

This article was downloaded by: 10.2.97.136

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Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

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## The Routledge Companion to World Cinema

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### Eyes on the future

Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315688251.ch40>

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**Published online on: 27 Sep 2017**

**How to cite :-** Mette Hjort. 27 Sep 2017, *Eyes on the future from: The Routledge Companion to World Cinema* Routledge

Accessed on: 30 Mar 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315688251.ch40>

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## EYES ON THE FUTURE

### World Cinema and transnational capacity building

*Mette Hjort*

#### **Introduction**

“World Cinema”, Dudley Andrew remarks, is now “permanently with us” (Andrew 2004: 9).<sup>1</sup> The term’s current centrality in Film Studies signals a substantial shift in thinking: a previously influential “foreign art film” category is no longer seen as adequate to the task of doing justice to moving images produced in a host of sites around the globe; once the object of survey-style discussions undertaken from afar, these images now prompt a deeper and more systematic engagement with the cultures from which they arise. Indeed, as Andrew sees it, the role of the World Cinema scholar is to “zero in” on specific “cinema sites”, to provide “coordinates for navigating” the “world of World Cinema” (Andrew 2004: 9). Consistent with Andrew’s proposal is Lúcia Nagib’s positive definition of “World Cinema” as “cinema worldwide”, as compared with “non-Hollywood” cinema. Advocating a polycentric approach that is at once democratic and inclusive, Nagib foregrounds the need to give due attention to “peaks of creation in different times and periods” throughout the world (Nagib 2006: 30). In this equalizing model, Hollywood becomes one centre among others, ceasing thereby to be the standard against which varieties of moving image production elsewhere must be measured.

The idea of a diminished role for Hollywood is an appealing one, as is the invitation to seek a deep understanding of specific “cinema sites”. A comparative focus on the cinematic contributions of small nations, one aimed at establishing or further developing supportive networks among relevant practitioners, offers a fruitful way of implementing an inclusive approach to World Cinema. This transnational approach to small-nation Cinema Studies requires a broad conception of small nationhood that recognises the implications not only of geographic scale and population size, but also of limited resources (measured in GDP) and histories of diminished political autonomy (especially colonial ones) (Hjort and Petrie 2007: 3–78). As for the call for site-based explorations, case studies are promising in this regard, especially if they give due attention to what I call “practitioner’s agency” (Hjort 2010a: 40–99). The process of coming to understand the aspirations, practices, and intentions of practitioners—of festival organisers, film commissioners, film educators and filmmakers—brings to light the institutional, professional and personal networks, many of them transnational, that are operative within a given site. Consideration of practitioner’s agency also helps to reveal the constraints and opportunities by

which the relevant context is defined, thereby providing a basis for assessing the nature of the contributions made by different instances of cinematic expression.

The aim in this chapter is to trace collaborative links between sites of cinematic activity in the Global North and Global South. More specifically, it seeks to explore a range of film-related projects involving film practitioners, production companies, government and non-profit organisations in five sites that are variously shaped by one or more of the defining elements of small nationhood: Denmark, Burkina Faso, Mali, Kenya, and Uganda. Film-based collaboration between the Nordic country and the West African and East African countries in question is structured through bilateral agreements that are government-supported, development-oriented, and generally attuned to the promise of regional synergies. The programme names and funding periods are as follows:

- Mali–Denmark: Cultural Co-Operation Programme (2008–2012; 2012–2016)
- DANFASO—Culture and Development Programme for Burkina Faso (2011–2013, extended through 2014; 2015–2017)
- Uganda Youth Cultures Project (2010–2013; 2014–2016)
- Kenya Culture and Development Programme (2014–2017)

These collaborative North/South programmes are all instances of what I have called “milieu-building transnationalism” (Hjort 2010b), for at the heart of each of them is a “resource partnership” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2013: 4) that is intended to facilitate knowledge exchange and capacity building in some film-related area (ranging from production skills through to audience development). Special attention will be given to the Uganda Youth Cultures Project, which has been especially fruitful. Due to limited space, the other projects will be discussed in a summary way.

