has been unanimity either around the significance of festivals (see Ayi Kwei Armah 2010 [1985]) or the notion of development: as Congolese writer Sony

reveals some of the underlying similarities between events as seemingly opposed as the Dakar and Algiers festivals (as is also argued in Chapter 10). The ideological language may have been different but, as I have argued elsewhere (Murphy 2015), there was also a fundamental continuity in terms of the core vision that the post-imperial world should be as concerned with the cultural elevation of Africa as it was with its industrial and scientific development.

For Senghor, culture should be placed at the heart of any attempt to consider progress or development. At the National Congress of his Union Progressiste Sénégalaise (UPS) political party in late 1966, Senghor's speech dealt with various budgetary matters and justified the expenditure that had been set aside for the festival in the following terms: 'Les sacrifices financiers que le Festival nous a coûtés, nous ne devons pas le regretter parce qu'il s'agit de culture et qu'encore une fois, la culture est au commencement et à la fin du développement' [The financial sacrifices that the Festival has cost us should not be a source of regret because this is a question of culture, and let me repeat it again, culture is the source and the conclusion of development] (cited in Rous 1967: 81). What did it mean to position culture as 'the source and the conclusion of development'? Was Senghor arguing that cultural development was more important than the industrial and technological development of his homeland? If so, does the logic of this argument not lead to a situation in which culture is posited as a form of compensation for the absence of material development? In a country entering a vicious cycle of drought and famine that would devastate large sections of the rural population, some would argue that expenditure on the festival was merely a frivolous and irrelevant extravagance. But, for Senghor, there was a deeper political and ideological agenda at work. If the festival's work could be

Labou Tansi famously declared 'Je ne suis pas à développer. Je suis à prendre ou à laisser' [I am not someone to be developed. I am someone to take or leave as you find me] (cited in Mensah 2007: 6).

deemed more important than the exploration of space, then it was also more important than the economic and infrastructural development of his homeland: for what price could be placed on the cultural renaissance of the black world?

This is why Senghor's 'performance' through the festival (as he had previously done through his writing) of an African renaissance was so significant. His writings had worked for decades to define an African 'classical' age that might act as an inspiration for the future, and, in particular (as will be seen below), the exhibition at the Musée Dynamique 'reunited' many of Africa's 'classic' works of art under one roof for the first time. In speeches prior to the festival, Senghor underlined this 'classical' theme, making remarkable comparisons between contemporary Senegal and ancient Greece:²⁰

[Le peuple grec] habitait un pays pauvre, fait de plaines étroites et collines caillouteuses. Mais, comme le peuple sénégalais, il avait la mer en face de lui, et des céréales sur ses plaines et de l'huile sur ses collines, et du marbre dans son sol. [...] C'est pourquoi si longtemps que vivront des hommes sur notre planète, ils parleront de la civilisation grecque comme d'un monde de lumière et de beauté.] (Speech to UPS in January 1966; Rous 1967: 76-77)

[The Greeks] lived in a poor country of narrow plains and rocky hills. But, like the Senegalese people, they had the sea beside them, cereals on the plains, oil in the hills and marble in the soil. [...] They sacrificed everything for the love of liberty and truth, for the love of life and beauty. [...] That's why, as long as Men are alive on this planet, they will speak of Greek civilization as a world of light and beauty.]

²⁰ Ali Mazrui provides a striking analysis of the influence of the Classical tradition on African nationalists in his short text, *Ancient Greece in African Political Thought* (1967).

This is, in many ways, a typical piece of exalted Senghor prose, far-removed from the day-to-day concerns of many of his people, although it was also a canny piece of political stage-management, announcing for his homeland a vocation that belied its size. The Rome to Senegal's Greece was Nigeria which, as the rest of the speech makes clear, wins hands down in terms of quantity; however, the smaller country has nothing to envy it in terms of quality. Also, despite Senghor's love of abstraction and *la longue durée*, the festival and not least the exhibition at the Musée Dynamique were built on hugely impressive diplomatic and practical achievements. In its complex mix of the utopian and the pragmatic, the First World Festival of Negro Arts was thus a striking example of the approach that Gary Wilder has identified as central to the postwar thought of both Senghor and Aimé Césaire in his remarkable study, *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World* (2015). Although Wilder focuses on the period from 1945-60, and the ultimately failed attempt to construct a federal solution that would tie France to its former colonial possessions—in what he calls 'pragmatic-utopian visions of self-determination without state sovereignty' (7)—his analysis is applicable to their (equally fraught) attempt through the festival to construct a transnational black community:

[Césaire and Senghor's] projects were at once strategic and principled, gradualist and revolutionary, realist and visionary, timely and untimely. They pursued the seemingly impossible through small deliberate acts. As if alternative futures were already at hand, they explored the fine line between actual and imagined, seeking to invent sociopolitical forms that did not yet exist for a world that had not yet arrived. (2015: 2-3)

Wilder's reading of Senghor's and Césaire's transnational political imagination in the postwar period invites us to look beyond the 'failures' of their project and its perceived lack of realism. Their willingness to imagine a post-imperial world outside the confines of the nation state or the hegemony of Western imperialism may ultimately have been unsuccessful but it offered models and ideas—a commitment to transnational forms of community, and a focus on culture as the best way to forge that community—that continue to inspire many black people both in Africa and the diaspora.

Negritude, Pan-Africanism and the search for black unity

The reader has probably realised by this point that this introduction has been working on the assumption that both Negritude and the First World Festival of Negro Arts constituted very specific expressions of Pan-Africanism. Negritude and Pan-Africanism are, of course, not wholly interchangeable terms: the former concept implies a racial understanding of Africanness that is absent from some of the broader geo-political constructions of a Pan-African identity. Indeed, the 1966 Dakar festival revealed some of the tensions between Negritude and these broader understandings of Pan-Africanism, as North African nations were given observer status and excluded from official festival competitions, although some North African art works were exhibited at the Musée Dynamique (see Chapter 1 for further details) and there were performances of music and dance (including a concert by the Tunisian singer and writer, Taos Amrouche). However, such tensions do not make Negritude and Pan-Africanism opposing concepts, for the latter term has always been malleable, available to those keen to give it a racial or a geo-political meaning.

The concept of Pan-Africanism had been born in the nineteenth century, as a way of attempting to forge a common bond between Africans and those of African descent (primarily) in the Americas, one that might transcend the historical catastrophe of the Atlantic slave trade and growing European domination of what it viewed as the ‘dark continent’. In the first half of the twentieth century, Pan-Africanism inspired the writings of key black intellectuals such as W.E.B. DuBois and George Padmore who sought to ‘reunite’ the black world through a series of major congresses (London, Paris, Brussels, Manchester). Then, in the era of decolonization, figures such as Ghanaian president Kwame Nkrumah aimed to give tangible political form to the Pan-African ideal through the attempted creation of a United States of Africa.²¹ Paradoxically, the European empires had reinforced Pan-Africanism by bringing colonized peoples together: as was mentioned above, Negritude was born in Paris, while, as is noted by several contributors to this volume, the William Ponty School in Senegal would play a foundational role in the emergence of a Pan-African performing culture.

The First World Festival of Negro Arts was organized in the middle of a period extending from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s during which a wide range of organizations and events—cultural, sporting and political—informed by Pan-Africanist ideals were created: from the footballing African Cup of Nations in 1957, through the launch of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 to the first of the now biennial festivals of African cinema (FESPACO) in Burkina Faso in 1969. As was mentioned above, the 1966 festival was also followed by a series of other major Pan-African cultural festivals. During this period, the cultural domain arguably became the privileged forum for the expression of Pan-Africanist sentiment, at the

²¹ Nkrumah’s brainchild, the Organization of African Unity, proved unable to drive greater African integration and, in a rather grim irony, the Ghanaian was overthrown in a *coup d’état* in early 1966, shortly before the Dakar festival.

very moment when political independence for Africa and civil rights (if not actual equality) for African-Americans became a reality. It may seem ironic that what had long been a primarily political idea should take on more of a cultural character at precisely the moment at which Africans and African-descent peoples were finally gaining greater autonomy. However, Pan-Africanism has always been in part an expression of what Raymond Williams (1977) termed a ‘structure of feeling’: it constitutes the lived experience of a given historical moment, what it means for different people around the world to ‘feel’ African.

