Ousmane Sembène and the Politics of Culture

Undoubtedly one of Africa’s most influential first generation of writers and filmmakers, Ousmane Sembène’s creative works of fiction as well as his films have been the subject of a considerable number of scholarly articles. The schemas of reading applied to Sembène’s oeuvre (novels, short stories and films) have, in the main, focused either on his militant posture against colonialism, his disenchantment with African leadership, or his infatuation with documenting the past in an attempt to present a balanced and nuanced view of African history. While these studies, unquestionably contribute to a better understanding of his works, they collectively ignore Sembène’s relentless preoccupation with culture in his entire career as a writer and filmmaker. The collection of essays in Sembène and the Politics of Culture sets out to fill that gap as the contributors at once foreground Sembène’s fixation on the centrality of culture in the articulation of the discourse of national consciousness and reevaluate his intellectual and artistic legacy within an overarching framework of African liberation. The contributors critically reassess the ideological underpinnings of Sembène’s thoughts, his role as one of the foundational pillars of African cultural production, and his relevance in current discourses of nationhood. They do so through a wide variety of interdisciplinary approaches that draw on linguistics, feminist theory, film theory, historiography, Marxist criticism, psychoanalysis and a host of other approaches that give novel insights in the critical analysis of the works under study. In the part entitled “Testimonies,” a collection of conversations with people who worked closely with Sembene, each of the interlocutors provide illuminating insights into the man’s life and work. The variety of themes and critical approaches in this critical anthology will certainly be of interest not only to students and scholars of African literature and cinema at various levels of intellectual and cultural sophistication but also anyone interested in the analysis of the nexus between power, culture, and the discourse of liberation.

The Films of Ousmane Sembène

Tidiane Fofana 2012 Ousmane Sembène was a Senegalese film director, producer, and writer whom the Los Angeles Times considered one of the greatest authors of Africa. Often called the "father of African film," Sembène strongly believed that African films should be geared primarily toward educating the masses and making the philosophical quandaries and political issues contested by elites accessible to the poor and those with little to no formal education. Although Sembène's central aim was to reach African audiences and encourage a dialogue within Senegalese society, his films are also extraordinarily effective in introducing non-African audiences to many of the most intriguing cultural issues and social changes facing African people today. The films are not fast paced in the manner of many Hollywood films. Rather, they are deliberately unhurried and driven by the narrative. They show actual ways of life, social
relations, and patterns of communication and consumption, and the joys and tribulations of West African people. For people who have never been to Africa, the films offer an accessible first gaze. For those who have visited or lived in an African culture, the films provide a way to explore African society and culture more profoundly. Sembene was an independent filmmaker, solely and totally responsible for the content of his films, which were inspired by the realities of daily life. This focus on microcosmic social relations and day-to-day politics is so central to Sembene art, his films breed provocative commentary on social, historical, political, economic, linguistic, religious, and gender issues relevant to Senegalese society. Because of his concern with daily Senegalese life, Sembene targeted the common people whose voices are seldom or never heard. In fact, depicting the struggles and concerns of average Senegalese people was a central preoccupation of his films, as he himself has articulated. This study examines the artistry of Sembene’s films as well as the multitude of signifying elements Sembene uses in them to communicate in less direct ways with his audience. The book interprets the meaning conveyed by images through their placement and function within the films, and it contributes new insights into Sembene’s interpretations of cultural practices and the meanings he ascribes to social behaviors. It examines how Sembene uses language, mise-en-scene, cinematography, and creative editing to evoke the emotions of his targeted audience. Several chapters in the volume also demonstrate how the many ironies and political economic tensions that are so characteristic of Sembene’s work are best understood within the sociocultural context of each film’s production. Hence, to make sense of Sembene’s cinema, one must be willing to read beyond the denoted meaning of the storyline and to dig into the cultural significance of the carefully selected and manipulated codes and images.

