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Aesthetic Dividuations in a Globalized Art World

Abstract: As a professor of philosophy in the art academy of Hamburg, I deal with contemporary art practices; as a theorist of aesthetics I try to determine what kind of aesthetic and artistic developments seem to be significant for our times, and which kind of philosophical theories I can offer in order to better conceptualize and understand the given art productions. At the same time, I attempt to transcend contemporary tendencies and concepts and to foster students' art practices in a way that makes them meaningful for the future.

This lecture seeks to provide a possible interpretation of actual art practices in a globalized world, reflecting also on big art exhibitions such as Documenta 14 and on African films. It sketches a specific aesthetic program called *Afropolitanism* as an understanding which could be conceived of as paradigmatic for our globalized times. Afropolitanism is a term coined by the South African theorist Achille Mbembe in one of his 2010 book *Sortir de la grande nuit. Essai sur l'Afrique décolonisé*. Starting from there I want to offer a philosophical concept that goes far beyond the European context and hopes to provide a possible conceptual frame for a more complex understanding of the culturally and artistically entangled and hybridized expressions of our days, including those of human subjectivation. I call this concept *dividuation* as I have explained further in my book *Dividuations: Theories of Participation,* which was published in English in 2018.

Keywords: *dividuation*; participation; contemporary art practices; *Afropolitanism*; African films; composite-cultural expressions; big art exhibitions.

The term *dividuation* is derived from Deleuze's use of the term *dividual*, which appears twice in his writings: once in a positive sense, in *Cinéma1. L'image-mouvement* of 1993,[1] in the *movement-image* where it serves to indicate the aesthetic status of images and sounds in film. In the context of the affection-image, he points to the fact that, on the one hand, film provides a specific and undivided audiovisual expression and on the other hand, since its aesthetic elements change permanently due to the time-based medium, this expression cannot be identified as an individual one. There is no fixed moment in a film, says Deleuze, because the aesthetic qualities are permanently rearranged and distributed in different ways. Because of the temporal

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[1] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1. L'Image-Mouvement* (Paris: Ed. De Minuit, 1993).

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condition of film expressions, he speaks of the *dividual* character of movement-images. This seems even more true in times of digital film production since the audiovisual data never provides an unvarying image like previous analogous technologies. We are nowadays confronted with permanent calculations, which tell us that each image is in an ongoing process of modulation so that it can never be called an undivided, individual one.

In a rather negative way, Deleuze uses the term *dividual* in his short "postscriptum on societies of control"[2]. In this context, he underlines the fact that contemporary human beings are compelled to respond to the requirements of the neoliberal market, to the needs of ongoing self-formation, to permanent adaptations in the context of work, the technological environment and so forth. He calls this new fluid person a *dividual* one, warning that the specificity and recognizability of the single person may be lost in the longer run.

In this sense, I will use the term *dividuation* as a conceptual indicator of the fact that not only persons but also goods, services and even artworks are nowadays embedded in globalized contexts forcing them to respond to globalized requirements, also in the aesthetic sense. They are asked to participate, to construct their expressions by appropriating and amalgamating given data, to dividuate their capacities and references and to increase their disposition of being seen and heard; by so doing, they lose their cultural opacity and aesthetic autonomy, which in former times were considered indispensable for a work of art. In this sense, my reflection here has the status of a diagnosis of contemporary developments in the realm of art, of human practices and also beyond that.

Dividuations in contemporary art practices

The situation of the globalized art world discussed as *contemporaneity* by the German art theorist Hans Belting[3] is far more present-day oriented, transnationally and transculturally oriented than it was even thirty years ago; this has prompted the emergence of increasingly globally-oriented ways of artistic articulation, causing theorists like Nicolas Bourriaud to speak of various *altermodernities*. It is significant that curators like Okwui Enwezor see, above all, composite cultural appropriations and formal amalgamations in contemporary art practices, and, on the whole, a decentralizing of art events in the multiplication of biennials for example, whilst other commentators report market-oriented uniformities, the maintaining of Western norms and aesthetic standards, and the alignment of art practices with buyer expectations. For instance, the German art collector Ingvild Goetz observes that trends imported from the West, or adopted western judgments on taste, also dominate the art markets of China, India, and Russia.

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[2] Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control," *October* 59 (October 1992): 3–7.