Indeed, the series of major cultural festivals in the era of decolonization might be seen to have constituted some of the most meaningful articulations of Pan-Africanism. In essence, as was argued above, these festivals staged the ‘performance’ of a Pan-African culture, and they formed a crucible in which the African Renaissance could be forged. They facilitated concrete encounters between Africans and members of the diaspora that fashioned a new and profound sense of cultural belonging. For instance, in his autobiography, *Music is my Mistress* (1973), Duke Ellington described his trip to Dakar as a return home, ‘After writing African music for thirty-five years, here I am at last in Africa!’ (1973: 337), and he wrote of the warm response to his performances (figure 3): ‘It is acceptance of the highest level and it gives us a once-in-a-lifetime feeling of having broken through to our brothers’ (Ellington 1973: 338).²² Furthermore, the festival’s commitment to bilingualism—almost all of the official publications were in both French and English—was a central plank in the attempt to reach out to black people around the world beyond the

²² For an overview of Ellington’s trip to Dakar, see Cohen (2010: 500-04).

boundaries of old colonial boundaries (although, of course, these two languages could not hope to speak to all black people).²³

In statements he made about the Dakar festival, Senghor expressed a desire for Senegal to be perceived as the ‘deuxième patrie’ [second homeland] for all black visitors (Senghor 1977: 63). As Andrew Apter discusses in his contribution to this volume (Chapter 7), the Algiers and Lagos festivals of 1969 and 1977 respectively would push this sense of Pan-African belonging still further, leading to the (temporary) positing of Pan-African citizenship as something that superseded one’s national belonging to any particular nation state. In this vision, one’s current national citizenship was deemed an accident of history; one’s Pan-African citizenship was the result of a profound cultural identity. Nonetheless, the festival was also a source of Senegalese national pride. As Brian Quinn and Ruth Bush (Chapters 3 and 4) demonstrate in their analysis of the Senegalese play, *Les Derniers jours de Lat Dior*, its story of the recent past had greater resonance for local audiences than some of the more celebrated transnational, Pan-African works performed in Dakar.

The 1960s and 1970s was a period when the destinies of Africa and black America seemed inextricably intertwined, a belief shared across very different shades of political opinion. For instance, in *Journey to Africa*, a collection of his writings on various trips to the continent, the radical journalist, Hoyt Fuller, wrote (regarding his first trip to Guinea, in 1959) that:

The African emergence is a significant development for all the world, but it has a very special importance for those of African blood who are rooted in the

²³ Edwards (2003) has charted the importance of translation to black internationalism from the 1920s to the mid-century. For instance, in its early years, the journal, *Présence Africaine*, was published in both French and English.

American culture. For, with all respect to the moral intent of desegregation, only Africa will set the Black American free. (Fuller 1971: 68-69)²⁴

From an early twenty-first century perspective, such vaunted hopes that Africa might play a major part in the progress of black America, just like Nkrumah's dream of a United States of Africa, no doubt appear outmoded or excessively utopian to many. Even Fuller, by 1971, was writing despondently that: 'The reality of Africa can be enough to drive a Black man to despair, if that man believes that genuine freedom for Black people all over the world will only come when the Black African holds genuine power' (1971: 71). Pan-African political unity is a distant prospect today but that does not mean that attempts to achieve unity or to imagine a transnational black culture are somehow misguided. One of the main aims of this volume is precisely to try to understand better the cultural and political energy of the Pan-Africanism of the 1960s-70s by fostering an analysis that refuses to be bound solely by considerations of the movement's apparent 'success' or 'failure':

The recognition that practicing solidarity is hard work offers us an opportunity to consider pan-Africanism not so much as a movement that has or has not succeeded, but as a continuum of achievements and apparent failures that can only be understood in toto. (Jaji 2014: 18)

In addition, Tsitsi Jaji's work has provided a timely reminder of the distinction that George Shepperson drew over 50 years ago between 'Pan-Africanism' and 'pan-

²⁴ The Chair of the American Society of African Culture (AMSAC), John A. Davis, a white academic, wrote in the inaugural issue of AMSAC's journal that 'The American Negro has always seen the Africans' struggle for freedom and equality as an integral part of his own, for he always believed that freedom for one is not possible without freedom for the other' (Davis 1965: 4)

Africanism’: the former refers to the formal international gatherings and organizations of the ‘Pan-Africanist’ movement since 1900 while ‘[s]mall “p” pan-Africanism designates an eclectic set of ephemeral cultural movements and currents throughout the twentieth century ranging from popular to elite forms’ (Jaji 2014: 3). The 1966 Dakar festival was a Pan-Africanist event but it was also one at which the performance of pan-Africanism, in terms of personal encounters and exchange around cultural forms, was able to flourish.²⁵

Organization of the Festival

As mentioned above, the idea of organizing a festival of African culture in Africa had been formerly adopted by the Société Africaine de Culture (SAC), at the Second Congress of Black Writers in 1959. However, it was not until 4 February 1963 that Senghor formally announced his plan to host the festival in a radio address to the nation, shortly after he had emerged victorious from a power struggle with his former ally, the more politically and economically radical Mamadou Dia (see Ficquet and Gallimardet 2009: 138). Had Senghor been obliged to delay his long-cherished and costly dream of hosting the festival while Dia held the reins of government as prime minister? The historical record does not allow us to make a categorical judgement on the matter but, at the very least, it seems plausible. Financial justification of the festival’s cost would become a constant refrain in comments from Senghor and some of his ministers before and after the event, indicating a pronounced sensitivity to questioning of their priorities for an impoverished nation.

Although Senghor’s presiding spirit informed planning for the festival, from the outset, the practical organization fell to others. With the creation of the Association du

²⁵ I do not propose to maintain the ‘p’/’P’ distinction in spelling in the remainder of this volume—academic usage tends to be too unruly for such policing—but the reader is invited to remain alert to the presence of both concepts throughout this introduction and the chapters that follow.

Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres, formally launched on 21 September 1963, to act as the overall organizing committee at one remove from the Senegalese government, Senghor handed oversight of the festival to two of his closest allies: Alioune Diop, president of the SAC and chair of the Association du Festival, and Aimé Césaire, vice-chair of the Association and Senghor's longstanding literary ally (see Huchard 2012: 121-22).²⁶ Much of the heavy lifting at the local level was done by the Senegalese organizing committee, led by a succession of government officials with Souleymane Sidibé finally bringing the project to fruition (two previous incumbents had been ousted from their posts as their organizational skills struggled to match the sheer scale of the event which had grown exponentially since the 1959 proposal to organize an expanded writers' congress in Africa).

It takes many hands to organize the different strands of such a mammoth festival, and, although it is beyond the scope of this chapter to detail all of those involved, it is important to note the contribution of several key figures. As Cédric Vincent demonstrates (Chapter 1), the organizers of the 'traditional' art exhibition, *L'Art nègre* [Negro Art], played a particularly important role, with their committee enjoying autonomy from the wider festival organizational structures. The Swiss museum director, Jean Gabus, and a young Cameroonian priest, Engelbert Mveng (together with the French curator Pierre Meauzé) were central in gathering together the items that would form the basis of this exhibition. After a number of missions across Africa, Europe and North America, they had managed the remarkable feat of

²⁶ As one of Diop's biographers has underlined, Diop and Césaire were close friends as well as intellectual collaborators, and Césaire worked far more closely with *Présence Africaine* than Senghor (Verdin 2010: 235-40). For an overview of Diop's contribution to the festival, see Verdin (2010: 299-336) and Grah Mel (1995: 99-218).

securing the loan of 600 items for the exhibition from over 50 museums as well as a number of private collections.²⁷

As Tobias Wofford has underlined, the decision of the festival organizers solely to engage with national delegations effectively prioritized international cultural relations over the promotion of the work of individual artists (Wofford 2009: 182). Indeed, much of the official festival paperwork, including the programme, makes reference primarily (and sometimes exclusively) to the nation due to perform on a given date. The need for the artist to play a representative role on behalf of his/her nation and race would lead to some ambiguous moments. For instance, the Grand Prize for printmaking and illustration in the modern art section of the festival was won by William Majors, an abstract artist who claimed to be uninterested in his African heritage: 'I don't care about going to Africa... I just work' (cited in Wofford 2009: 184). The other modern art prize (for painting) went to the British Guyanan, Frank Bowling, yet another abstract artist who did not travel to Dakar.

The participation of the US delegation was facilitated by the fact that diplomatic relations between Senegal and the United States had been entrusted to two 'men of culture': the US ambassador to Senegal, Mercer Cook, was a trained musician (son of the celebrated maestro Will Marion Cook) and respected scholar of French literature, while the Senegalese ambassador to the US was the novelist Ousmane Socé Diop, one of whose novels, *Mirages de Paris* (1937) had centred on a very different type of 'festival', the 1931 Colonial Exhibition in Paris. Cook had grown up as part of the black bourgeoisie in Washington, DC, where he had been friends with a young jazz

²⁷ To give some sense of the scale of the 1966 exhibition, at the time of writing in February 2016, the Musée Dapper in Paris is holding a major exhibition (30 September 2015-17 July 2016) of African 'traditional' art, entitled *Chefs-d'œuvre d'Afrique* [African masterpieces], which draws together 'just' 130 pieces.

prodigy, Edward Kennedy Ellington, later known as Duke (figure 4).²⁸ In 1934, Cook had met Senghor and the Nardal sisters at the Paris apartment of Louis Achille and he became a close friend of the future Senegalese leader as well as with other leading black Francophone writers (in particular, René Maran) with whom he remained in regular correspondence. Cook was also a scholar of Haiti where he studied in the 1940s, and he collaborated with Langston Hughes on the English translation of Jacques Roumain's landmark novel, *Masters of the Dew*. Cook was, therefore, an important *porteur* figure, facilitating the communication of ideas between Anglophone and Francophone contexts. It also seems quite likely that he shared Senghor's vision of the make-up of the American delegation, prioritizing those artists who had made their name prior to the increased radicalism of the civil rights era (as will be shown below, the choice of participants would be queried and contested during and after the festival).