The motivation for examining the values, challenges and achievements of different examples of policy-based milieu-building transnationalism on a North/South basis is threefold. First, the intent is further to expand the scope of World Cinema Studies. The claim throughout is that it is of crucial importance to look beyond the “peaks of cinematic creation” (Nagib 2006: 30) to the ground where the conditions for different types of film-related success are being prepared. The study of World Cinema, that is, must also be about the rich varieties of film-focused initiatives that are fuelled by the *aspiration* to develop creative milieus to the point where talk of “peaks” becomes possible. Questions having to do with the quality and quantity of film productions are relevant here, but so are issues related to the appropriateness of types of capacity building, to audience development, to the need to nurture a local voice and perspective, and to governments’ policies regarding broadcasters’ commitment to local content. The drive fueling milieu-building aspirations can often be traced to a gifted filmmaker who, in spite of having achieved recognition both nationally and internationally, is operating in relative isolation and under conditions that make regular filmmaking difficult, if not impossible. World Cinema Studies cannot afford to ignore such figures, whether they are emerging or established talents. In many cases these figures’ milieu-building initiatives are as important as their films. Typically, their interventions in specific sites are based on deeply held convictions about the public value of moving images, or, in other words, about their capacity to contribute to the creation of sustainable “good” societies. By taking efforts to develop a creative milieu seriously, even in the absence of a significant number of high quality films, a capacious approach to World Cinema helps to answer a crucial question to which many films emerging from the affluent and well-established sectors of the Global North suggest a poor answer: why make films in the first place?

A second reason for drawing attention to examples of Nordic/African partnerships has to do with tendencies in small-nation Cinema Studies. Certain small nations, some of them in the Nordic region, have managed to overcome many of the recurring obstacles associated with small nationhood and have built thriving film milieus. In the context of small-nation Cinema Studies, attempts, for example, to explain Denmark's success with film since the late 1980s have emphasised film policy on a national, Nordic and European level, as well as institution building within the country itself (Hjort 2005; Bondebjerg 2016). Thus, the National Film School of Denmark, an elite conservatoire-style film school, is seen as playing a critically important role (Philipsen 2004; Novrup Redvall 2010) within a larger and quite variegated film training landscape that itself affords diverse opportunities for the enhancement of skills and pathways into filmmaking. Case studies have documented the National Film School's commitment to developing independent documentary filmmaking in the Middle East and North Africa (Hjort 2013), as well as CPH:DOX's (Copenhagen International Documentary Festival) "twinning" of European and non-European filmmakers through DOX:LAB (later renamed CPH:LAB), a capacity-building programme for a small number of selected filmmakers (Hjort 2016). Collaboration between the National Film School and the Danish Film Institute on the one hand and a variety of stakeholders in Bhutan, on the other, has also been the object of cogent analysis (Grøn 2016). What has yet to be properly captured, however, is the full extent to which practitioners in the Danish filmmaking milieu have looked beyond not only the Nordic region, but Europe and the Western coast of the United States too, to forge productive relationships with filmmakers in the Global South, often with the support of government-funded organisations and through the implementation of official development strategies. Denmark's longer-term, partner-based engagement with film beyond the Global North extends to the Middle East and Asia, as well as to West Africa and East Africa.

The third reason for examining the partnerships in question concerns the role of human rights thinking in the context of North/South collaborations with a focus on film. The transnational partnerships that are considered here are implemented through the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' development strategy, and this, as we shall see, is explicitly framed in terms of support for human rights beyond Danish borders. As Michael Ignatieff points out in a critical vein, "human rights is increasingly seen as the language of a moral imperialism just as ruthless and just as self-deceived as the colonial hubris of yesteryear" (2001: 19–20). Titles evoking the scepticism to which Ignatieff seeks an alternative include *The End of Human Rights* (Douzinas 2000), *The Last Utopia* (Moyn 2010), and *The Endtimes of Human Rights* (Hopgood 2013). Of interest, then, are questions regarding the ways in which the Danish government's overarching rights-based framework for development work contributes to or hinders the establishing of productive, reciprocally rewarding relationships among film practitioners on a transnational, North/South, as well as South/South basis.

The analysis presented below is based on a mix of methods. Policy documents, government strategies, grant applications, country reports, and interim as well as final reports on specific partnership programmes have been scrutinised carefully. Films produced by practitioners associated with the partnerships, or through the partnerships themselves, have been studied with an eye to identifying thematic and stylistic features, as well as issues having to do with local culture. In the case of Burkina Faso, non-participant observation was possible, as I assisted with training programmes at Gaston Kaboré's film school, IMAGINE, during FESPACO in 2011 and 2013; in 2013, at the same time as a Danish trainer was conducting a workshop at the school. A great deal of weight has been given to practitioner interviews and site visits. In addition to field trips to Burkina Faso, a research trip to Kenya was undertaken in the Spring of 2016. Practitioner interviews,