[3] Hans Belting, "Contemporary Art as Global Art. A Critical Estimate," in *The Global Art World*, ed. Hans Belting and Andrea Buddensieg (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009), 38–73.

What is certain is that the media communicability of the artistically 'in demand', the worldwide circulation of artworks at art biennials and their advertising and multiplying by digital media mean that no artistic praxis can be understood as a fully independent and individual creation, unless the desire is to situate it in a local tradition, or very much outside of the art market. Because *the canvas (of the world) is covered* (Deleuze) and *everything* is downloadable and re-transmittable, processes of repetition, appropriation, and targeted adapting to a given context can be observed everywhere. Even a composition conceived with different production and criticism in mind often refers and distances from expressions regarded as time period-appropriate and thus becomes inevitably dividual. And yet the artistic practices differ in their repetition and transformation intensity: artistic dividuation activity embraces film remakes, serialized image reproduction, polemic re-photographs, also extending to compositions that enact their conditionality and non-concludability.[4]

In this context, particular interest attaches to artistic practices that engage in self-reflexive appropriations and reinterpretations based on the insight that repetition is inevitable, thus acquiring an explicitly dividual character. Art practices of this kind endeavor, through affirmed affiliation and re-contextualizing, to achieve minimal formation of difference. The reduction of the difference may render it almost imperceptible. They may dramatize their dividuatedness, using repetition to generate moments of becoming-other – e.g., virtualizing of the real, or hovering somewhere between fiction and documentary, etc. At best, they pose questions about the unconsciously dictated picture of reality that slumbers in the depicted image, and how, in order to recognize what is unregarded, it must be relativized, its limited character and visual narrowness exposed. Interestingly, it can be observed that especially non-Western art practices increase their potentiality of dividuation, as they are frequently caught between local cultural traditions and globalized standards and are thus forced into culturally composite invention. It is no accident that hybrid constructions from the global South that attract attention through a mix of local style tradition and borrowings from Western art languages are hyped as genuine products of artistic globalizing. They display the contemporary wish to make art in a symptomatic and outstanding way, demonstrating by that that art practices striving for global visibility are particularly subject to the law of dividuations, because on the one hand they wish for placement of their particular statement, whilst at the same time they want the recognition of art organizers and market players who are guided by Western habits of seeing and valuation interests.

Today, an artistic creation that touts its uniqueness and individual signature is also undermined by aesthetic and popular practices as pursued by crowds on the Internet. Because texts, images, films, and musical compositions are accessible in digital archives, they are extracted, remounted, supplemented, elaborated, and rearranged. Unless blocked by copyright issues, videos are uploaded, put into global circulation,

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[4] Cf. Michaela Ott, "Zwischen Virtualität und Kontrolle: Dividuelle Filmästhetiken," in *Virtualität und Kontrolle*, ed. Hans-Joachim Lenger et al. (Hamburg: Material Verlag, 2010), 178–93.

reused and reinterpreted. Certain computer games explicitly provide file formats and game editors that allow users to expand the game and add new levels. Film series are extended by fans in both written and film form; fans add new episodes and discuss them in blogs, impacting on the "original" sequels and dividuating them *a posteriori*. Facebook and YouTube users are enthused by the way viral videos, responses to videos, re-enactments of photographs and instructions produce a whole field of performative expression in a grey area between the pre-individual, the individual, and the collective, between culture, art, and politics are released to this or that fate of greater or smaller difference formation, of becoming visible, vanishing, or being subsequently revived.

Today, the reversibility of the completed form applies to all artistic practices that take place within digital media and that bring their products into circulation, offering them for participation, and thus exposing them to dividuation. The opportunities for appropriation include quasi-simultaneity of production and reception, but also, in some cases, suspension of the causal/linear time sequence itself: the future may take place before the past does. If anything, copies of design objects or designer's drafts are implemented more quickly than the original designs. Copies of artworks circulate on the Internet simultaneously with their models, forcing the latter into an encounter with another 'self' and initiating unfathomable dividuation processes. Even seemingly unmistakable real locations – cities with a special local character – now find themselves reproduced on a 1:1 scale. Venice, a Bavarian village, or the Eiffel Tower can be found, to-scale, on other continents. Thus, the special character of a location is suspended, moved further into the dividual realm.