The American scholar, dancer and choreographer, Katherine Dunham, was another major figure overseeing preparations for the festival (figure 5). She was in the unique position of having been appointed by Senghor to act as an advisor to the festival, as well as being nominated by the US State Department to officially represent the United States in Dakar (see Aschenbrenner 2012: 175; Harnan 1974: 201; Jaji 2014: 96-100). She was also occupied a unique role as one of the few prominent women within this 'inclusive' Pan-Africanist initiative. She served on the prize committee for Anglophone literature and she chaired the performing arts committee, which was given the task of analysing performances at the festival. A close friend of Senghor, even though she disagreed fundamentally with what she perceived to be Negritude's promotion of a 'fixed' notion of blackness, she had been

²⁸ Cook and Ellington remained close and the musician would name his own son Mercer in honour of his friend. Mercer Ellington became a trumpeter in his father's band and played at the Dakar festival in 1966.

invited prior to the festival to spend several months in Dakar training the members of the national ballet. In advance of this trip, she drew up a 'Plan for an Academy of West African Cultural Arts' to be housed on the island of Gorée, just off the coast of Dakar (see Clark and Johnson 2005: 407-10). This plan never came to fruition but Dunham's role before and during the festival, and her general commitment to forging links with newly independent Africa illustrate the strength of Pan-African ties at this moment in history.

The organization of the festival not only involved bringing artists and exhibitions to Dakar but also involved the physical transformation of the city itself. An early assessment of the infrastructural improvements required in order for Dakar to be in a position to successfully host a festival on this scale had identified the need both for new artistic spaces to be constructed and for the city's hotel capacity to be greatly increased. This led to major infrastructural projects (such projects are often the most visible legacies of festivals): shantytowns were cleared, brand new roads were carved through the city, a new terminal was built at the airport, complete with a mural entitled *The Sun Bird* by Senegalese painter Iba N'diaye, two major cultural venues were built, the Théâtre National Daniel Sorano in the city centre and the Musée Dynamique on the western corniche, which would house one of the art exhibitions, while nearby an artisans' village was constructed next to the fishing harbour at Soumbédioune Bay. The Senegalese government had originally planned to build a Cité des Arts around the Musée Dynamique, which would have included a 500-seater auditorium, a concert hall, smaller exhibition spaces for fashion and artisanal work, administrative buildings and a shop.²⁹ Financial constraints meant that none of these

²⁹ Ousmane Sow Huchard, who would later act as director of the Musée Dynamique, gives a detailed account of the plans for Cité des Arts and the later history of the museum after the festival (Huchard 2012).

plans beyond the construction of the Musée Dynamique were ever realized and, ironically, the area around the museum is today occupied by a fun fair.

Participating nations were asked to make a financial contribution to the cost of the festival, while UNESCO funded construction of the Musée Dynamique and the colloquium held at the National Assembly; UNESCO had earlier hosted a ‘pre-colloquium’ gathering at its Paris headquarters on 5-6 December 1964 (Huchard 2012: 122). The vast majority of funding came, though, from the Senegalese state, while the French poured vast resources into the ‘traditional’ art exhibition at the Musée Dynamique: once the festival closed, the exhibition was transferred in the summer of 1966 to a brand new exhibition space at the Grand Palais in Paris, before touring major Western museums. The French also provided much of the technical support for the *son et lumière* show on Gorée island and installed state-of-the-art production equipment in the Daniel Sorano Theatre.

Various commentators have underlined that it would be no exaggeration to view the festival a largely Franco-Senegalese initiative (see Ficquet and Gallimardet 2009: 139-41; see also Cédric Vincent’s contribution in Chapter 1). A quick perusal of official festival publications reveals the participation of many French officials on festival committees: and, at the top of the organizational pyramid, President Charles de Gaulle shared the status of honorary patron with Senghor. Indeed, it could justifiably be argued that the festival marked the emergence of France’s policy of ‘cultural co-operation’ with its former African colonies, which would eventually lead to the creation of *la Francophonie*. As Catherine Coquio (2012) has argued, Malraux’s speech in Dakar presented precisely this model of cultural relations: France and Africa should be partners, although France should remain the paternal figure for its wayward African offspring. De Gaulle largely deployed his Minister for Culture’s

eloquence to present the idealistic case for France's continued presence in Africa. Meanwhile, behind the scenes, De Gaulle's African 'fixer' Jacques Foccart was putting in place the networks and mechanisms that would become known as *la francafrique*, the system of corruption and support for autocratic regimes that operated in the name of France's 'interests'. French cultural co-operation was not simply the camouflage to hide French neo-colonialism; it was the flip side of that neo-colonialism, the expression of a 'desire for Africa' that had developed during the colonial period. Before and after independence, France celebrated African culture while systematically exploiting Africa economically and politically.³⁰

In the decades since the festival, a certain degree of nostalgia has tended to cloud memories of the very real organizational difficulties encountered by the organizers. The relative lack of cultural interest on the part of Senghor's successor, Abdou Diouf, as well as the monumental organizational dysfunction of FESMAN 2010, has understandably shaped a retrospective vision of the 1966 festival as an organizational triumph. However, its practical deficiencies were not lost on contemporary observers, even those inherently favourable to the event: Hoyt Fuller writes of 'incredible blunders in planning and goofs unworthy even of children', including 'hundreds of people [being] turned away from theater box-offices time and again because no tickets were available' only for the very same plays to be performed later that day before half-empty venues (Fuller 1966c: 101).³¹ According to another US festival attendee, Fred O'Neal, 'several of the performances at the Sorano were interrupted because the Senegalese running the theater had not yet learned how to

³⁰ In a speech delivered in Dakar in 2007, then French president Nicolas Sarkozy infamously asserted that 'the tragedy of Africa is that the African has not fully entered into history'. Forty years after Malraux's words, the African entrance into modernity announced by the Minister of Culture was deemed not to have even begun. For a discussion of Sarkozy's speech, see Thomas (2013: chapter 4).

³¹ Fuller's account is corroborated by a short article tucked away on the back page of Senegal's daily newspaper, *Dakar-Matin*, on Tuesday, 5 April 1966, which laments the number of empty seats in the Sorano Theatre over the opening weekend of the festival.

operate the complex lighting and sound systems' (cited in McMahon 2014: 298). The festival was postponed on a number of occasions,³² and some of the new hotels required to house the thousands of participants and visitors never materialized. In the end, the Soviet government stepped in and gave the Senegalese use of a cruise ship, which was moored in the port of Dakar, to provide extra bed space (another was loaned to Senegal by Italy).

Trouble was not limited to infrastructural issues, for, in the months preceding the festival, Dakar had been subjected to an unusually high level of social disruption. The ever-radical university students had once again been brought on to the streets in a series of student strikes in February-March 1966 in an angry response (that escalated into rioting) to the overthrow of Ghana's independence hero, Kwame Nkrumah, who, as we saw above, was one of the most vocal advocates of political Pan-Africanism: the irony of the apparent death of Nkrumah's dream of a United States of Africa just as Senghor's dream of black cultural unity was about to be realized was probably not lost on the protestors.³³ In a press conference a month before the festival, the Senegalese Minister for Information warned students who had been involved in anti-government demonstrations that 'le Gouvernement se montrera à leur égard d'une fermeté inébranlable' [the Government will display an unshakeable firmness towards them] ('Le Sénégal ne se laissera pas imposer' 1966: 1).³⁴ The alleged ringleaders were expelled from the university, while a number of foreign students were expelled from the country altogether. In response, a full student strike was called and the government's 'unshakeable firmness' finally gave way, just over a week before the

³² A firm set of dates spanning the Christmas/New Year period in December 1965-January 1966 were announced before organizers noted a series of clashes leading it to be postponed until its eventual dates in April 1966

³³ Neighbouring Guinea, under the radical and temperamental leadership of Sékou Touré, would eventually boycott the Dakar festival, which it perceived as neo-colonialist venture.

³⁴ For an account of the political tensions in Senegal, and in particular student unrest, in this period, see Ndiaye (1971).

festival, to a desire to bring an end to social unrest that would reflect badly on the country. A deal was struck allowing all students who had been expelled to resume their studies but the university remained closed until after the beginning of the festival, with classes eventually resuming on 13 April (Bathily 1992: 51-52; de Benoist 1998: 146).