The Films of Ousmane Sembene-Amadou T. Fofana 2005

Social and Political Commitment in the Works of Ousmane Sembene-Alphonse Kwawisi Tekpetey 1973

Ousmane Sembène-Samba Gadjigo 2010-05-06

Samba Gadjigo presents a unique personal portrait and intellectual history of novelist and filmmaker Ousmane Sembène. Though Sembène has persistently deflected attention away from his personality, his life, and his past, Gadjigo has had unprecedented access to the artist and his family. This book is the first comprehensive biography of Sembène and contributes a critical appraisal of his life and art in the context of the political and social influences on his work. Beginning with Sembène’s life in Casamance, Senegal, and ending with his militant career as a dockworker in Marseilles, Gadjigo places Sembène into the context of African colonial and postcolonial culture and charts his achievements in film and literature. This landmark book reveals the inner workings of one of Africa’s most distinguished and controversial figures.

Xala-Ousmane Sembène 1997-08-01 "Ousmane’s satirical fable tells of the downfall of El Hadji, a member of the African elite who have taken the place of white businessmen in Francophone Africa. The protagonist is stricken with xala--impotence--in a raucous bedroom scene with his new young wife. The novel subtly traces the interplay among his three wives as El Hadji desperately tries to overcome the affliction. In his obsession he resorts to primitive incantation, and his unscrupulous business associates cynically reject their former friend." -- cover.

Social and political commitment in the works of Ousmane Sembene-Alphonse K. Tekpetey 1979

Ousmane Sembène-Ousmane Sembène 2008 "Ousmane Sembe??ne: Interviews collects conversations from the mid-1960s to 2005, and spans the breadth of his filmmaking career while also touching on his literary work and his role as a public intellectual. Many of these interviews appear here in English for the first time and come from French, German, African diaspora, and Senegalese periodicals."-publisher website.

Women, Tradition and Modernity-Yasmin Elderby 2007

The Last of the Empire-Ousmane Sembène 1983 The government of an African country is
thrown into turmoil when the President mysteriously disappears and a coup attempt begins to seem likely.

The Cinema of Ousmane Sembene, a Pioneer of African Film - Françoise Pfaff 1984 The films of Ousmane Sembene are powerful representations of the newly emerging black African cinema. In this interpretive study of his most significant films, Françoise Pfaff examines Sembene's pioneering efforts over the last two decades. While focusing primarily on the realistic and symbolic levels of his works, the stylistic and technical aspects are also examined. Pfaff discusses the aesthetic, sociopolitical, and metaphysical values of Sembene's oeuvre within its African context. His depiction of the tension between traditional and modern African life is explored. Pfaff includes film stills and excerpts from interviews with Sembene and other African filmmakers. She concludes with comments about Sembene's contributions to our intercultural heritage.

A Call to Action - Sheila Petty 1996

Sembene - David Murphy 2000-01-01 This study of Sembene Ousmane gives an overview of his work in fiction and on screen.


Social and Political Commitments in the Films of Sembene Ousmane - McDonald Ndombo Kale 1980

Niiwam ; And, Taaw - Ousmane Sembène 1991

Black Docker - Ousmane Sembène 1987 Set in the 1950s, this book tells of Diaw Falla, a docker for whom work exists merely to finance his true obsession - his writing. As his novel nears completion, he meets Ginette Tontisanne whose good connections ensure he is published - but, to his dismay, under her name.

Tribal Scars and Other Stories - Ousmane Sembène 1974

African Cinema - Manthia Diawara 1992 Film production in Africa has a complex background. A mere listing of films made by Africans, although helpful, would not clarify the structural and political issues.

Ousmane Sembene - Ousmane Sembène 1993 Celebrates the work of Sembene, the African filmmaker and writer. This work contains critical essays on his oeuvre and is followed by a series of presentations by black writers. There are also remarks on his film Camp de Thiaroye, an interview, and a bibliography of Sembene's novels and films.

Fetishism and Curiosity - Laura Mulvey 2019-07-25 Writer and film-maker Laura Mulvey is widely regarded as one of the most challenging and incisive contemporary cultural theorists, credited for incorporating film theory, psychoanalysis and feminism. Part of the pathbreaking 1970s generation of British film theorists and independent film-makers, she came to prominence with her classic essay on the pleasures - and displeasures - of narrative cinema, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema'. She went on to make her own avant-garde films, co-directed with Peter Wollen, and to write further, greatly influential works - including this one. Fetishism and Curiosity contains writings which range from analyses of Xala, Citizen Kane and Blue Velvet, to an extended engagement with the creations of Native American artist Jimmie Durham and the feminist photographer Cindy Sherman. Essays explore the concept of fetishism as developed by Marx and Freud, and how it relates to the ways in which artistic texts work. Mulvey returns to some of the knottier issues in contemporary cultural theory, especially the links between looking, fantasy and theorisation on the one hand, and the processes of historical change on the other. What are the modes of address that characterise 'societies of the spectacle'? How might 'curiosity' be directed towards deciphering the politics of popular culture? These are just some of the questions raised in this brilliant and subtle collection. Published as part of the BFI Silver series, this new edition of Mulvey's classic work of feminist theory features a new, specially commissioned introduction and stills from the
Xala - Ousmane Sembène 1983