either face-to-face or through Skype, have been conducted with, among others: current and former employees at the Centre for Culture and Development (CKU, under the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Vibeke Munk Petersen [2015]; Louise Friis Pedersen [2015]; Elizabeth Maina [2016], based in Nairobi, Kenya); the Head of the continuing education arm of the National Film School of Denmark (Tina Sørensen [2013]); film trainers at the Danish film school for children and young people, Station Next (Claus Michaelsen [2014]); a film trainer (Frederick Kigozi [2014]) and project coordinator (Denis Pato [2014]) associated with Mira Nair's *Maisha* in Uganda; filmmakers in Kenya (Judy Kibinge [2016]) and Burkina Faso (Gaston Kaboré [2011; 2013]; the Head of the Danish Film Institute's (DFI) Film Archive (Jacob Trock [2014]); the Head of the Children and Youth Department at the DFI (Charlotte Giese [2008]); and a key trainer in the Mali programme (Anne Juul [2015], previously with Zentropa and currently production manager at Metronome). Analysis of the values, challenges and achievements of the transnational programmes makes reference, not only to central filmmakers but also to cinematic works, however short or long, that have been developed through them. In some cases, selective reference is also made to films that provided a rationale for the establishing of specific transnational partnerships in West and East Africa.

### **Development strategies: the role of the Danish Centre for Culture and Development (CKU)**

The programmes in Mali, Burkina Faso, Uganda and Kenya were developed by CKU and it is thus necessary to clarify the mandate and mode of operation of this body. Established in 1998 as a self-governing institution under the auspices of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, CKU is guided in its work by two fundamental goals: the strengthening of art and culture in developing countries; and the enhancement of Danish audiences' knowledge and appreciation of these countries' artistic and cultural contributions. In the Danish context, this second goal has been pursued through the IMAGES festival, an Arts Fund that supports collaborative artistic projects, and the youth programme known as World Images in Motion. The mobility of artists is a clear emphasis here, for the festival and fund enable cultural practitioners to travel to Denmark for the purposes of artistic collaboration, performances and a direct engagement with Danish audiences.

CKU has, since 2013, been charged with implementing Denmark's Strategy for Culture and Development, "The Right to Art and Culture" (Danida 2013). This cultural strategy is itself encompassed by Denmark's overarching "strategy for development cooperation", "The Right to a Better Life" (Danish Government 2012). The latter strategy identifies two objectives, poverty reduction and the promotion of human rights, and encourages their pursuit through activities in four priority areas (human rights and democracy; stability and protection; green growth; and social progress). "The Right to Art and Culture" is designed to bring about "positive change" through art and culture, recognising that "a rich artistic and cultural life [also] has value in itself". Describing Denmark's "strong cultural policy traditions" as a resource on "the global stage", Christian Friis Bach, then Minister for Development Cooperation, foregrounds an aspiration to "create equal and strong cultural partnerships, including in new dynamic emerging economies with a cultural and religious identity that is distinctly different from ours" (Danida 2013: 3). The implementation of "The Right to Art and Culture" is to be effected through five priority areas: "empowering people through active participation in art and cultural activities"; "ensuring freedom of expression for artists and cultural actors"; "enhancing economic growth through creative industries"; "strengthening peace and reconciliation in post-conflict areas through art and cultural activities" and "promoting

intercultural dialogue and intercultural collaboration” (Danida 2013: 6). Inasmuch as the government’s strategy for development cooperation, including development through art and culture, rests on a rights-based approach, CKU’s design of programmes since 2013 has made reference to different categories of rights:

- a) Cultural rights, e.g. [the right to] partake in culture, freedom of artistic expression and creativity, [the] promotion of cultural diversity, [the] protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, etc.
- b) Other human rights treaties and articles that have a *specific relevance* for artists and culture operators, e.g. intellectual property rights, copyright, freedom of movement, freedom of assembly, etc.
- c) Areas where art and culture initiatives can make a *positive contribution* to the realisation of rights—e.g. civil and political rights, social and economic rights, [the] right to development, [the] rights of indigenous people, [the] rights of women, [the] rights of children etc.

(CKU 2014: 9)

Programmes (in Mali, Uganda and Burkina Faso) that predate the “Right to Art and Culture” strategy are broadly consistent with the abovementioned priorities, although less strategically focused. However, assessment of the effectiveness of these programmes has typically made reference to the strategy in question. Thus, programmes granted monies for a subsequent phase could be rethought in light of the designated priority areas.