The local political context in Senegal was also highly charged in early 1966. The newly independent nation was gradually becoming a one-party state as opposition groupings were subsumed into Senghor's ruling Union Progressiste Sénégalaise (UPS) party. Just a few weeks before the beginning of the festival, the police rounded up many of the leaders of the radical Parti Africain de l'Indépendance (PAI) (Bathily 1992: 30), no doubt with an eye on limiting potential protest during the event. The police had also sought to 'clean up' central Dakar by rounding up the numerous beggars who populated the downtown area and pushing them to the outskirts of the city, a move closely linked to the desire to provide visitors to Dakar with an improved (tourist) experience of Senegal's 'front region' (see Ní Loingsigh 2015: 89). Clearing the city of beggars was deemed by the government to be part of a more general 'assainissement de la ville' [cleansing of the city]:

Si la lutte déclenchée depuis le 25 août 1965 par la police contre les mendiants, les lépreux, les vagabonds et les aliénés qui pullulent dans notre capitale a déjà eu des résultats spectaculaires, il importe de la poursuivre avec des moyens renforcés, afin d'aboutir à un assainissement définitif. ('Le Sénégal ne se laissera pas imposer' 1966: 1)

[Although the struggle that was launched by the police on 25 August 1965 against the beggars, the lepers, the vagrants and the alienated who swarm in our

capital has already enjoyed spectacular results, it is important that it be continued with greater means at its disposal so as to achieve a definitive cleansing of the city.]

In addition, the *New York Times*' reporter in Dakar, noted that a tall aluminium screen had been erected to fence off parts of the Medina so that the slum dwellings there would not be visible to international visitors (Garrison 1966c). Clearly, not all of the Senegalese population was welcome at this gathering of the black world. However, despite this troubled build-up to the festival, it would eventually unfold in a relative calm.

The Festival: 1-24 April 1966

With the formal opening of the festival on Friday, 1 April, Senegal headed into a long weekend of celebration, as Monday, 4 April was a national holiday marking the sixth anniversary of independence. Over those first four days, festival audiences were treated to a wide array of events: a gala performance of Wole Soyinka's play *Kongi's Harvest* at the Daniel Sorano National Theatre; the hugely popular Congolese rumba band OK Jazz played gigs at Sorano and the national stadium; and the weekend culminated on independence day with a grandiose production of the epic play *Les Derniers Jours de Lat Dior*, by Senegalese government minister Amadou Cissé Dia, which featured a cast of hundreds, and met with great popular patriotic fervour. (For a discussion of this and other theatrical performances, see Chapters 3 and 4 below.) Over the next three weeks, the festival programme was packed full of official and unofficial events—'The intensity of the festival itself was evidenced by the simple fact that there were many more things to do each day than was humanly possible'

(Flather 1966: 58)—and, as one might imagine with an event on this scale, it contained material and performances of varying quality—‘The Festival [...] proved sometimes banal, frequently engrossing, and occasionally brilliant’ (Fuller 1966c: 100).

The festival was held in a series of locations around the city. Some of the most high-profile events were held in the newly built venues: in addition to Soyinka’s play, the Sorano Theatre hosted performances of Césaire’s *La Tragédie du roi Christophe*,³⁵ as well as nightly performances of music and dance; the Musée Dynamique was home to the major exhibition of *Negro Art*; the refurbished Centre culturel Daniel Brottier hosted theatre, music and dance; while the Palace Cinema was the venue for the somewhat marginalized film strand. Other strands of the festival saw non-arts venues pressed into service: as was indicated above, the event was formally launched at the National Assembly where the official festival colloquium took place; there was a modern art exhibition at the Palais de Justice (the law courts); both musical and theatrical performances were held at the National Stadium; the African-American gospel singer, Marion Williams performed at the Cathedral; and Dakar town hall was the venue for a modest exhibition on the festival’s ‘Star Country’, Nigeria (indeed, the entire town hall had been handed over as a base for the Nigerian delegation); the *son et lumière* show on the beachfront at Gorée, entitled the *Spectacle féerique de Gorée*, brought the festival out on to the city streets. A highlight of the festival, the *Spectacle féerique* was produced by a Frenchman, Jean Mazel, and written by Haitian author Jean Brierre, who was living in Senegal as a refugee from the Duvalier regime, yet another striking example of Pan-Africanism in operation (for analysis of this show, see Chapter 4). The *Spectacle féerique* presented a series of

³⁵ Visiting US-based academic, Thomas Cassirer, hailed Césaire’s play as the ‘hit of the festival’ (cited in McMahon 2014: 302).

tableaux recounting the history of Senegal, through the slave trade and colonialism, culminating in the nation's very recent independence from France. It took place nightly during the festival (apart from 4 April) and reports indicate that it was seen by over 20,000 people in total, which suggests a more than respectable audience of approximately 1,000 each night.³⁶

The festival may have featured a wide array of cultural forms but, for Senghor, its centrepiece was, without question, the exhibition of Africa's 'classical' art at the Musée Dynamique. By contrast, an exhibition of art works by young African artists left him slightly disappointed. As was explained above, Mveng, Gabus and the other members of the exhibition committee played key practical roles in bringing these artistic treasures to Dakar. But, more than any other aspect of the festival, the exhibition embodied Senghor's vision of Negritude and the role of African culture in a post-imperial landscape; and, as Cédric Vincent clearly demonstrates (Chapter 1), Senghor's willingness to deploy his political and cultural capital was central in persuading the owners of the material to loan their works for the exhibition. The *Negro Art* exhibition managed to assemble some of the finest examples of 'traditional' African art. These were exhibited alongside a selection of works by Picasso, Léger, Modigliani (amongst others), borrowed from the Museum of Modern Art in Paris, in what must have been a fascinating contrapuntal play between traditional sources and the modern masterpieces inspired by them.

This juxtaposition of so-called traditional African arts and European high modernist art, was designed to illustrate both difference and complementarity, which was central to Senghor's cultural philosophy. Negritude was often perceived as turned towards the past, and in the context of decolonization, some interpreted the break with

³⁶ One contemporary newspaper report claimed that the *Spectacle féerique* had attracted a total audience of 23,500 during its three-week run (as Ruth Bush notes in Chapter 4).

European imperial control as signalling the re-emergence of a previously oppressed culture. As I have argued elsewhere (Murphy 2009; 2012), Senghor's vision of post-independence African culture is more complex than such critical views allow. To paraphrase Senghor's vast output on the topic, Negritude was designed to locate and define the black soul: once a new, positive black identity had displaced the old, racist imaginary of the colonial era, Africa could enter confidently and on equal terms into the Universal Civilization of the future in which the entire world would be subject to a process of *métissage* (or mixing). Senghor thus used the festival and, in particular, the *Negro Art* exhibition to reiterate his fundamental belief in both a deep sense of black identity (Negritude) and the need for dialogue and exchange (the emerging 'Universal Civilization').

If Senghor was clear on where he perceived the heart of the festival to reside, he was less forthcoming about (and arguably less interested in) whom he envisaged as the potential audience for the best art that the black world had to offer. Who were the audiences that the festival managed to reach? Was it solely the French-educated cultural elite? As we saw above, the performances on Gorée drew large audiences, but can we conclude that this was one of those moments where the festival reached a wide popular audience? The island is sparsely populated and, in addition to the cost of the ticket to see the performance (400 CFA, the equivalent of roughly \$1.60 at the time), the average *Dakarois* would have needed the funds to pay the shuttle fare for the boat ride from the mainland. It is difficult to imagine anyone except the well-to-do middle-classes or foreign visitors making up the audience.

One 'event' that did draw a huge crowd was the arrival of Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie who was driven through the streets of the city in a motorcade preceded by the presidential mounted cavalry: in Greaves' documentary film, we see thousands

of cheering locals lining the streets to greet him. In addition, most contemporary reports indicate that there was a general air of celebration in Dakar throughout the festival, with impromptu musical and other performances taking place in the streets across the city. Duke Ellington describes listening to bands rehearsing every night from the balcony of his hotel window (1973: 337), while Hoyt Fuller writes of ‘local groups in gay—and sometimes outrageous—costumes [who] enlivened the streets and the *médinas* with explosions of song and dance’ (1966c: 100).³⁷ Dance parties were held across the city, which as Hélène Neveu Kringelbach argues (Chapter 2), were moments when popular (often urban) cultural forms excluded from the festival proper could find a home. The national newspaper *Dakar-Matin* (as well as the UPS newspaper, *L’Unité Africaine*) ran stories on the festival on its front cover virtually every day in the three months leading up to the event and, of course, each day of its duration. It may have been impossible for many ordinary Senegalese to attend festival performances/exhibitions, but there is little doubt that the event caught the attention of the local populace, and even generated genuine enthusiasm amongst a considerable number of them.

Despite these ‘popular’ elements, however, the festival was neither a festival of ‘popular culture’ nor a ‘popular’ festival in terms of the audience it reached (or largely sought to reach). This was no broad celebration of ‘culture’ in which anything goes; it was a celebration of the arts as understood by Senghor (and, by extension, cultural figures of his generation). He was a lover of the ‘high’ arts and they informed his conception of the entire festival, which meant that sculpture, visual art and theatre were in, while most popular arts were largely left out. The festival was to be a showcase for the best the black world could offer and this quality would be judged in

³⁷ Christina McMahon charts a series of impromptu events that took place during the festival (2014: 302). One of the best-remembered of these was the concert given by Duke Ellington’s orchestra at the party hosted by Mercer Cook at the US ambassador’s residence.

formal competitions, grouped into specific formal categories, with panels of experts awarding prizes to those whom the festival deemed to be the cream of the ‘negro’ arts world.

