

mythologizing hip hop's origins in the United States (i.e. the Bronx myth), on the one hand, as well as by distancing themselves from indigenous performance genres such as *taasu*, praise singing, and *mbalax* (i.e. the Orality myth), on the other. She finds that the perceived appeal and utility of hip hop lies in its ability to articulate experientially an urban lived experience of marginalization that speaks to the needs and desires of a disenfranchised 'youth' generation due to the conscious 'social action' impulse embedded in the culture. Appert complicates this narrative by pointing out how state intervention and the social pressure to respect adult authority place constraints on what she calls their 'hip hop voice'.

One of Appert's most compelling and insightful chapters is Chapter Five, in which she focuses on the experiences and perspectives of women hip hoppers. She reveals their precarious status in Rap Galsen and how they are forced both to confront and negotiate a multilayered labyrinth of patriarchal attitudes and behaviors within and outside the movement. Appert problematizes male rappers' 'distinct masculinity' (136), which reduces women's role in Rap Galsen to the margins, while highlighting the agency women exercise in challenging sexism and exclusion to carve out a space of belonging and visibility. In the final chapter, she returns to her core conceptual framework to underscore the ways in which hip hop production constitutes a discursive diaspora experience and response to contemporary urban marginalization in Dakar. In seeking to understand not only how but why Senegalese practice hip hop, she makes a very appealing argument about hip hop as an alternative temporality that suspends the transition from youth to adulthood, as well as allows for the articulation and re-articulation of transatlantic diasporic connections.

Appert's thorough and self-reflective ethnography convincingly supplants dominant narratives of hip hop in Africa by honing in on the intellectual groundwork that sets the politicization of rap in motion. Although her study lacks sufficient critical engagement with the nature and meaning of how Senegalese consume US hip hop, as well as on how the exogenous impacts consciousness, aesthetics, and politics, *In Hip Hop Time* is a must read for anyone not only interested in music, but also in understanding the relationship between memory, agency, and cultural production in contemporary urban Senegal and beyond. Her theoretical insights into diaspora cultural identity making breaks new ground in what is possible when studying the globalization of hip hop music and culture in Africa.

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## Language, Ethnicity, and Media in South Africa

### *Radio soundings: South Africa and the Black Modern*

By Liz Gunner. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2019. Pp. 227. \$105.00, hardcover (ISBN: 9781108470643); \$28.99, paperback (ISBN: 9781108456357); \$20.33, e-book (ISBN: 9781108662253).

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**Keywords:** South Africa; African modernities; media; ethnicity; apartheid; technology

In *Radio Soundings*, Liz Gunner contributes to academic research on radio, race, and identity in Africa, as well as on Africa's vernacular media, by exploring how Zulu-language serialized radio

dramas played a key role in the formation of South African identity and culture during apartheid. Gunner argues that, via vernacular stations like Radio Zulu, the apartheid state used media to impose particular forms of ethnicity designed to perpetuate the domination of Black South Africans. Yet as Gunner demonstrates, the aural genre of Zulu radio drama played a key role producing culture for a subaltern audience beyond the purposes of state power. *Radio Soundings* analyzes the genre of radio drama within the context of Zulu-language radio, and Gunner asks ‘what the mediatization of the voice as sound meant in the context of the racially segregated South African state and its policies of black containment and subjugation’. She then follows this question through into the post-1990 democratic era and ‘further trace(s) voice as part of the soundings of radio in isiZulu within a dramatically altered state and a differently convened public space’ (3).

Gunner is one of the pioneers of academic research on African radio.<sup>1</sup> The current study begins with Zulu-language serialized radio dramas broadcast by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) in the early 1940s; as well as the English plays written by exiled Zulu radio artists for broadcast on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The Zulu ethnic group is the largest in South Africa, the Zulu-language the most widely spoken in the country, and the Zulu-language radio station operated by SABC currently has the largest number of listeners. *Radio Soundings* provides a chronological account of the growth of Zulu-language broadcasting across different South African political regimes, based on detailed archival work including the transcription and translation of radio tapes, as well as qualitative interviews with broadcasters. Gunner elegantly articulates how Zulu radio drama represented a space for the subversion of apartheid ideology, by creating a soundscape that informed identity construction that surpassed the state’s intentions.