The “Right to Art and Culture” strategy brought about pronounced changes having to do with the roles and responsibilities associated with CKU’s programmes. Prior to 2013, programmes were developed, to some extent funded, and largely managed by the Danish embassies in the Danish government’s designated “programme countries”, the role of CKU at the time being related to quality assurance. Following the introduction of the new strategy, development, funding and oversight of the culture and development programmes became the responsibility of CKU. Advantages of this approach are seen as including a streamlining of activities with an eye to achieving greater impact. Under the new dispensation, CKU came to emphasise sustainable projects with the potential to be scaled up, including through regional synergies involving South/South cooperation. The embassies have, however, retained an important role, as Louise Friis Pedersen, CKU’s programme manager for West Africa, remarks:

We still work closely with the embassies. They have to feel the programme document makes sense. We can’t just come up with a programme without their requesting that we develop it. So there’s still a sense of ownership for them, but without the administrative burdens.

(interview, Friis Pedersen)

Although the interest of the West and East African programmes lies in their commitment to moving images, it is important to note that CKU always develops multidisciplinary interventions, typically with three to five distinct elements, each with its own sub-programme. Thus, for example, the “Uganda Youth Cultures Project” focuses on capacity building in five areas seen as relevant to the future of young Ugandans: film, music, dance, theatre and electronic media. CKU conducts team-based research in each selected country and the findings inform the design of the new programme. Each research team includes a national consultant with local know-how. Also, the fact-finding brief includes consultation with national stakeholders,

including local government, the aim being to ensure that programmes dovetail with the priorities of local government. Thus, for example, the elements in the “Ugandan Youth Cultures” programme are meant to align with the Government of Uganda’s “Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda” (PRDP), and, further, to contribute to Uganda’s pursuit of a “culturally vibrant, cohesive and progressive nation” through its national cultural policy (Royal Danish Embassy 2010: 7). Funding allocated to the programmes varies. In the case of “Ugandan Youth Cultures” 5,600,000 DKK were allocated over a three-year period, 2,543,835 of them for film (Ibid.: 46). Funding for programmes that progress to a second phase, as in the case of Mali, is typically significantly higher. Support for the Mali–Denmark Programme in its second phase was 10,599,000 DKK, with 3,099,000 being earmarked for film (Danida 2012: 29).

Unfortunately, CKU’s programmes have now come to an end. The centre-right government led by Lars Løkke Rasmussen since June 2015 closed CKU at the end of 2016, asking embassies, according to Kenyan lawyer Elizabeth Maina, CKU’s programme officer in Nairobi, to continue to administer programmes through 2017 (interview, Maina). The elimination of CKU represents a significant loss and is symptomatic of neoliberal priorities, political expediency, and a diminished political appetite for funding not only development work, but also culture. Given the context of CKU’s demise, an account of its milieu-building efforts on behalf of moving image cultures in the Global South is especially timely.

### Youth and Film Uganda

By all accounts CKU’s film programme in Uganda, which targets children and young people aged 13–20, has been especially successful. An important factor in this regard is no doubt the quality and appropriateness of the collaborative partnerships it has generated. The primary Ugandan partner was Maisha (meaning “life” in Swahili), a non-profit organisation established in Kampala in 2004 by the New York-based Indian filmmaker Mira Nair (well known for *Salaam Bombay*, 1988, India; *Mississippi Masala*, 1991, UK/USA; *Monsoon Wedding*, 2001, USA/India; *Vanity Fair*, 2004, USA/UK/India; *The Namesake*, 2006, USA/India; *Amelia*, 2009, USA/Canada and, most recently, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, 2012, USA/Pakistan, an adaptation of Pakistani writer Mohsin Hamid’s eponymous post-9/11 novel). Guided by the motto “If we don’t tell our stories, no one else will”, Maisha targets “aspiring and established screenwriters and filmmakers of all ages from Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda”. The Maisha Foundation seeks to “empower artists”, to “enrich World Cinema” and to “establish the roots of a self-sustaining film industry in East Africa” (Maisha).