The most noticeable absentee was perhaps contemporary pop music: for example, while ‘classic’ big band jazz (which had enjoyed its heyday in the interwar period) was included, none of the hugely popular soul artists from the Motown label, which had made its major commercial breakthrough three years earlier, were invited to take part. The gap between the emerging popular youth culture and the middle-class, middle-aged tastes of the organizers is clearly visible in a letter of March 1966 to the US festival organizing committee from Motown’s lawyer patiently explaining that ‘Motown Record Corporation is the world’s largest Negro-owned record company’, and going on to elucidate what soul music is and who its greatest stars are.³⁸ Some popular music did make it into the festival, as many of the national ‘orchestres’ were in fact amongst the most commercially successful African musicians of the mid-sixties (not least the eagerly anticipated OK Jazz, cited above), and there was a competition for the best popular music record, although the adjudication of this prize was farmed out to the cultural attachés of various embassies in Dakar.³⁹

Various other factors, in addition to the choice of art forms selected for the festival, are likely to have influenced attendance: the decision to charge an entry fee for performances,⁴⁰ as well as the fact that they were held in what would surely have

³⁸ Schomburg Centre for Research in Black Culture, Archives of the US organizing committee for the First World Festival of Negro Arts, SCM84-32 MG220, Box 1.

³⁹ Many of the score cards used by the cultural attachés to assess these records have been preserved in the festival files in Dakar. Archives Nationales du Sénégal, FMA013.

⁴⁰ The full range of ticket prices was as follows: Sorano Theatre (300-1000 cfa; 1000-1,500 cfa for gala performances); Stadium (150-300 cfa); Cathedral (500 cfa). The lower prices at the stadium may well explain the healthy popular audience at the 4 April performance of *Lat Dior*. Prices listed on ‘Performing Arts Schedule’ Schomburg Centre for Research in Black Culture, Archives of the US organizing committee for the First World Festival of Negro Arts, SCM84-32 MG220, Box 1.

seemed intimidatingly formal venues to many ordinary Senegalese, are all likely to have dissuaded many locals from attending. It is difficult to give precise figures but it seems probable that the total audience for the festival's various performances was around 50,000—various sources cite attendance figures of 20,000 for the festival (see Ficquet and Gallimardet 2009: 22), plus a further 20-25,000 for the *son et lumière* show on Gorée. These are more than respectable audience figures, not least because in the mid-1960s, Dakar's population stood at less than 500,000 (far less than the current estimate of over three million for the greater Dakar region). However, if one considers that there were at least 2-3 shows taking place every day over more than three weeks, they reveal that each one gathered an audience of perhaps several hundred only. Although an event on a massive scale, it did not reach a massive audience. But, then, Senghor's claims regarding the significance of the festival were always centred on the work it set out to do rather than the number of people it might reach.

The festival made a significant financial loss of 158 million CFA (approximately \$500,000 in today's money), largely due to lower than expected income from ticket sales. At the closing press conference for the festival, though, the Senegalese commissioner, Souleymane Sidibé declared (in Senghorian terms): 'Il n'y a pas de déficit en matière culturelle. Les résultats de ce premier Festival ont plus de valeur que tous les milliards du monde' [There is no deficit in cultural terms. The results of this first Festival are worth more than all of the billions in the world] (Ficquet and Gallimardet 2009: 22-23).

The US Delegation, the Cold War and Civil Rights

As was discussed above, the participation of the US delegation was central to Senghor's vision of the festival. The cultural flowering of the Harlem Renaissance and the big band jazz age had played a formative role in shaping Senghor's conception of Negritude in the 1930s: it was thus no great surprise that Langston Hughes and Duke Ellington, two heavyweight representatives of these cultural moments should figure so prominently in Dakar.⁴¹ Not everyone shared this favourable view of the composition of the American delegation, however. For instance, Hoyt Fuller, one of the most astute commentators on the festival, noted general puzzlement at 'the absence of the most exciting of America's black intellectuals' (Fuller 1966c: 102), such as Amiri Baraka (then still known as LeRoi Jones), Ossie Davis and James Baldwin, and equal bemusement at the choice of musical artists: 'Painter Amadou Yoro Ba, a jazz *aficionado*, asked why musicians like Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk did not come to Dakar, and half of Senegal seemed to have assumed that Harry Belafonte should have been present' (102). Such artists were absent for a complex range of reasons. Some related to the aesthetic preferences of Senghor and, it seems likely, his close friend, the US ambassador to Senegal, Mercer Cook. However, there were also more political reasons: the US State Department placed a white socialite Mrs Virginia Inness-Brown at the head of the US organizing committee and, through her, exercised a hidden but vice-like grip on the choice of US participants: no US delegates to Dakar were to drag politics into the cultural sphere by talking about civil rights and the scourge of American racism. Simultaneously, on the other side of the political spectrum, there was a perception amongst more radical black figures (like Belafonte) that Senghor's Senegal was a

⁴¹ In September 1966, Senghor travelled to the United States on an official visit, during which he presented prizes to those African-American artists who had received awards from the festival juries. Mercer Cook provides a detailed account of this triumphal visit, which included the awarding of an honorary degree to Senghor at Howard University to where Cook returned as Professor of French after his time as an ambassador (Cook 1966).

politically conservative regime that should be shunned in favour of more revolutionary states, not least Sekou Touré's Guinea. As Dominique Malaquais and Cédric Vincent reveal (Chapter 10), it is now clear that the US delegation had in part been funded by the CIA who wanted to use the festival to promote a positive image of the United States in Africa. Many of those within and around the US delegation were conscious of a CIA presence in Dakar, although fears were silenced to preserve a sense of unity. However, several years later, as black politics on both sides of the Atlantic became more radicalized, Hoyt Fuller would denounce the 1966 festival, and in particular the US delegation, for allowing itself to fall foul of the US State Department's Cold War machinations:

One of these days, the full awful story of the American secret service's role in the First World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar in 1966 will be told, stripping of honor certain esteemed Black Americans who lent their prestige to the effort to hold to the barest minimum the political impact of that unprecedented event. (Fuller 1971: 92)

As well as its accusations of duplicity, the implication of Fuller's critique was that Negritude was so devoid of radicalism that it could be safely backed by the State Department as lacking any potential threat to the US's global and domestic status quo.

One of the most powerful records of the Dakar festival is the documentary (simply titled *First World Festival of Negro Arts*) by African-American filmmaker William Greaves. A director for the United States Information Agency (USIA), Greaves had been sent to Dakar by his employers to film footage for a newsreel. However, quickly realizing the scale, ambition and importance of the festival,

Greaves instructed his team to shoot as much footage as possible so that a full-length documentary film could be pieced together upon his return to the US (as the footage was filmed in ‘snatched’ moments, the finished documentary is obliged to make widespread use of post-synchronous sound). The film opens with images of Langston Hughes strolling along the fisherman’s beach at Soumbédioune Bay, chatting and joking with the locals, while in the narrative voiceover, we hear Greaves reciting Hughes’s famous poem, ‘The Negro Speaks of Rivers’, its references to the Congo, the Nile, and the Mississippi evoking a deep historical connection between Africa and the Americas. The implications of beginning a film in this fashion about a festival held in, and primarily organized, by an African country, are teased out by Tsitsi Jaji:

The film’s narration is remarkable for its prophetic tone, in part an effect of the off-screen, stage-perfect enunciation of Greaves’s Actor’s Studio-trained voice, but also because of the diction and rhetorical structure of the narration. The poem so aptly captures the agenda of the film that we might not immediately recognize how remarkable it is that a text about Négritude’s most important historical event begins not with a poem by Senghor, nor for that matter, with a reading from Césaire or Damas. Instead Hughes is the focus. This reads two ways: first, as an extension of black international literary connections beyond Négritude proper to include the New Negro movement and beyond [...], and, second, as an indication that the film was designed to present an American and specifically State Department perspective. (Jaji 2014: 94)

This American focus is reinforced when the film gradually segues from the images of Hughes, via an image of a Benin bronze, to shots of Duke Ellington’s band in concert

at the national stadium. The film was edited by the USIA in a manner that clearly emphasized the role of American participants in the festival, and also ensured that the slave trade was never directly evoked (the film contains no footage of the *son et lumière* show on Gorée). The USIA would tour Greaves' film around Anglophone Africa for the next decade and it was, reportedly, its most popular film. By contrast, it remained pretty much unseen in the US for several decades. This example clearly illustrates that the Dakar festival's dialogue between Africa and people of African descent was mediated by powerful forces that a post-imperial world would struggle to overturn.

The festival, somewhat inevitably, also found itself bound up in the complex political wrangling of the Cold War, as both the US and the Soviet Union sought potential allies amongst the newly independent African nations. As was shown above, the US State Department used the festival to demonstrate America's commitment to racial equality, the nation's global reputation having suffered during the protracted Civil Rights struggle back home. The Kennedy administration's decision to appoint a small number of black ambassadors to African nations, not least Mercer Cook, had been an early illustration of this desire to 'win over' black Africa (although, as Cook revealed much later in an interview, such was his disillusionment at the lack of concrete US support for developing African countries that he had in fact sought to resign from his position in late 1965 but had been persuaded to stay on until after the festival).⁴² In particular, the participation of Duke Ellington's orchestra had been facilitated by funding from the US State Department which had, by the mid-1960s, been deploying its Jazz Ambassadors programme for a decade as part of its Cold War

⁴² Cook reveals his disappointment at the lack of State Department support for US diplomatic and developmental initiatives in Africa in a fascinating 1981 interview conducted as part of the Phelps-Stokes oral history project looking at the role of former Black Chiefs of Mission. A copy of the interview is held in the Mercer Cook Papers at the Moorland-Springarn Research Centre, Howard University, Washington, DC, Box 157-5.

diplomacy, sending black artists around the world to represent the United States while, back home, they did not enjoy even the most basic civil rights (see von Eschen 2004).

