

of *Forest and Labor in Madagascar* has her own contributions to make to the anthropological literature. She takes her readers on a wonderful tour along the underbelly of conservation work in order to give them a clear understanding of how labour plays out in a political economy ruled mainly by conservation stakeholders. Sodikoff uses theory to guide the empirical results of her field studies, rather than as an engine hammering down points. For example, she uses Marx's materialist theory as a touchstone to help her derive insights about the contradictions of conservation, thereby avoiding the reduction of history, societal relations, and labour into a flattened Marxist space of victims and victimizers. Instead she brings the lives of Malagasy, with their limited choices, closer to her readers. Sodikoff has a clear sense of her audience, nurturing our interest in their lives by changing the pace and tenor of the narrative, integrating masterful descriptions of on-the-ground experiences with ethnohistorical scholarship and ethnographic findings.

There are few faults worth noting. She might have strengthened her argument by discussing the attack in the conservation literature upon Malagasy loyalty to kin (*fihavanana*) in the form of contriving local societal rules (*dina*) against conservation transgressors. But, in her defence, conservation policy makers only appropriated local rules to serve a conservation master after the ICDP experiments proved untenable. Sodikoff's field study was done during the ICDP period.

It is worth noting that Sodikoff is caught in something of a contradiction herself: that she is a cultural anthropologist who has spent time labouring in the conservation sector, and yet has a deep regard and concern for the sustainability of Malagasy lives *vis-à-vis* crushing poverty. Too few cultural anthropologists embrace this contradiction and try, as Sodikoff does, to lift their voices above a murmured string of curses aimed at conservation projects. She offers no way out of the contradiction other than embracing it and enlivening the conversation that needs to take place about 'people and parks' in the light of the failures of the last conversation that ground to a halt with the inept ICDP projects.

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ALCINDA HONWANA, *The Time of Youth: work, social change, and politics in Africa*, Sterling, VA: Kumarian Press (pb \$27.95 – 978 1 56549 472 5). 2012, 240 pp.

Moving away from her earlier studies of young people in war-torn African nations, Honwana focuses on youth from four contrasting countries (Mozambique, South Africa, Senegal and Tunisia) to conceptualize how this social group is an agent for political change. Using the term 'waithood' to describe a liminal period experienced by youth anticipating adulthood, Honwana contributes to the emerging literature on youth in waiting. In waithood, youth are not idly awaiting change; they are industrious social actors. But as African youth engage in diverse activities to survive in precarious times, they face many inequalities. Such inequalities, Honwana argues, are far from being geographically defined, and a theme running through the book is the global experience of youth.

The book begins by grounding African youth in the literature on waithood, and by problematizing the understanding of adulthood and full personhood. Introducing the topic with vignettes from recent riots in London and Paris, Honwana includes African youth in the global predicament of young people. The middle chapters are more ethnographic and Africa-focused, covering the aspirations and challenges of African youth as they try to connect to formal economies of education and work. The book then illustrates the daily tactics African youth employ to survive and to realize their dreams, the intimate relationships they develop with each other and other social groups, and finally the relationships they reject with the state as they shun old-fashioned politics. The final chapter returns to broader themes of social change – youth's engagement with FRELIMO in Mozambique, the 1976 Soweto uprisings, and the more recent Tunisian revolution. Highlighting youth in protest, Honwana closes with a thought-provoking question: 'Will this waithood generation become the next 1968 generation?' (p. 169).

The book draws both on Honwana's extensive past research in Africa and more recent fieldwork – conducting in-depth interviews, facilitating focus groups, just 'hanging out' with youth – undertaken in the four countries. As Honwana tells us, 'Young people were eager to tell their stories' (p. xi), and she portrays the world of her informants through engaging life stories, weaving different characters through the various themes that constitute this busy tapestry of waiting. From the tactics of taxi drivers in Mozambique, to girls working in call centres in Tunisia and negotiating relationships with sugar daddies in Senegal, Honwana's examples encapsulate daily realities, inequalities and sentiments of (particularly urban) African youth struggling to make ends meet – experiences understood across the four countries as *desenrascar a vida*, *débrouillage*, 'just getting by'. For instance, Honwana introduces Aicha in Tunisia. At university, Aicha had joined other students to protest against limited future employment opportunities. A year after graduating, we learn that Aicha has yet to find a job and has resigned herself to working in an exploitative call centre, a plight suffered by many over-qualified young Tunisians. Across Africa in Maputo, we are presented with *chapa* (minibus taxi) drivers working long hours in insecure jobs. Unlike Aicha, these youth are not university graduates – and indeed we might question whether the experiences of youth are really the same across Africa – but Honwana rightly emphasizes youth as a state without choice and of feeling exploited. As such, waithood denotes the ambivalence of modernity: a time for imagining and reaching new opportunities and possibilities, yet also a period of restriction. Beyond looking at young Africans in the global order, Honwana also emphasizes their engagement with it, and their newfound identities, aspirations and frustrations. Unfortunately, while Honwana urges us to recognize the creative means of youth, her analysis is sandwiched between opening and closing vignettes of youth across the globe rioting violently.