Dividuation as an aesthetic difference

In a kind of countermovement to ongoing dividuations, the art historian Hans Belting claims to see the contemporary art scene as an answer to modernism's universalist claims, whose consequence is now to propagate the symbolic capital of difference on the market. Precisely because the art market demands difference for (capitalizable) difference's sake, it promotes a largely a-historical, quasi-simultaneous art scene that he believes is not controlled by any binding aesthetic norm: "It does not imply an inherent aesthetic quality which could be identified as such, nor a global concept of what has to be regarded as art."[5] One might ask: who determines the difference of the different, and its epistemological and aesthetic value? Doesn't recognizing differences depend upon implicit norms and the familiarity of the viewer with contemporary art practices? What appears different from one perspective may not from another – as the interpretation of contemporary art events teaches us.

Belting would surely agree that art practices and their reception are less bound to Western capital cities today than they were even a few decades ago. Because globalization

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[5] Belting, "Contemporary Art as Global Art. A Critical Estimate," 40.

establishes altered strategies of making-visible and representing – in a decentralized and multi-location art scene – the claims to universal validity of modern, predominantly Western art appears relativized in favor of recognition of regional and local art scenes:

> "The regional and particular are presently undergoing unforeseen revaluation, whereas the universal and international are subject to devaluation. [...] What appeared to be international now seems monopolar and unilateral. [...] We are able to recognize that so-called international art, from the USA, for example, is only ethnic art, and that we must duly aspire to a post-ethnic art. This post-ethnic art could be the result of a re-writing program. [...] Local becomes as important as global, local becomes coequal with global."[6]

Peter Weibel discerns a paradigm shift in favor of reversing modern hierarchies of attention and recognition, one that demotes hitherto dominant art languages to merely ethnic/regional languages, and, conversely, promotes the articulations of other regions, or raises them to equal rank. Like Okwui Enwezor, he sees the hybridizations of global standards of expression with local codes as post-ethnic articulations.

Admittedly, Weibel's well-meaning perspective is disputed by many art market experts. In spite of theoretical deconstruction, it can be asserted that the globalized art scene of today is all the more subject to Western aesthetic norms – which have been leveled out, but are still valid – now that they are spread further and cemented by financially powerful collectors, auction houses, and curators. The Spanish art expert Joachìm Barriendos even speaks of a "re-Westernization of the global art concept"[7]. In spite of geopolitical expansion, the 'hierarchical schema' of the West remains the same and still determines if the artwork is included in global distribution. If an artwork succeeds in combining Western art languages with other traditions of expression and uniting them in a special composite cultural expression, it is accorded full recognition. When someone like Ai Wei Wei unites American conceptual art attitudes with Chinese craft traditions, then such a culturally composite dividuation is a guaranteed success on the art market. However, it is not just non-Western artists that must bow to art market expectations in terms of size, spectacular properties, or provocative potential; as is emphasized by Ingvild Goetz, Western artists too are expected to produce attention-commanding artworks, possibly thereby losing their special expressive power. Artistic dividuations may thus result exactly from the claim to aesthetic difference, against the background of a continuing Western norm.

In this spirit, large-scale exhibitions such as Documenta or the Venice Art Biennale often make a particular effort to place older and younger, Western and non-Western artworks in a simultaneous space of resonance and validity: at the 2011

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[6] Peter Weibel, "Global Art: Rewritings, Transformations, and Translations. Thoughts on the Project GAM," in *The Global Art World*, ed. Hans Belting and Andrea Buddensieg (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009), 80f.

[7] Joachim Barriendos, "Geopolitics of Global Art. The Reinvention of Latin America as a Geoaesthetic Region," in *The Global Art World*, ed. Hans Belting and Andrea Buddensieg (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009), 98.

Venice Art Biennale, Tintoretto's paintings were exhibited alongside contemporary artworks, and at Documenta 13, millennia-old Bactrian sculptures were combined with 20th-century artworks. If one places artworks from different cultural contexts side-by-side under the heading "Migration of Form" without listing their origin, as was tried at Documenta 12, form-relationships and transcultural variations on the same theme become noticeable. This was an effort to counteract automatic cultural attributions and evaluations and to prevent form difference being judged according to the cultural context. A kind of dividual counterstrategy was developed in which the individual artwork gained a new substance from the form-comparison – unaffected by its cultural classification.