For its part, the Soviet Union, which consistently underlined US racism in its pitch to newly independent black countries in Africa, was keen to use the festival to increase its influence in Africa. Without a black diaspora of its own, it could not play a formal role in the festival itself but, as was mentioned above, it did help the beleaguered hosts in their desperate attempts to secure sufficient hotel accommodation by lending them a cruise ship: as a *New York Times* journalist wryly reported, the Soviets had prepared a small exhibition to entertain the festival goers housed on the ship (including some Americans): ‘As the guests sip their vodka on the main deck, they are also treated to an exhibit extolling Russian-Negro brotherhood. Several display boards highlight the fact that the Russians never engaged in the slave trade while guess-who did’ (cited in Wofford 2009: 185). The Soviets also sent their distinguished and charismatic poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko, a critic of Stalinism who benefited from the relative openness of the Khrushchev regime and enjoyed rock star status in the mid-1960s. Senghor was always happy to meet a fellow poet but asked Yevtushenko to wait until the conclusion of the festival proper to conduct a public reading of his work: this was a festival of ‘negro art’ after all.

The Soviets had sent journalists to cover the festival and newsreel footage shot in Dakar was later pulled together to create the documentary film, *African Rhythms* (which includes footage of a meeting between Yevtushenko and Senghor). Whereas the use of black-and-white film stock and the solemn voiceover in Greaves’ film had given his documentary an epic and somewhat nostalgic feel, the Soviet film was shot in colour and it captures more of the spontaneity and excitement of the performances.

Given that the Soviets did not share American qualms about representations of slavery, the film also captures footage of the *son et lumière* show on Gorée. Finally, the film also shows us the street scenes that are largely absent from the Greaves film: ‘The Russian narration guides viewers through numerous Dakar neighborhoods into which the festival’s events spilled over in outdoor performances, and emphasizes the event’s significance as a “reunification” of peoples severed by colonization’ (Jaji 2014: 96). This street-level ‘reunification’ of Africans and those of African descent reminds us that the festival unfolded as a living performance of the African renaissance, one that extended far beyond the museums, theatres and concert halls of the official festival venues.

One of the unexpected encounters facilitated by the festival involved Langston Hughes and Yevgeny Yevtushenko. The Russian, prevented from performing during the festival, had a lot of time on his hands, and Hughes later recalled:

‘We had dinner on the ship, with an endless supply of Georgian champagne. After that, for about a week, we went out drinking every night.’ One companion in their revels was the Harlem-born filmmaker William Greaves, who [...] was making a documentary movie about the festival. ‘We used to ride around in Yevtushenko’s limousine’, Bill Greaves recalled, ‘drinking pretty heavily and having a lot of fun’. (Rampersad 1988: 401)

As with Senghor’s poetic encounter with Yevtushenko (captured in *African Rhythms*), this anecdote suggests ‘that shared poetic interests overrode national and geopolitical differences’ (Jaji 2014: 105). So much then for Hoyt Fuller’s vision of the US delegation as Cold War patsies serving a State Department agenda. Hughes’ account

of US-Soviet ‘fraternization’ reminds us to be wary of excessively ideological readings of complex personal encounters. The complexity of such personal interaction must also be traced in relation to the role of Negritude within the festival. What might a wider examination of some of the many personal encounters generated by the festival reveal to us about the performance of pan-Africanism (to cite Shepperson’s uncapitalized sense of the term) as lived by individuals rather than as imagined by the festival organizers?

Pan-Africanism and pan-Africanism: tracing personal encounters at Dakar 66

While the 1966 festival (like the other mega-festivals of the 1960s and 70s that followed) was in large part driven by a national government keen to promote the officially sanctioned account of its relevance and significance, various cultural actors, performances and works of art refused to confirm to the dominant ideological narrative, despite careful attempts to police festival programming. Bringing together thousands of participants and audience members inevitably gave rise to a series of personal encounters the narrative of which simply could not be regulated by the Senegalese state or other supporters of Negritude who wished to preserve a specific archive of the festival. As is demonstrated by various contributions to this volume, the encounters generated when thousands of cultural actors are brought together in one city can often take highly unexpected forms. For example, H el ene Neveu Kringlebach (Chapter 2) charts the ‘popular cosmopolitanism’ of the dance parties and street events in Dakar, while Tsitsi Jaji (Chapter 5) traces non-elite accounts of the festival in popular magazines. In the process, both authors recover the voices of female participants (mainly dancers) in the festival, whose stories are often occluded. Neveu Kringlebach also notes the impact on individual Senegalese dancers of witnessing the

modernity of the Alvin Ailey dance troupe's performances, which would influence their vision of African dance. The story of the vast Pan-African festivals of the 1960s-70s will thus remain incomplete if it does not include the experiences of a wide range of individual actors alongside the over-arching national/transnational narratives promoted by the organizing nation state. To return to Shepperson's terms, we must attempt to capture the story of pan-Africanism alongside that of Pan-Africanism.

Given that William Greaves appears from the Hughes-Yevtushenko encounter cited above to have enjoyed the social aspects of his stay in Dakar, it is ironic that his documentary deploys throughout a solemn, epic tone from which such spontaneous and potentially subversive 'fun' is conspicuously absent. The film does, however, provide us with a glimpse of some of the many human encounters that must have occurred at the festival, including its opening scene (discussed above) in which Langston Hughes, speaks with the fishermen on Soumbédioune Beach. Duke Ellington later wrote in his memoirs about the desire for direct human contact that had been prompted by his performances: 'the cats in the bleachers really dig it. You can see them rocking back there while we play. When we are finished, they shout approval and dash for backstage where they hug and embrace us, some of them with tears in their eyes' (Ellington 1973: 338). Ellington's memoir also reveals that, while in Senegal, he became good friends with the Senegalese artist Pape Ibra Tall, some of whose tapestries he brought back to the US with him. The festival elicited in Ellington a desire to communicate on a personal and cultural level with Africans: in preparation for the event, he had even composed a new song, 'La Plus belle Africaine' and, as his son (a trumpeter in his father's band), told the *Los Angeles Times*, 'Sam Woodyard, our drummer, was a big hit. [...] He's spent a lot of time studying African rhythms, so

the natives got a big kick out of hearing their own licks come back home.⁴³ In addition to these individual examples, the American Society for African Culture had chartered a plane taking over 200 visitors to Dakar for the festival and one can only guess at the numerous personal encounters to which this gave rise.⁴⁴ At the dawning of the jet age, Africa was now for the first time, within easy reach for an emerging African-American middle-class.

The *PANAFEST Archive*, cited above, has been guided by principles that chime with Shepperson's ideas on the co-existence of pan-Africanism/Pan-Africanism. The project has consulted the 'official', institutional archives of the four major Pan-African festivals of the 1960s-1970s (where these exist) and then, in a second phase, shifted from macro to micro-history via the stories of individual participants from each of the four festivals. Filmed interviews with participants feature on the project website, which allow us to gain a better sense of many of the diverse, personal and cultural encounters that were facilitated by such events. As Dominique Malaquais and Cédric Vincent, the co-directors of the project, state (Chapter 10), their work is 'grounded in a definition of archives as labile entities fixed neither in space nor time—a definition that accords with the complex, multifaceted and changing nature of Pan-Africanism itself'.

For Léopold Senghor, the festival was designed to act as a living 'illustration of Negritude' (Senghor 1977: 58), the moment when the theory about which he had written at such great length would come alive. The examples above demonstrate, however, that this living illustration, this 'performance of Pan-Africanism', did not

⁴³ This information is taken from a press clipping contained in the Mercer Cook Papers, Box 157-18, File 5. The article, 'Duke's Triple Play: Africa, Hollywood, Japan', by Leonard Feather, is taken from from the *Los Angeles Times*, and is undated, although from the context it would appear to be from the summer of 1966.

⁴⁴ A glimpse of this 'personal' encounter with Africa can be seen in the many notes of thanks sent to Mercer Cook, not least for the party he hosted at the ambassador's residence. See Mercer Cook Papers, Boxes 157-1, 157-2, 157-3.

result in a monolithic assertion of Negritude as a unifying black identity. The selection for the US delegation of abstract artists, who refused to see themselves as ‘black’ artists, is a classic case in point. Discussing the issues surrounding their selection, Tobias Wofford has argued that:

Rather than being situated outside the rhetoric of racial unity put forward by Negritude, the diversity of works in the US delegation mirrored the larger space of the festival as a site for a dialogue about the possibility of creating a global blackness. (2009: 186)

The festival was an occasion to question, challenge, debate, explore rather than simply to assert or passively accept various conceptions of a global black identity/community. There was no consensus about what Pan-Africanism meant or what role culture should play in the period after empire: rather the festival was a site in which various actors could come together to perform their own understanding of black culture and identity in complex and often contradictory ways.