Furthermore, while Honwana successfully depicts African youth acting in bustling scenes, just trying to make ends meet, we might question how this social group is actually constituted. Honwana notes that, as some suffer incessant waiting, waithood is blurring the boundaries of youth and adulthood. To what extent are the aspirations, struggles and survival strategies of youth shared by older generations in Africa? To understand this question better, we could link Honwana's contributions to a wider literature on 'becoming', to better understand youth's agency and the conflicts between generations. We might also ask whether Honwana's youth are the same as those of 1968. Citing Fanon, Honwana states that generations should identify their own cause, but her volume never states whether today's youth have the same cause as those of half a century ago.

Honwana's ambitious depth of scale offers an insightful synthetic text on African youth, shifting the focus from idleness or destruction and towards agency and constructive activity. By uniting North and sub-Saharan Africa, this short volume makes itself accessible to a wide general readership. I thoroughly recommend it to anyone interested in either African youth or youth studies more generally.

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JAMES GIBBS (ed.), *African Theatre 11: festivals*. James Currey, Oxford (pb £18.99 – 978 1 84701 057 5). 2012, 172 pp.

As a former guest editor of *African Theatre* (Special Issues 6 and 10), I am aware of the difficulties which accompany the task of achieving a balanced issue. You want to provide a geographical and thematic spread, but when the articles for selection arrive on your computer that's not how it turns out; familiar sources of articles tend to prevail. I suspect this is what James Gibbs, editor of *African Theatre 11 (AT11)* experienced. One of the articles is from Southern Africa, as is the interview, and one article is from Egypt; the other nine articles or information pieces are from West Africa (Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal), despite Gibbs's attempts to elicit articles from other regions. Obviously, that makes for some imbalance in the material.

However, Gibbs is able to provide unity to the collection by drawing attention in his introduction to some of the common themes shared by festivals. He rightly picks out Mshengu Kavanagh's article on Zimbabwe as a keynote for the whole volume, because it articulates the most important issues. Kavanagh acknowledges that festivals can provide an incentive for theatre workers to gain skills, but he says that this can only happen if government supports theatre with provisions for training, theatre venues and publicity. Unfortunately, in Zimbabwe 'independent professional production and performances were starved of funds [but] festivals did secure support'. Kavanagh also asserts that foreign donors, for PR reasons, also prefer supporting festivals rather than providing 'sustained developmental assistance to the arts' (p. 10). The overall picture is one of festivals diverting funding from theatre development.

Funding issues constitute a continuous thread throughout the collection. Although some authors (Pahwa, Egypt, and Oteh, Jos) feel that, on balance, money is well spent on festivals, others are adamant that it is criminally wasteful. Amy Niang quotes newspaper sources speculating that the Senegalese government spent as much as £330 million on FESMAN, which she identifies as a grotesque PR instrument for President Wade. Sonali Pahwa's informative and balanced article on the Cairo international Festival for Experimental Theatre (CIFET) acknowledges that 'vast amounts of taxpayers' money (are) spent on accommodating foreign visitors in five-star hotels'. On the positive side, she feels that the 'internationalization of CIFET prompted local dramatists to explore the diversity of culture within Egypt'. She clearly struggles to make a cost-benefit analysis when the benefits are easy to identify, but difficult to measure.

Many of the issues debated in *AT 11* relate to two early events, the Dakar Festival of 1966 and FESTAC in Lagos 1977. Both were huge Festivals hosting