

Editorial: *Africa / Brasil*

Welcome to the 13th edition of *3rd Text Africa*, an online peer-reviewed journal published by ASAI. *3rd Text Africa* began life in 2008 as an extension of the journal *Third Text*, making African content from the print journal more accessible through open-access publishing. Subsequently, *3rd Text Africa* began publishing original material with themed editions.

3rd Text Africa has been especially addressing topics related to African geography throughout its editions. As said in the issue dedicated to “Localities” (volume 3.1, 2013), this journal has faced “the need to focus more attention on particular African localities and their associated practices, specifically those receiving insufficient or no attention in prominent international journals and institutions.” Thus, it has contributed to reviewing the still dominantly generic and stereotyped approach to the artistic, critical, and curatorial productions of a vast continent with diverse regions, societies, cultures, and histories. Since its beginning, *3rd Text Africa* has special issues dedicated to African arts’ spatiality – “Re/centering artists” (volume 1.4, 2009), “Dis/locating Africa/s” (volume 2.1, 2010), and “Re/centering artists 2” (volume 2.4, 2010) – and to particular African artistic contexts – “Surveying South Africa” (volume 1.3, 2009), “South Africa in Black & White” (volume 2.3, 2010), “East Africa” (volume 4, 2015) and “Mozambique” (volume 5, 2018).

In the present issue, *3rd Text Africa* explores Africa’s spatiality in an expanded way, focusing on the relations between Africa and Brazil. The transatlantic and multitemporal connections between certain African regions and Brazil constitute an almost obvious and expected topic of *3rd Text Africa*. First, due to the relations maintained by Portuguese colonialism on both sides of the Atlantic and the trafficking of African enslaved people since the fifteenth century. However, the connections established from both sides of the Atlantic in their struggles for independence and the contacts maintained after the conquest of political autonomy have outlined an anti- and post-colonial relationship with the potential to establish other dynamics from the Global South.

There is no Brazil without Africa. But critical efforts to recognize and understand the contributions of Africans and Afro-descendants in the constitution of Brazilian society, as proposed by Manuel Querino in his seminal 1918 essay, “O colono preto como fator da civilização brasileira” (The Black settler as a factor of Brazilian civilization), are still few in the face of what there is to study. However, they have been increasing in recent decades. Particularly in the field of art, the critical, curatorial, and historiographic interest in Africa and its relation to Brazil is very recent and still incipient due to all that remains to be done.

Like other African diaspora contexts, Brazil is an important element of African history. Without Brazil, Africa would be different. So why not consider Brazil — albeit located on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean — as part of an African imaginary? This way, we could understand Brazil as one of the hybrid diasporic islands that Africans have been constituting with other migrant and native agents worldwide. Thus, art in Brazil must be understood and incorporated into the history of art in Africa.

Indeed, the archipelago logic is intrinsic to this issue of *3rd Text Africa*. Coherently, its production team and contributors delineate a network distributed worldwide, unrestricted on the shores of the South Atlantic. If we think about the localities addressed in the articles, as well as where editors, authors, and translator were born and are based, this issue connects Angola, Benin, Brazil, Canada, Cape Verde, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Japan, Mozambique, Nigeria, Portugal, Senegal, South Africa, Sweden, and the United States.

Including case studies and voices not only from Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa, America, and Europe, this issue of *3rd Text Africa* goes beyond colonialism's shadow. On the other hand, the bilingual edition, with all texts presented in English and Portuguese, is a way to broaden the audience and minimize the dominance of English as the lingua franca of globalized art.

Still, regarding the shadows of colonialism, it is interesting to note that in this issue, there is no article focusing specifically on the periods when Brazil was a Portuguese colony or when transatlantic human trafficking and captivity in Brazil prevailed. The articles indicate that authors are aware of the effects of colonialism, the slave trade, and slavery but more interested in cultural and artistic exchanges in later periods. And some of the articles included in this volume discuss the artistic relations between Africa and Brazil amid the processes of political independence in Africa.

Indeed, Africa and Brazil have been particular contexts for art developments in the Southern Hemisphere. As many artists and other artistic agents in Brazil have had unique stimuli and experiences in Africa, transforming their works and the cultural contexts in which they intervened, individuals and institutions from Africa were important agents in the process of transforming art in Brazil. Similarly, the articles published here are sufficient evidence of how Brazil was, at times, a vital reference or context for artists, critics, and curators in Africa. This makes us question not only the dominance of European agents and institutions in the process of artistic modernization but also, perhaps above all, the idea of modernization as something exclusive to European interventions, helping to question the beliefs of modernization and modernism still in force.

Covering various media, institutions, and topics from the art world (sculpture, photography, architecture, art education, art activism, museums, exhibitions, archives), the texts of this *3rd Text Africa* issue sometimes articulate with each other, but they also indicate voids to be explored. Stimulating as they are, these articles make explicit how the relations between Africa and Brazil still need further exploration.

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