Was Dakar 66 really a Festival of Negritude?

Despite the multifaceted nature of the First World Festival of Negro Arts, it has nonetheless largely been remembered as ‘Senghor’s festival’ and a celebration of Negritude. Indeed, a perusal of the festival colloquium proceedings reveals that Senghor had gathered together in Dakar a group of cultural actors who were, at the very least, broadly supportive of Negritude as a project, although (as we have seen at various points already in this introduction) closer examination reveals it did not enjoy

hegemonic status either in the colloquium or in the festival more widely. To what extent, then, was the Dakar event a festival of Negritude?

That an international cultural festival as complex and diverse as Dakar 66 has regularly been perceived as having espoused a hegemonic political-cultural ideology is a shorthand interpretation that stems not only from the accounts of Senghor's 'friends' (see, for example, Malraux's speech cited above) but also from those of his 'enemies'. In particular, the juxtaposition of the 1966 Dakar festival with the Algiers festival of 1969, at which Senghor and Negritude were loudly denounced by delegates at its colloquium as outdated and reactionary, has led to polarized understandings of both events. Samuel D. Anderson and Andrew Apter (Chapters 6 and 7) closely examine the very real ideological opposition between the 1966 and 1969 festivals. At the same time, we must remain conscious of the continuities that might be concealed by these ideological differences. As we saw above, underlying all of the major Pan-African festivals of the 1960s and 1970s was a development discourse that placed culture at the heart of the modernization of post-imperial Africa.

Far from the hegemonic espousal of Negritude, the 1966 festival witnessed many different performances of black identity and culture. For instance, US speakers at the festival colloquium, including Langston Hughes and Katherine Dunham, did not actively endorse Negritude, a concept about which they continued to harbour strong reservations.⁴⁵ Indeed, Hughes's celebration of African-American 'soul' as the American equivalent of Negritude constitutes a striking example of the 'décalage' that Brent Hayes Edwards has identified in communication between Africa and its diaspora: strongly similar ideas but understood and expressed in often quite different ways. Even Aimé Césaire, the man who coined the term 'Negritude', spent part of his

⁴⁵ The exiled South African poet, Keorapetse Kgositsile, who attended the festival with the US delegation, was scathing in his critique of the festival's refusal to engage with burning political issues (see Ratcliff 2014: 178-79).

speech to the festival colloquium expressing just how tired he was of both the word and the constant requirement to define and/or defend it.

Elizabeth Harney's work on the arts scene in post-independence Senegal underlines the fact that, although Negritude was official state cultural policy, Senghor's fostering of the arts in fact led to the development of a cultural scene in which oppositional voices were able to emerge:

[P]erhaps the aptest model for understanding the field of production during the postindependence period is one that emphasizes the intersection of histories and zones of practice wherein those working under government patronage shared physical space and a cultural climate with those seeking to subvert the system's premises. [...] The avant-gardist and anti-Négritude movement was thus enabled by Senghor's commitment to Négritude arts. (Harney 2004: 12-13)

Similarly, the 1966 festival provided a platform for artists with political and cultural visions that clashed with those of Senghor. Not only did they gain a platform, but some of them won official festival prizes. In particular, his compatriot, the Marxist novelist and filmmaker, Ousmane Sembene won prizes for literature and cinema (see Murphy 2015). The success of Sembene's work at the festival created something of a problem for those critics, scholars and journalists who wished for the event to be perceived as the apotheosis of Negritude. In the June 1966 edition of the monthly cultural magazine *Bingo*, Paulin Joachim engaged in a less than subtle process of recuperation in his ambiguously titled editorial, 'La Négritude, connais pas' (1966b) [Negritude, never heard of it]. Joachim claims that Wole Soyinka, Tchicaya U'Tamsi and Sembene, all of whom had previously signalled their disapproval of Negritude but

who had now won prizes at the festival have been forced to see the error of their ways, as though winning prizes at what he explicitly views as a festival of Negritude is clear evidence of their false consciousness.

The tenuous nature of Joachim's argument is revealed in a profile of Sembene later in the same issue (Joachim 1966d). However, although, Sembene is more charitable in this interview than he is in many of his other statements about Negritude, his remarks are consistent with his usual Fanonian reading of Negritude as a historically contingent concept whose time had passed with the achievement of independence. What is perhaps most remarkable is that Joachim appears to share Sembene's reading of Negritude, for in an article earlier in the same issue, tellingly titled 'Où va la culture négro-africaine?' [Where is Black African Culture Heading?], Joachim positions the Dakar Festival both as a celebration, and the culmination of, Negritude. Having outlined the nature of 'classical' black civilization, Africa can now look to the future:

Ce Festival des Arts est un tournant. La nuit tombe [...] sur une étape [dans notre développement] qui fut certes douloureuse, mais exultante. Le jour se lève sur une nouvelle ère où il ne sera plus question d'encenser éperdument le Nègre, [...] ni de chanter l'Afrique comme la terre préservée ou comme le berceau de l'humanité. (Joachim 1966c: 13)

This Festival of the Arts is a turning point. Night is now falling [...] on a stage [in our development] that was painful but exhilarating. The dawn of a new era is upon us, one in which it will no longer be a question of mindlessly praising the

Black man [...] nor will we constantly be obliged to praise Africa as the promised land or the cradle of humanity.

Essentially, for Joachim, the festival was the real enactment of the metaphorical process that Senghor had often evoked in relation to Negritude, that of storing Africa's soul in a safe place in order to meet the challenges of a future globalized world. This is what Senghor viewed in the Musée Dynamique exhibition as the celebration of Africa's 'Classical' age: what shape the future of African culture would take and how it might lead to the development of the continent was at the heart of a more rancorous debate that would rage all through the subsequent Pan-African festivals of the 1960s-70s.

The Legacy of 1966: from Dakar 1966 to FESMAN 2010

The First World Festival of Negro Arts clearly announced its pioneering status in its title but it also implied that its aim was to inaugurate a regular gathering to celebrate black arts and culture. The Second Festival of Black Arts and Culture finally took place in Lagos in 1977 but, as Andrew Apter demonstrates (Chapter 7), it did so more in a spirit of rupture than continuity with the cultural agenda identified by Senghor eleven years earlier. Hostility towards Negritude had been expressed, largely from a Marxist perspective, by many at the Algiers colloquium; in Lagos, this hostility took a somewhat different form and was based on a desire for the festival to provide a platform for all of Africa, as well as a more widely understood 'black world', encompassing the dark-skinned people of Papua New Guinea, amongst others. As the discussions grew more rancorous, Alioune Diop, who was there to represent

continuity with the First World Festival, found himself unceremoniously moved from the organizing committee.

In the mid-1980s, the respected Senegalese academic Pathé Diagne was charged by President Abdou Diouf with exploring the feasibility of Senegal hosting another edition of the festival but, in the era of Structural Adjustment Programmes and IMF-imposed budget cuts, the project finally ran into the sands (see Ficquet and Gallimardet 2009: 24; Vincent 2008c: 159).⁴⁶ In the same period, the Musée Dynamique, which constituted the most tangible legacy of the 1966 festival, became the most visible symbol of the decline of Senghor's cultural programme and the apparent demise of his vision of culture as the motor of development at the heart of the African renaissance. After functioning for over a decade as one of Africa's most respected art galleries (hosting exhibitions of work by Picasso and Chagall, amongst others), the museum was suddenly and inexplicably transformed by Senghor into a dance school. Then, in the late 1980s, it lost its artistic vocation entirely, when Diouf's government turned it into a law court: it today houses Senegal's Supreme Court.

But is Senghor's vision of culture really dead? Senegal hosted the Third World Festival of Negro Arts (FESMAN) in December 2010, defiantly announcing the arrival of the African renaissance more than four decades after Senghor had made almost identical claims.⁴⁷ Can we conclude from this that FESMAN 2010 was an inherently belated gesture, a nostalgic re-run of an event that made sense in the context of post-independence utopianism but that seemed outdated in the early twenty-first century? Or should we interpret President Abdoulaye Wade's

⁴⁶ Such are the difficulties in organizing festivals and biennales that one critic has argued for the creation of a history of these 'absent' or 'incomplete' events (Vincent 2008d).