In this respect, it is instructive that a large number of art events, such as the Sharjah Biennial,[8] the Fespaco-Filmfestival in Burkina Faso or the Internationale Filmfest in Dubai, are dedicated to the presentation of 'regional' – Black African and Arabic, respectively – art and contrasting it with productions from other cultures and continents, leading to productive interactions, and also the making-visible of 'regional' art and its inevitable conflictual reference to Western aesthetic formats at the same time. Thomas Fillitz emphasizes the significance of biennials, particularly with regard to the perception of African art: "We may consider them as spaces, which allow for greater reciprocity between different art worlds: They are potentially more inclusive in their representation, and each biennial may adopt particular forms of classification for diverse, globally produced contemporary art."[9] This was particularity true for Documenta 14 which tried to include and to juxtapose artworks of the whole world. The Documenta of Athens and Kassel tried to prove that not only single artworks but whole exhibitions are obliged to become a composite-cultural expression if they wish to be timely and respect postcolonial epistemological shifts. An exhibition such as Documenta 14 in Kassel is dividual in the sense that it keeps "together apart" so many different aesthetic statements that it becomes impossible to get an overview or to synthesize the perceived artworks to a coherent impression. The Documenta 14 may be read as a condensed expression of affirmed dividuations thanks to the heterogeneity of the assembled cultural articulations and their mutual reactions.

Biennials such as Dak'art in Senegal are relatively restricted dividuations in the sense that they only offer the opportunity to African artists and people of African descent to gain certain visibility. Enwezor, therefore, reinforces the claim to de-identify with the African background in order not to be caught in a niche of the globalized art market. Even the postcolonial discourse of difference would tend to deprive their art of the status of world art by restricting it to otherness and stigmatizing it as 'other'.

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[8] Kaelen Wilson-Goldie: "The most crucial and enduring contribution this event has made to the region's mechanisms of cultural production comes from the fact that the Biennial commissioned no fewer than 20 art works, in many cases inviting local, regional and international artists to spend time in Sharjah producing new projects." Cit. in: Jack Persekian, "A Place to go: The Sharjah Biennial," in *The Global Art World*, ed. Hans Belting and Andrea Buddensieg (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009), 159.

[9] Thomas Fillitz, "Contemporary Art of Africa. Coevalness in the Global World," in *The Global Art World*, ed. Hans Belting and Andrea Buddensieg (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009), 116.

Therefore, African artists today try to play with identity patterns and to affirm their position between necessary adaptation and productions of difference. It is a post-ethnic position to perform as an artist from Africa rather than to suffer the label of an 'African artist. They understand ethnicity as a role rather than a fate, combined with issues of gender and class. Artists from the global South try to operate today as virtuosos of dividuation who place themselves in relation to Western art languages, using and combining them with other artistic languages in order to produce more strongly dividual artworks that are not culturally classifiable.

Aesthetic dividuation thus emerges as an artistically necessary strategy, and as the only process appropriate to our era for all those who live between different cultures and seek to join them together in their symbolic statements. Together with V. Y. Mudimbe, Enwezor once again seeks to contain their specialized tension in the concept of 'reprendre' which refers to the simultaneous appropriation of African and Western traditions, the referencing of postcolonial social context, and the formal amalgam of each; thus, it refers to potentiated dividual processes. "Consequently what emerges as contemporary is an art of the supplement and citation, set between different archives, between and among traditions, set in its own invented traditions: colonial and postcolonial, local and global, regional and transnational, diasporic and cosmopolitan spaces."[10]

Since, in a globalized art field, unambiguous receptions can no longer be given, it is likewise no longer sensible to see contemporary art practices primarily as appropriation and recoding of Western art languages. Instead, the knowledge of multidirectional participation makes caution in decoding the artworks appear wise. Who could venture to say whether an abstract Indian painting is a continuation of US expressionism or a reference to Japanese abstract traditions, or whether it represents other codes? Whether it draws on the Internet, on Indian or Asiatic techniques within its environment, or on all of these at the same time? Today, formal dividuations are too multifarious to be clearly traced back to styles or to artists' distinctive handwriting. Instead, we have to understand that art practices are specific ways of combining, repeating and differentiating – bringing about dividual artworks applying to our capacity to change perspectives and to look if possible through the eyes of people from other continents.

'Afropolitanism' as a paradigm of contemporary aesthetics?