Cinema in a Democratic South Africa - Lucia Saks 2010
Lucia Saks uses South African cinema as a lens through which to view cultural changes resulting from the end of apartheid in 1994. She examines how media transformed the meaning of race and nation during this period and argues that, as apartheid was disbanded and new racial constructs allowed, South Africa quickly sought a new mode of representation as a way to distance itself from the violence and racism of the half-century prior, as well as to demonstrate stability amid social disruption. This rapid search for a new way to identify and portray itself is what Saks refers to as the race for representation. She contextualizes this race in terms of South African history, the media, apartheid, sexuality, the economy, community, early South African cinema, and finally speculates about the future of "counter-cinema" in present-day South Africa.

Souffles-Anfas - Olivia C. Harrison 2015-11-25
Souffles-Anfas: A Critical Anthology from the Moroccan Journal of Culture and Politics introduces and makes available, for the first time in English, an incandescent corpus of experimental leftist writing from North Africa. Founded in 1966 by Abdellatif Laâbi and a small group of avant-garde Moroccan poets and artists and banned in 1972, Souffles-Anfas was one of the most influential literary, cultural, and political reviews to emerge in postcolonial North Africa. An early forum for tricontinental postcolonial thought and writing, the journal published texts ranging from experimental poems, literary manifestos, and abstract art to political tracts, open letters, and interviews by contributors from the Maghreb, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and the Americas. The essays, poems, and artwork included in this anthology—by the likes of Abdelkebir Khatibi, Tahar Ben Jelloun, Albert Memmi, Etel Adnan, Sembene Ousmane, René Depestre, and Mohamed Melehi—offer a unique window into the political and artistic imaginaries of writers and intellectuals from the Global South, and resonate with particular acuity in the wake of the Arab Spring. A critical introduction and section headnotes make this collection the perfect companion for courses in postcolonial theory, world literature, and poetry in translation.

African Political Thought of the Twentieth Century - Shiera Malik 2018-02-06
This book focuses on African political thought, as it emerged in the context of and contributed to fundamental changes in world order during the twentieth century, and as it continues to speak to the present global condition. The six chapters form a set of close readings of 20th century African political theorists insofar as their work forms part of a conversation that Africa had with itself and with the rest of the world regarding freedom, independence, emancipation and statehood, as well as forming part of the larger global conversations within which these theorists can be situated. The essays analyse the ideas and practices of a number of prominent figures including Frantz Fanon, Leopold Senghor, Amilcar Cabral, Agostinho Neto, Julius Nyerere, Gabriel d’Arboussier, Sembene Ousmane. This collection is unusual in its breadth, bringing together analyses of radical thinkers and activists from the Portuguese-, French- and English-speaking regions of Africa. It includes chapters from prominent senior figures in the field, as well as contributions from younger scholars. The editor includes a short introduction which frames the collection and situates its contribution to broader debates and fields of enquiry. This book was originally published as a special issue of African Identities.

The Senegalese Novel - Ihechukwu Madubuike 1983

Learning from the Curse - Richard Fardon 2017-02-16
This book is about a story (Ousmane Sembene's Xala), about a time (the aftermath of Senegalese Independence), and about a place (Dakar, the capital of Senegal). It's also about the collaboration between an artist and an anthropologist, who have reacted in their different mediums to the story, time and place, and to what the other made of them ....’ So opens a unique account in a genre of its own devising that will engage readers interested in Sembene Ousmane as writer and film director, in Senegal, in African film, in West Africa, or in books designed to be desirable objects in their own right.
Ousmane Sembene - Ernest Cole 2015-10-22
Across four sections - Interviews, Novels, Films and Tributes - the work of Ousmane Sembene is contextualised in both the worlds of post colonial literature and African film.