The primary Danish partner was (up until the end of the first phase) the DFI, through its Children and Youth Department, Headed by Charlotte Giese. Giese played a significant role in the design of the programme, having been part of the research team led by then CKU Head of Projects, Vibeke Munk Petersen. Giese brought considerable expertise in the area of filmmaking for children and young people to the project. Equally helpful was Giese’s earlier collaboration with the Zanzibar International Film Festival (ZIFF), focusing on film programming for children and youth and capacity building in the area of film production for young people. Denmark’s longstanding commitment, supported by policymaking, to young people’s cultural right to experience diverse, high quality, age-appropriate films provided a basis for the DFI’s involvement with ZIFF. More specifically, Tanzanian filmmaker and Australian academic Martin Mhando (director of the award-winning film *Maangamizi: The Ancient One*, 2001, Tanzania/USA, Maisha Lab mentor, and long-serving Director of ZIFF) saw considerable

potential, within a development context, in film's ability to speak to the concerns, needs and aspirations of a sizeable percentage of the East African population. Mhando's vision is supported by demographic data: for example, according to *New Vision*, Uganda's leading daily, Uganda had the youngest population in the world in 2012, with 78 per cent of Ugandans under 30 years of age and 52 per cent under 15 (Bwambale 2012).

The primary partners were charged with subcontracting a certain amount of work. In the case of Maisha, it was a matter of reaching agreements with the Amakula International Film Festival and the Straight Talk Foundation, both in Uganda, and with CPH:DOX/DOX:LAB in Denmark. Maisha hired Denis Pato, through Straight Talk, to coordinate mobile cinema screenings (two Danish, two African and two international films in each year's film programme) and to establish cine-clubs in five selected areas—Gulu, Kampala, Moroto, Mbale and Mbarara (interview, Pato)—as well as to run 5-day film training Labs in Gulu and Kampala, with participants recruited through the cine-clubs (Ibid.). Pato brought an especially appropriate skillset to his role as project manager: a social science degree, a postgraduate diploma in project planning and management, further studies in international relations and diplomacy, and significant experience at Straight Talk, a foundation that pursues social change through a variety of media by engaging young people with health rights. Maisha's agreement with CPH:DOX/DOX:LAB concerned the recruitment of emerging young Ugandan filmmakers to the Copenhagen International Documentary Film Festival's talent development programme, DOX:LAB. Maisha also invited Ugandan filmmaker Frederick Kigozi, an alumnus of the 2010 Maisha Lab, to serve as a mentor for CKU's Youth and Film Uganda filmmaking Labs.

On the Danish side of things, the DFI was charged with subcontracting training tasks to Station Next, a film school established on the grounds of the Zentropa Film Town in Avedøre, Denmark. Devoted to talent development targeting young people aged 13–18 and reaching approximately 6,000 aspiring young filmmakers every year, Station Next has established an enviable reputation due to its insistence on professional standards and a pedagogy focused on learning by doing (Station Next 2016). Station Next's role in the Youth and Film Uganda programme involved sharing its youth-oriented practice-based film curriculum with the Lab mentors in Uganda, so as jointly to develop an approach appropriate to the Ugandan context. Claus Michaelsen from Station Next was also on site in Uganda to assist with the running of some of the annual film production Labs.

A number of films were produced through Youth and Film Uganda, some of them by young people aged 13–20, others by emerging filmmakers who were recommended to DOX:LAB organisers Patricia Drati and Tine Fischer for participation in CPH:DOX's DOX:LAB. Youth and Film Uganda funded the participation of three Ugandan filmmakers in DOX:LAB's "twinning" of European and non-European directors. In each case the brief given to the directorial "twins" was to develop an idea for a film together in Copenhagen—during the CPH:DOX festival, where the first phase of DOX:LAB unfolds—and to complete it before the next edition of the CPH:DOX festival. Ugandan filmmaker Caroline Kamyia had been twinned with Danish Boris Bertram during DOX:LAB 2009–2010. The two filmmakers successfully produced *Chips and Liver Girls* (2010, Denmark/Uganda), about young Ugandan women and the "men who pay for their studies and a modern life in luxury" (CPH:LAB). Interviews with Patricia Drati (2013) and Palestinian filmmaker Mahasen Nasser-Eldin (2012, a member of the same talent development cohort), indicate that Kamyia was an especially appreciated participant in the first Lab. The Youth and Film Uganda programme document (Royal Danish Embassy 2010: 14) refers to her participation in DOX:LAB and to the success of her feature film *Imani* (2010, Sweden/Uganda), about the former child soldier Olweny. Kamyia's talents