In pushing a bit further what has been explained in the last chapter I want to present now the new concept of Afropolitanism which might contribute to a postcolonially informed understanding of contemporary works of art – and can be understood as a variation of the term dividuation with an accent on the perspective of Africa. "Afropolitanism is a stylistics and a politics, an aesthetics and a certain poetics of

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[10] Okwui Enwezor, "Situating Contemporary African Art: Introduction," in Okwui Enwezor, *Contemporary African Art since 1980* (Bologna: Damiani Ed. 2009), 26.

the world. It is a manner of being in the world which refuses, on principle, any form of victim identity – which does not mean that it is not conscious of the injustices and the violence which the law of the world inflicted on this continent and its people."[11] The South African theorist Achille Mbembe, author of this statement, endeavors to identify Afropolitanism as the paradigm of actual modes of existence of persons mainly from non-Western countries and of their aesthetic expression in the globalized world. With Afropolitanism he provocatively refers to the concept of cosmopolitanism, the term which Kant coined for the enlightened self-understanding of being a (bourgeois) citizen of the whole world. Mbembe reconfigures this politanism by adding the perspective of the Global South and, at the same time, refusing to provide a cliche of Africanness and to connect Afropolitanism with "any form of victim identity". Mbembe has in mind self-assured African persons living and working in different urban centers on different continents; therefore he points to the fact that these new actors may be better adapted to globalized conditions than Western people because the former are used to the colonially-imposed mixture of cultures and languages from early on. Afropolitanism wants to be the name for their form of existence und expressions between different cultures and for "an interlocking of here and somewhere else", and a "presence of elsewhere in here".[12] This description of cultural compositions and spatiotemporal mixtures within a person's or group's identity and artistic expressions does not admit any sort of negativity; on the contrary, it affirms cultural entanglements and highlights the participation of African people in symbolic and economic value-creating chains as a timely response to the challenges of globalization.

In its affirmation of personal participation in worldwide communicated lifestyle modes, the idea of Afropolitanism is a complement to another of Mbembe's concepts which he unfolds in his *Critique de la Raison Nègre*[13] translated into German as *Kritik der schwarzen Vernunft* where the word 'nègre' is symptomatically replaced by the term 'black/schwarz'. In this text he envisions the *conditio nigra* expanding to become the deracialised outset situation of all those who do not participate in economic and symbolic capitals and continue to live in political disregard and medial invisibility. Whereas Afropolitanism highlights self-confident, cross-cultural human and artistic existences, the *Critique* speaks of rather poor multitudes of people who are forced to migrate, to look for jobs in foreign countries and do not deliberately deal with divergent cultural expressions. In this complementary way Mbembe seems to focus on two different classes of population who both live composite-cultural identities: one being able to conceive of it as free choice, the other one as indispensable choice for survival.

Becoming Afropolitan means accepting and intensifying a composite-cultural life, a (de-in)dividuated identity, a permanent intellectual and affective readjustment to varying contexts. Afropolitanism is an aesthetic attitude that acknowledges

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[11] Achille Mbembe, *Sortir de la grande nuit. Essai sur l'Afrique décolonisé* (Paris: La Découverte, 2010), 289.

[12] Ibid., 285.

[13] Achille Mbembe, *Critique de la Raison Nègre* (Paris: La Découverte, 2014).

its constitution by local and globalized codes, its mixture of articulations, its exposure to aesthetic and political differences and the tensions between them. It is an attitude of people and contemporary artworks not only from the African continent but of all aesthetic expressions which derive from culturally different sources, which appropriate pre-given formats, transform or parody them in order to point at specific contexts and unnoticed perspectives and to provide complex articulations underlining the entanglements of any sort of artistic statement. Afropolitanism in a more general sense is the name for a becoming 'normal' of cross-cultural compositions which therefore should not be reidentified as 'African'.

The question remains of how to conceive of the practice of Afropolitanism in artworks and their heterogeneous compositions. Since Mbembe does not provide further explanation, I want to refer to the Caribbean poet and theorist Edouard Glissant and his claim of aesthetic strategies of "disindividualisation", of the necessary abolishment of unified and folkloristic cultural understandings and for their affirmed dividuation. When he describes the necessary development of composite cultures on the French Antilles, he underlines that composite culture does not mean dilution or dispersion of aesthetic signs, but their affirmed and not imposed partition. So what does it mean to understand cultural and artistic articulations as an affirmed, non imposed 'partition'? A partition which at the same time means participation and division, being part and not being part, being together and being apart of something which is a heterogeneous composition? How does an artwork look like which does not mirror the putting into pieces of our contemporary culture, but the aesthetic symbolization of affirmed differences between different participant elements?