Ethics and Aesthetics in Contemporary African Cinema - James S. Williams 2019-03-21
Since the beginnings of African cinema, the realm of beauty on screen has been treated with suspicion by directors and critics alike. James S. Williams explores an exciting new generation of African directors, including Abderrahmane Sissako, Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, Fanta Regina Nacro, Alain Gomis, Newton I. Aduaka, Jean-Pierre Bekolo and Mati Diop, who have begun to reassess and embrace the concept of cinematic beauty by not reducing it to ideological critique or the old ideals of pan-Africanism. Locating the aesthetic within a range of critical fields - the rupturing of narrative spectacle and violence by montage, the archives of the everyday in the 'afropolis', the plurivocal mysteries of sound and language, male intimacy and desire, the borderzones of migration and transcultural drift - this study reveals the possibility for new, non-conceptual kinds of beauty in African cinema: abstract, material, migrant, erotic, convulsive, queer. Through close readings of key works such as Life on Earth (1998), The Night of Truth (2004), Bamako (2006), Daratt (Dry Season) (2006), A Screaming Man (2010), Tey (Today) (2012), The Pirogue (2012), Mille soleils (2013) and Timbuktu (2014), Williams argues that contemporary African filmmakers are proposing propitious, ethical forms of relationality and intersubjectivity. These stimulate new modes of cultural resistance and transformation that serve to redefine the transnational and the cosmopolitan as well as the very notion of the political in postcolonial art cinema.

The Dictator Novel - Magalí Armillas-Tiseyra 2019-07-15
Where there are dictators, there are novels about dictators. But “dictator novels” do not simply respond to the reality of dictatorship. As this genre has developed and cohered, it has acquired a self-generating force distinct from its historical referents. The dictator novel has become a space in which writers consider the difficulties of national consolidation, explore the role of external and global forces in sustaining dictatorship, and even interrogate the political functions of writing itself. Literary representations of the dictator, therefore, provide ground for a self-conscious and self-critical theorization of the relationship between writing and politics itself. The Dictator Novel positions novels about dictators as a vital genre in the literatures of the Global South. Primarily identified with Latin America, the dictator novel also has underacknowledged importance in the postcolonial literatures of francophone and anglophone Africa. Although scholars have noted similarities, this book is the first extensive comparative analysis of these traditions; it includes discussions of authors including Gabriel García Márquez, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Alejo Carpentier, Augusto Roa Bastos, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, José Mármol, Esteban Echeverría, Ousmane Sembène, Chinua Achebe, Aminata Sow Fall, Henri Lopès, Sony Labou Tansi, and Ahmadou Kourouma. This juxtaposition illuminates the internal dynamics of the dictator novel as a literary genre. In so doing, Armillas-Tiseyra puts forward a comparative model relevant to scholars working across the Global South.

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Violence in French and Francophone Literature and Film - 2008-01-01 Stories of violence — such as the account in Genesis of Cain’s jealousy and murder of Abel — have been with us since the time of the earliest recorded texts. Undeniably, the scourge of violence fascinates, confounds, and saddens. What are its uses in literature — its appeal, forms, and consequences? Anchored by Alice Kaplan’s substantial contribution, the thirteen articles in this volume cover diverse epochs, lands, and motives. One scholar ponders whether accounts of Huguenot martyrdom in the sixteenth-century might suggest more pride than piety. Another assesses the real versus the true with respect to a rape scene in The Heptameron. Female violence in fairy tales by Madame d’Aulnoy points to gender politics and the fragility of female solidarity, while another article examines similar issues in the context of Ananda Devi’s works in present-day Mauritius. Other studies address the question of sadism in Flaubert, the unstable point of view of Emmanuel Carrère’s L’Adversaire, the ambivalence toward violence in Chamoiseau’s Texaco, the notions of “terror” and “tabula rasa” in the writings of Blanchot, the undoing of traditions of narrative continuity and authority in the 1998 film, À vendre, and consequences of the power differential in a repressive Haiti as depicted in the film Vers le Sud (2005).

Paradoxes emerge in several studies of works where victims may become perpetrators, or vice versa.