and achievements and earlier training with Maisha (Maisha Film Lab 2006) were clearly seen as providing a rationale for links between the Kampala-based organisation and DOX:LAB in Copenhagen. The CKU-funded Ugandan participants in DOX:LAB are as follows: Donald Mugisha (2010–2011), who made *The Kampala Story* (2012, Uganda) with Danish Kasper Bisgaard; Frederick Kigozi, who was paired with Danish Mira Jargil but ended up making *This Is My Family* (2012, Denmark/Uganda) mostly on his own; and Peter Tukei Muhumuza, who co-directed *Walk with Me* (2013, Uganda/Denmark/Sweden) with Danish Johan Oettinger. Of special interest here is Kigozi's *This Is My Family*, given the filmmaker's crucial role as a Lab mentor for the CKU project. Trained in Abu Dhabi, Kigozi had participated in a Maisha Lab in 2010, where he made a poignant short called *Rough Boy*, about "issues of mental illness and the difficulties individual families have dealing with the fallout from it" (interview, Kigozi). This film, which straddles the fiction/non-fiction divide in ways that are entirely consistent with the CPH:DOX and DOX:LAB concept, became the basis for Kigozi's acceptance to DOX:LAB 2011–2012. A fascinating film about polygamy, *This Is My Family* originated in discussions between Jargil and Kigozi, with the former recalling her parents' experiments with an open marriage and the latter expressing critical views about family arrangements involving multiple wives in Uganda. Due to pregnancy, Jargil was unable to travel to Uganda to shoot the film, but Kigozi sees the pair's early sparring as positive and as having substantially shaped the film (interview, Kigozi).

The Labs for young people (aged 13–20) in Gulu and Kampala also produced important work. Two of the films, *The Secret Note* (Youth Lab, 2011, Gulu, Isaac Titus Odokorach) and *Christmas Turkey* (Youth Film, 2011, Kampala, Reagan Washiwala)<sup>2</sup> were accepted to the Chicago International Children's Festival and Pato recalls the effects produced by this recognition in Uganda:

When we announced in the film club that two of our films were accepted at the Chicago international Children's Festival, it was wildfire in the club. Everyone wanted to make a film and get it accepted at some festival somewhere. And we were very happy about that. We began to receive more scripts, more phone calls from our youth.  
(interview, Pato)

It is worth underscoring that both films are issues-oriented, focusing on problems on which the children and young people participating in the Labs wished to reflect. In the case of *The Secret Note*, the central issue is misunderstanding and jealousy among school children. *Christmas Turkey* explores dysfunctional parenting, through the eyes of a teenage boy who seeks to counteract the effects of his father's alcoholism. Also, it is important to recall the overarching goals that shaped the various activities of Youth and Film Uganda, including the filmmaking in the Labs. Among other things, the CKU programme aimed to work towards "reunification among youth groups", the bolstering of young people's "self esteem", and "conflict reduction among youth" (Royal Danish Embassy 2010: 12). The context for these goals is the history of violent conflict in Uganda, with much of it targeting young people. Gulu, for example, is close to the Northern town of Atiak, where Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army, having massacred hundreds of civilians on 20 April 1995, forced "youth [. . .] to join the LRA to serve as the next generation of combatants and sexual slaves" (Liu Institute for Global Issues and the Gulu NGO Forum 2007: 2). Pato's reflections on the filmmaking activities in this context suggest that the goal of nurturing positive youth cultures in post-conflict areas was achieved on a modest, yet promising scale:

When you talk about conflict reduction, we worked in conflict zones, like Gulu, in Northern Uganda, and Moroto. You must know about the rebel activities of Joseph Kony in Northern Uganda. For years they shattered the lives of young people and adults alike and today people still live with post-conflict trauma in these zones. So when this project was taken to Gulu, we hoped we'd target the young people who are suffering from post-conflict trauma and that we'd be able to fit them into this club, so that they could get out of the conflict, away from the traumatic scenes that keep replaying in their minds. I can't boast about this because we did not really access the young people who are suffering from post-conflict trauma on a large scale. But the few that we did manage to access, we have been able, for lack of a better word, to "rehabilitate". We don't address every young person in Uganda, but we have started the process. And that's part of the reason why we need this project to continue. We think it's helping.

*(interview, Pato)*

Pato was keen to see the project, including the approach taken, continue. He did, however, indicate that the project goals would be more readily achievable with enhanced funding. As he saw it, the rhythm of the Labs, which were run on an annual basis, made it difficult to build momentum, to access enough young people, to sustain their commitment to creative expression and problem solving through moving images, and to further develop their emerging skillsets (interview, Pato).