The book comprises eight chapters organized into three sections. Part One, ‘Sound and “migration”’, outlines the colonial origins of Zulu mediatization with the first broadcasts of the 1920s. Part Two, ‘Distance and intimacy’, focuses on two exiled South African writers, William ‘Bloke’ Modisane and Lewis Nkosi, who wrote radio dramas for the BBC, playing a key role in the dissemination of African and African-American ideas on culture and politics. Gunner argues that there is a long history of African-American entanglement with Black South Africa, which has become a key component of Black modern South African identity. In fact, Gunner argues that the pathway to Black South African modernity was through this enduring connection, across the fields of religion, popular culture (including song and expressive mediums), and global Black politics. One of the central arguments of the book is the connection of African-American culture to Zulu radio serials, which in turn ‘became an essential component of black modern South African identity’ (4). Part Three, ‘Drama, language and daily life’, explores how listener forums for radio drama indirectly facilitated responses to the state violence of the 1980s and political upheavals of the 1990s. At the end of each drama listeners were invited to call or write in with their comments; with the texts of the plays used to explore ways of belonging and thinking about the self in public space, becoming what Gunner refers to as a space of discursive freedom.

While Radio Zulu was seen as a means of control by the state, dramatized serials promoted diverse forms of identity and offered resistant alternatives to apartheid propaganda. These dramas, argues Gunner, were a combination of drama and farce, representing a subtle form of subversion of the apartheid hegemony. The Zulu radio dramas allowed writers and listeners (urban and rural) to claim a space for debate without directly referring to politics. Moreover, these dramas were not subject to the same apartheid editorial scrutiny as news broadcasts or current affairs shows.

<sup>1</sup>L. Gunner, ‘Wrestling with the present, beckoning to the past: contemporary Zulu radio drama’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 26:2 (2000), 223–37; L. Gunner, ‘Exile and the Diasporic voice: Bloke Modisane’s BBC Radio plays 1969–1987’, *Current writing: text and reception in Southern Africa*, 15:2 (2003), 49–62; L. Gunner et al., *Radio in Africa: Publics, cultures, communities* (Johannesburg, 2012); L. Gunner, ‘Soft masculinities, isicathamiya and radio’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 40:2 (2014), 343–60; L. Gunner, ‘The man from where? Ukhozi FM and new identities on radio in South Africa’, *Journal of African Media Studies*, 9:1 (2017), 61–75.

Although Gunner's primary task is to explore the cultural landscape of South Africa during apartheid, *Radio Soundings* also makes a strong contribution to radio theory by locating her historical analysis within the political and cultural aspects of 'sonic agency'. Because sound is unseen, argues Gunner, 'its architectural and shaping qualities in the experiences of everyday life can be elusive' (3), and the narratives presented by radio serials created the possibility for African agency. The focus on topics like love, courtship and family life, Gunner argues, were staple items in the construction of the modern, creating a discourse of the modern in relation to social life, and presenting alternate versions of community and selfhood. With the growth of Web 2.0, *Radio Soundings* is a stark reminder of the power of the 'old' medium of radio. In this instance, the power of radio during apartheid's formalized segregation, promoted and sustained the diverse sounds of Black modernity. In particular, Radio Zulu's jazz and music programs kept currency with global popular music and styles, helping to create modern subjects.

Gunner's work points toward the need for further exploration of the role of radio on the continent, particularly in a more contemporary political context and alongside the growth of online platforms. Radio Zulu still exists today as Ukhozi FM, one of the SABC's African language stations, which boasts the highest listenership in the country. As Gunner writes, although unseen, sound attunes an individual to the texture of a modern city; from that can come an understanding of where a person fits into a community. Scholars have considered radio's ongoing importance in self-fashioning in postapartheid South Africa, focusing especially on English-language stations. Future research might explore how Ukhozi FM and other vernacular radio stations contribute to contemporary soundscapes of race, culture, and identity in modern day South Africa.

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## Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire's Forking Paths

### *Postcolonial Security: Britain, France, and West Africa's Cold War*

By Marco Wyss. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021. Pp. 352. \$100.00, hardcover (ISBN: 9780198843023); \$94.56, e-book (ISBN: 9780192580924).

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Once independence was won, the leaders of Africa's new states faced a series of Hobson's choices. Would they take the defense agreements the departing colonial powers offered them, or would they fend for themselves? What about the 'help' that other foreign powers presented? The US and the USSR both dangled lifelines, but they clearly had hooks at the end of them. Smaller states like Czechoslovakia and the Federal Republic of Germany offered forms of 'protection' too, though the Cold War's dangers were no less obvious there. In *Postcolonial Security: Britain, France, and West Africa's Cold War*, Marco Wyss tries to untangle the history of Europe's post-independence maneuvering in Africa, focusing on two of the biggest knots: Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire.

While politicians made promises about the wealth and freedom that independence would bring, the diplomats who hashed out the details faced a more immediate question: what kind of