⁴⁷ In a sign of the evolving terminological debates, the full title in French of FESMAN 2010 was *Festival mondial des arts nègres*, while its English title was Festival of Black and African Culture, which saw the adoption of the terms that had been used at FESTAC '77.

organization of the festival and his construction of the monumental (and highly controversial) *Monument de la Renaissance Africaine* in Dakar as evidence that Pan-Africanism is still alive and kicking or perhaps in ruder health than ever given that FESMAN attracted 6,000 participants from over 50 countries (Pool 2011)? Certainly, many Senegalese commentators in particular have opted for the former interpretation, viewing FESMAN 2010 as an opportunistic attempt by Wade to recuperate some of the cultural capital of his predecessor: by many accounts, a man with a gargantuan ego, Wade had reputedly long envied Senghor's status as a man of learning.⁴⁸ Certain critics of FESMAN have decried the event as embodying the 'politics of self-aggrandizement' (Niang 2012: 32) of a new, neo-liberal elite who have replaced the patrician leaders of the independence era: '[FESMAN 2010] provided a metaphor for the hypnotic capacity of mega-events to breed a sense of achievement in a ruling elite resolutely turned outward and collectively obsessed with wealth and power' (Niang 2012: 36). In addition, critics often cite the lack of a coherent intellectual framework for the festival and, indeed, its colloquium gave a prominent place to the strident Afrocentrism of Molefi Kete Asante, Théophile Obenga and Runiko Rashidi and their essentialist views about a transnational black culture. Furthermore, much of the organization of FESMAN was catastrophic with many events simply cancelled at the last minute, while the government of new president Macky Sall (who defeated Wade in elections in Spring 2012) uncovered major discrepancies in the festival's accounts which appeared to indicate that there had been widespread embezzling of funds.⁴⁹

FESMAN 2010 may have lacked a single, guiding philosophy but, in many ways, this is a reflection of the contemporary fragmentation or diversity (depending on one's point of view) of thought on black culture and identity. In addition, as was

⁴⁸ See, for example, the two strident critiques of FESMAN 2010 in a special issue of *African Theatre* on festivals (Dieye 2012; Niang 2012).

⁴⁹ For a first-hand account of my own experiences at the festival, see Murphy (2011).

argued above, the 1966 festival only appears in retrospect to have been a unanimous celebration of Negritude, whereas in fact a conscious process of recuperation had been required to defuse the critiques of the likes of Soyinka and Sembene. FESMAN 2010 was a flawed but rich and diverse performance of Pan-Africanism, which was responding to the changed landscape of the early twenty-first century. As I have argued elsewhere (Murphy 2014), the 2010 festival might charitably be interpreted as an attempt to democratize the understanding of black art and culture. While the 1966 festival was marked by its explicitly selective approach to the arts, FESMAN 2010 showcased a highly eclectic mix of African cultural forms with a strong emphasis on popular arts, especially pop music, as well as elements of African culture defined far more broadly. Over the three weeks of the festival (it ran from 10-31 December), a wide array of events took place, and, unlike the 1966 event, absolutely everything was free to the public. There was an impressive exhibition of contemporary art at the Biscuiterie de la Médina (featuring works by the renowned British-Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare); a low-key exhibition of ‘traditional’ art at the newly renovated IFAN Museum (a major contrast to the richness of the *Negro Art* exhibition in 1966); dance shows at the Maison de la Culture Doua Seck, which also housed Mondomix’s outstanding, high-tech interactive exhibition on black music. Every night, there was a free, open-air concert at the independence monument in Colobane, and huge crowds turned up to see the likes of Youssou N’dour, Salif Keïta, Akon and Diam’s. (These concerts were broadcast live by the state television channel, RTS.) There were also theatre, architecture and literature programmes. Football matches at the national stadium, featuring Brazilian and Senegalese club and national (junior) teams drew crowds of over 20,000, while the magnificent opening ceremony in the same arena

drew a huge audience of at last 30,000. By any standards, this was a big and incredibly eclectic festival that sought to engage with a wide range of audiences.

What is more, in drawing thousands of participants and festival audiences to Dakar, the event permitted more of the personal encounters that facilitate the performance of pan-Africanism (in Shepperson's terms). FESMAN 2010 may have been marked by a recuperative and nostalgic approach to the archive but this did not foreclose the possibility of re-igniting some of the utopian energies central to earlier manifestations of the Pan-Africanist project. Shortly after the conclusion of FESMAN, its British artistic director Kwame Kwei-Armah claimed of his experience in Dakar that:

It was like the UN in the artists' village [...]. You sit in the cafeteria and Mauritanians are jamming, the Guadeloupeans are giving impromptu readings—it's artistic heaven. Being able to take in the great art, and then being able to chill out with world-class artists with my children has probably been the highlight of my life so far. (Kwei-Armah, cited in Pool 2011)

It is reported that 'Kwei-Armah was asked to curate on the recommendation of the legendary Senegalese musician Baaba Maal, who had seen several of his plays' (Pool 2011): a Senegalese musician appreciating the work of a British playwright of Caribbean descent is very much p/Pan-Africanism in action. Although the success of FESMAN 2010 as a well-oiled mega-event may be questioned, it appears evident that it still managed to provide a forum in which p/Pan-Africanist energies were tapped into by Kwei-Armah and many others present.

We must recall though that the main legacy of Dakar 1966 has not been the proliferation of mega-festivals but rather the proliferation of smaller cultural events. Senegal alone now holds roughly 100 cultural festivals each year, although they all tend to follow a model whose foundations were laid by the Dakar event. As Ferdinand De Jong argues in his contribution to this volume (Chapter 8), ‘the cultural festival as a genre of cultural performance has been appropriated to claim global membership by serving as both channel of modernity as well as “archive” of tradition’. As was the case with the 1966 event, the modern African cultural festival is simultaneously past- and future-oriented. For her part, Elizabeth Harney (Chapter 9) explores the ‘persistent engagement with and appeal of re-fashioning African modernist and vanguardist discourses of FESMAN ’66 to suit the workings of the local and global art worlds of today’. The pull of the local and the global, the modern and the traditional, still echoes through African cultural festival. The First World Festival of Negro Arts constituted a key moment of transition from the colonial to the postcolonial exhibition, and it is one that continues to inspire and challenge cultural actors in highly varied ways.

Conclusion

From an early twenty-first century perspective, the Pan-African political and cultural initiatives of the 1960s and 1970s often appear strikingly utopian. However, the Pan-African ideal has continued to inspire various cultural and political actors on both sides of the Atlantic and there has been a renewed academic interest in Pan-Africanism over recent years. As Tsitsi Jaji argues: ‘to speak of pan-Africanism as an ongoing project now seems outmoded. Yet it is precisely because the challenges of new forms of exploitation are so acute and pervasive that renewed perspectives on

liberation movements and solidarity are so urgently needed' (Jaji 2014: 8). It is thus important for us to revisit the First World Festival of Negro Arts not solely to explore what it tells us about the past but also in terms of the lessons we might learn for our present and our future. This chimes with ideas that Gary Wilder has outlined in another context:

I am not primarily concerned with futures whose promise faded after imperfect implementation nor with those that corresponded to a world, or to hopes, that no longer exist but instead with futures that were once imagined but never came to be, alternatives that might have been and whose unrealized emancipatory potential may now be recognized and reawakened as durable and vital legacies. (2015: 16)

The series of cultural festivals in the era of decolonization, of which the Dakar event was the first, marked some of the most profound articulations of Pan-Africanism. As has been argued throughout this introduction, the 1966 festival constituted a hugely significant *performance* of Pan-Africanism, acting as a living illustration of shared values and facilitating concrete encounters between Africans and members of the diaspora in which a profound sense of cultural belonging was performed. What is so significant about the First World Festival of Negro Arts (and each of the Pan-African festivals that has taken place since then) is that it provided a context in which the Pan-Africanism could be performed in ways meaningful to a wide range of people. Even those doubtful about the value of Negritude, such as Ousmane Sembene, Wole Soyinka and Langston Hughes, were willing to attend because of the historic cultural and political possibilities opened up by the simple fact of being there. This left them

open to processes of recuperation but they thought it worth the risk so that they too could play their part in a global dialogue about the black world. Ultimately, though, perhaps what is most important about the festival is that took place at all:

The Festival became a success by the mere fact that it opened, that it was held at all—for here were all but a few of the independent nations of Africa and the Caribbean, most of them desperately poor and with monumental problems, implicitly admitting that they nevertheless are bound together by certain historical and cultural imperatives, and that they wish to affirm and to strengthen those bonds. (Fuller 1966c: 101)

Over the past 50 years, it has sometimes appeared as though the significance of the First World Festival of Negro Arts been entirely lost from view. However, the past decade has seen a revival in scholarly as well as public awareness of this landmark event.⁵⁰ This volume seeks to consolidate that resurgence in interest and to restore Dakar 66 to its rightful place at the heart of our understanding of a transnational black culture and identity in the second half of the twentieth century.

⁵⁰ At the time of writing, the project team behind the PANAFEST Archive have just launched an exhibition at the Quai Branly Museum in Paris, *Dakar 66: Chronicle of a Pan-African Festival* (16 February-15 May 2016), to coincide with the 50th anniversary. For an outline of the exhibition, see www.quai Branly.fr/en/exhibitions-and-events/at-the-museum/exhibitions/event-details/e/dakar-66-36335 (consulted on 8 February 2016). On 23 January 2016, a screening of the Soviet film, *African Rhythms* (billed as *African Rhythmus*), was held at the Sorano Theatre in Dakar. However, at the time of writing, it is unclear whether the festival's anniversary will be commemorated officially in Dakar beyond this screening.