A particularly important outcome of the Youth and Film Uganda project has to do with pedagogy and its role in nurturing self-esteem. Michaelsen (from Station Next 2016), as well as Pato and Kigozi (from Maisha) all agree that one of the most productive aspects of the transnational capacity-building partnership was the forging of a space for a youth-focused pedagogy in Uganda. Michaelsen recalls his first encounter with the Gulu Lab participants (who made *The Secret Note*) and the sense of fear that permeated their interactions with the trainers at first, due to their having been exclusively exposed to disciplinarian schooling. Pato is especially eloquent about the need for alternative, youth-centred pedagogies in Uganda:

One of the things that has been happening in this country is that young people are downtrodden by their parents and their teachers. Young people are not allowed to express their most honest opinions when they are with adults. Sometimes it is seen as disrespect. A young person cannot argue with an adult, even if she is arguing without necessarily disrespecting the adult. It is seen as a sign of disrespect. So, personally, when I took up this project, that's one of the things that I was so passionate about. It was one of the circles I wanted to break. I wanted to help young people to feel free to air their opinions, to have discussions with adults without necessarily disrespecting them. In many ways this helped us as an organisation to achieve the goal of empowering young people through this project.

*(interview, Pato)*

As Michaelsen sees it, the exchanges between Danes and Ugandans, including the young people themselves, about student-centred as compared with more authoritarian pedagogies, led to an approach that "was really the best of both worlds" (interview, Michaelsen). His view is clearly shared by his Ugandan peers, who also describe the collaborative efforts as especially productive in the area of pedagogy, and as having helped to develop young Ugandans' self-esteem, as specified by the film programme's overall goals.

### Transnational capacity building in Kenya, Mali and Burkina Faso

CKU's work with film in Uganda provides a regional context for the most recent East African programme, the "Kenya Culture and Development Programme (2014–2017)", with CKU's country report on Kenya referring to the "great potential" for "synergies" with "CKU's culture and development programmes in Tanzania and Uganda" (CKU 2014: 4) and to the possibility of exchanges with "Maisha Film Lab in Uganda [and] ZIFF in Tanzania" (CKU 2014: 24). With reference to the "Right to Art and Culture" strategy, the Kenyan programme adopts two strategic foci: "empowering people through active participation in art and cultural activities" and "enhancing economic growth through creative industries". Two other goals in the strategy—"ensuring freedom of expression for artists and cultural actors" and "strengthening peace and reconciliation in post-conflict areas through art and cultural activities"—are identified, not as strategic foci, but as "cross-cutting areas" (CKU 2014: 5). The emphasis in the film-related part of the programme is on audience building for independent, creative documentary films, and not, as in the case of Uganda, on film production. Yet, inasmuch as the principal film partner is Docubox, a documentary film fund that "supports intimate, character-driven storytelling and encourages new forms of ownership and authorship in East Africa" (Irura 2013), film production and film training are a crucial part of the picture, although not directly funded by CKU. An important goal, in fact, is to encourage interest in making the sorts of films that Docubox funds, and to do this through audience building. Docubox's audience building, through screenings of films by Africans and about Africa, takes place in Nairobi—at Shalom House and more recently through activist photojournalist Boniface Mwangi's organisation PAWA254—but also in counties outside the capital, such as Nakuruu and Machakos. Judy Kibinge, one of East Africa's most accomplished filmmakers, founded Docubox in 2012, with support from the Ford Foundation. Especially noteworthy films by Kibinge include the fiction feature *Something Necessary* (2013, Germany/Kenya), evoking post-election violence in Kenya in 2007/2008 and its implications, and the documentary *Scarred: Anatomy of a Massacre* (2015, Kenya), which is about the until recently largely unacknowledged massacre of Somalis in Wajir, in Northeastern Kenya, in 1984 (Figure 40.1).



Figure 40.1 A survivor of the 1984 Wagalla massacre displays her scars: *Scarred: Anatomy of a Massacre* (2015, Kenya, Judy Kibinge).