Crash - Karen Beckman 2010-07-13 Artists, writers, and filmmakers from Andy Warhol and J. G. Ballard to Alejandro González Iñárritu and Ousmane Sembène have repeatedly used representations of immobilized and crashed cars to wrestle with the conundrums of modernity. In Crash, Karen Beckman argues that representations of the crash parallel the encounter of film with other media, and that these collisions between media offer useful ways to think about alterity, politics, and desire. Examining the significance of automobile collisions in film genres including the “cinema of attractions,” slapstick comedies, and industrial-safety movies, Beckman reveals how the car crash gives visual form to fantasies and anxieties regarding speed and stasis, risk and safety, immunity and contamination, and impermeability and penetration. Her reflections on the crash as the traumatic, uncertain moment of inertia that comes in the wake of speed and confidence challenge the tendency in cinema studies to privilege movement above film’s other qualities. Ultimately, Beckman suggests that film studies is a hybrid field that cannot apprehend its object of study without acknowledging the ways that cinema’s technology binds it to capitalism’s industrial systems and other media, technologies, and disciplines.

Rethinking Third Cinema - Wimal Dissanayake 2004-06-02 This important anthology addresses established notions about Third Cinema theory, and the cinema practice of developing and postcolonial nations. The ‘Third Cinema’ movement called for a politicised film-making practice in Africa, Asia and Latin America, one which would take on board issues of race, class, religion, and national integrity. The films which resulted from the movement, from directors such as Ousmane Sembene, Satyajit Ray and Nelson Pereira dos Santos, are among the most culturally significant, politically sophisticated and frequently studied films of the 1960s and 1970s. However, despite the contemporary popularity and critical attention enjoyed by films from Asia and Latin America in particular, Third Cinema and Third Cinema theory appears to have lost its momentum. Rethinking Third Cinema seeks to bring Third Cinema and Third Cinema theory back into the critical spotlight. The contributors address the most difficult and challenging questions Third Cinema poses, suggesting new methodologies and redirections of existing ones. Crucially, they also re-examine the entire phenomenon of film-making in a fast-vanishing ‘Third World’, with case studies of the cinemas of India, Iran and Hong Kong, among others.

Critical Approaches to African Cinema Discourse - Nwachukwu Frank Ukadike 2014-02-27 This book emphasizes the plurality of African cinema through a variety of themes and critical approaches that illuminate the scope of the mobilizing techniques for its proliferation, as well as its deep concern for methods of production, film aesthetics, theory, and criticism. Critical Approaches to African Cinema Discourse will offer scholars and students in film, media, and cultural studies, as well as in history, and
Black and African studies, a broader understanding of African cinema as a cultural art. The contributors show that it is informed not only by ideological determinants but also by the concern to boost perspectives for reading African film images that may or may not belong to the conventional interpretations proffered in Euro-American critical paradigms.

**Spectres of Fascism** - Samir Gandesha
2020-03-20 Historians and theorists debate the return of fascism, focusing on case studies from around the world.

**Positive Review** - 1978


**Race on Display in 20th- and 21st Century France** - Katelyn E. Knox 2016-07-01 In Race on Display in 20th- and 21st-Century France Knox turns the tables France's rhetoric of 'internal otherness', asking her reader not to spot those deemed France's others but rather to deconstruct the very gazes that produce them. Weaving together a vast corpus of colonial French children's comics, Francophone novels, and African popular music, fashion, and dance, Knox traces how the ways colonial 'human zoos' invited their French spectators to gaze on their colonized others still inform the frameworks through which racial and ethnic minorities are made-and make themselves-visible in contemporary France. In addition to analyzing how literature and music depicting immigrants and their descendants in France make race and ethnicity visible, Knox also illustrates how the works she analyzes self-reflexively ask whether they, as commodities sold within wider cultural marketplaces, perpetuate the culture of exoticism they seek to contest. Finally, Knox contends that to take seriously the way the texts interrogate the relationship between power, privilege, and the gaze also requires reconsidering the visions of normalcy from which racial and ethnic minorities supposedly depart. She thus concludes by exposing a critical 'blind spot' in French cultural studies-whiteness-before subjecting it to the same scrutiny France's 'visible minorities' face.