Partition in Glissant's sense points on the one hand to the affirmed participation in symbolic, economic and technological systems borrowed from other cultures and on the other at their necessary diffraction, dividuation and transformation into particular art practices and aesthetic counter-strategies to which he attributes even a certain opacity. Very much like the concept of dividuation, Glissant's concept of partition does not mean division, does not mean exclusion or privileged inclusion, but translates the conviction that cultural expressions when they expose the inevitable tensions between their different participative elements should not be named individuals, undivided entities. The term dividuation, as well as partition, tries to acknowledge the entanglements of different cultural elements or levels within a work of art while nevertheless providing a particular and coherent expression like in a composition of classical music in contemporary times. It is the privilege of works of art that they can de-individualize canonized forms by exposing their inherent and unnoticed diversity, by subverting their universalized norm or their claim of uniqueness, by parodying the aesthetic norm and by intensifying their heterogeneous characteristics. Aesthetic practices can develop a hilarious play with imposed and affirmed ways of participation; they can criticize forms of cultural hegemony, of deprecation of human beings, of economic inequality and so forth. I will present a filmic example which is excellent in parodying the own and the imposed cultural tradition.

Afropolitanism, as I would like to summarize, is the name for a delineation of symbolic enunciation and self-reflective participation in the world of today. For non-Western cultures, Afropolitanism seems the obligatory form of expression because these cultures are forced to self-dividuations since colonial times and are accustomed to combining different layers of expression, local substrates, a nationwide superstrate and a globalized pidgin. If African directors wish to realize films, they must adapt to Western concepts, economically enforced aesthetic formats and to narrative norms occurring between globalized film industries and TV standards worldwide. Today, Global Southern discourses respond to this imposition not so much by rejecting them as by appealing for aesthetic patterns to be adapted critically, to be reversed parody-fashion, and to be amalgamated with local and globalized codes so that, ultimately, no clear cultural affiliation can be retracted. Therefore the concept of composite cultures embraces different tactics. The most interesting are cultural encounters that expose their reworkings of traditional formats and standardized contents in the form of parody, caricature and so forth. We, the inhabitants of the Western world, should learn from them: Symbolic statements today have to pursue the integration of different cultural elements, not opposing them to each other so much as amalgamating and differentiating them in an aesthetically innovative way.

The film *Le complot d'Aristote (*1995) by Cameroonian filmmaker Jean-Pierre Bekolo deviates from Enwezor's recommendations in the sense that it exposes Africanness or better the images of Africa provided and stereotyped by the West. As a film commissioned by the British Film Institute as the Africa contribution to the centenary of cinema, it questions itself what African cinema is. It develops a hilarious and very critical interrogation of what African cinema could be with respect to its Western origins, its classical dramaturgical structure, its financialization by Western countries, its adaption of Western TV-formats and an audience which he, the filmmaker, does not even know. It develops a sardonic play and even some sort of struggle and action movie between the French-influenced cineast, the misunderstanding of this term as 'silly-ass', and action moviegoers; the film parodies itself as an expression which wants to be different, unconventional, genuinely African. It declares the Aristotelian and Hollywoodian film dramaturgy, with climax and catastrophe, impossible for Africa since there is a permanent catastrophe, but also permanent renewal and resumption; and it concedes that the theatrical aim of creating the affects of pity and fear in the viewer can in fact best be attained under African circumstances. It digresses on film genres such as Westerns and gangster movies which are highly appreciated in Africa, thereby subverting the cinematic form itself. All in all, it questions the status of cinema in Africa at times when the last cinema had to close in Cameroon.

In order to conclude, I would like to claim that after all, we should not strive to define what a dividual cultural composition exactly is in order not to produce new generalized aesthetic norms. We should rather pay attention to the different practices of cultural composition and wonder if we can shift our perspective on them. Of course, they are realized in divergently complex ways and not always pushed up to the

kind of parodistic play that Bekolo's film succeeds to unfold. The artworks will differ in their decision of how to moderate their dividual character and how to accentuate the tensions between their components also in relation to other exhibited works of art. By so doing, they open up a vast field of interrogation to which the theorist can respond with new concepts and new descriptions in a sensible and, if possible, respectful way.

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