Designed with specific challenges and opportunities in Mali in mind, CKU's "Mali–Denmark: Cultural Co-Operation Programme" pursues poverty reduction through culture and adds further elements to the story of North/South capacity building in film. A key figure in this case is the Danish filmmaker Per Fly, well known for the trilogy consisting of *Benken* (*The Bench*, 2000, Denmark/Sweden), *Arven* (*The Inheritance*, 2003, Denmark/Sweden/Norway/UK), and *Drabet* (*Manslaughter*, 2005, Denmark/Sweden/Norway/UK): Fly's friendship with the Danish ambassador to Mali, visits to the country, encounter with the work of the CNCM (Le centre national de cinématographie du Mali, established in 1979, under the Ministry of Culture), and strong desire to enable Malian filmmakers to undertake post-production work on their films in Mali itself were all important factors during the early stages of the programme's formulation (interview, Anne Juul). The CKU-funded activities are based on collaboration between the CNCM, the Danish Film Institute's Film Archive, and the production companies Zentropa and Creative Alliance (the latter being an initiative from 2013, launched by leading Danish filmmakers, including Per Fly). A primary objective of the Mali–Denmark programme was to establish a fully-fledged post-production facility at the CNCM and this has been achieved. Motivating the creation of such a facility was Fly's realisation that post-production for Sidy Diabaté's *Da Monzon, la conquête de Samanyana* (*Da Monzon—The Conquest of Samanyana*, 2011, Mali) could not be completed in Mali and that this had serious implications for authorial control (Figure 40.2). Early collaboration between the CNCM and Zentropa thus concentrated on the post-production for this film, with the director travelling to Copenhagen in order to be part of the process. Further capacity-building efforts in the area of post-production have taken the form of workshop-style training at the CNCM in Bamako, Mali. Also, four trainees were selected for a mentorship programme in Denmark, where they worked intensively with top-tier Danish professionals specialising in colour grading, sound, visual effects, and post-production coordination (CKU 2015: 38). During the first phase of the Mali–Denmark programme, distribution and audience building were also a priority. A number of mobile cinemas were secured, with the aim of complementing fixed cinemas in Bamako and Ségou and of taking films such as *Da Monzon* to audiences outside the capital. Working with the CNCM, the DFI's film archive developed



Figure 40.2 *Da Monzon* asserts his right to the throne, in the wake of his father's death: *Da Monzon, la conquête de Samanyana* (*Da Monzon—The Conquest of Samanyana*, 2011, Mali, Sidy Diabaté). ©Centre National de la Cinématographie du Mali (CNCM)

yet another element in the collaborative programme: a project to digitalise selected celluloid films and thereby to contribute to the preservation of Mali's film heritage. Moussa Ouane, the CNCM's director, Assane Kouyaté and Sidi Bécaye Traoré, both also from the CNCM, selected works from their collection of some 1700 cans of film and these were subsequently digitalised by Jacob Trock and his colleagues at the archive in Glostrup, Denmark. The Malians were fully included in the process, which was seen as the basis for knowledge exchange between the DFI archive and the CNCM. Overall, the archive's intervention was a significant one, for Trock estimates that about seventy-five cans of film were saved from inevitable destruction by hot and dusty conditions in Bamako (interview, Trock).

In addition to clear successes, the Mali–Denmark programme has also brought disappointments. Security issues related to the presence of al-Qa'ida in the Lands of Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and al-Murabitoun have been a factor, as have communication difficulties arising from the instability of the Internet in Mali. Post-production on Cheick Oumar Sissoko's *Rapt à Bamako* (Rapt in Bamako, 2014, Mali), an action film exploring difficulties thwarting multi-party democracy in Africa, was originally to have been completed in the fully professionalised facilities at the CNCM, but was finally moved to Morocco. This departure from an original intention is seen by some of the Danish partners as symptomatic of a number of organisational problems. These, they claim, must be resolved if they are to continue to invest time in what, for them, has always been a passion-driven undertaking rather than a fully remunerated job (interview, Juul). The programme has also produced unexpected benefits, however. Thus, for example, film production manager Anne Juul and archivist Jacob Trock both describe the program's fostering of new types of relationships and exchanges among film practitioners in Denmark—between the archive and production companies, for example—as positive, even energizing. Juul also refers to friendships with remarkable people and to rich encounters with Malian culture, including the country's musical traditions (interview, Juul).

Development cooperation between Denmark and Burkina Faso began as early as 1973, and included provision for the support of film culture in 1989. More specifically, DANICOM, then a division of the Danish Broadcasting Corporation, assisted with film marketing, AV-engineering, and press relations in connection with FESPACO (The Panafrican Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou) from 1989–1999 (CKU 2011: 4). More recently, the “Culture and Development Programme for Burkina Faso (2011–2013)” has sought to bring a variety of resources to three areas: animation, film and music. The film component was based on a partnership between Gaston Kaboré's IMAGINE, an independent training site established in 2003 by the filmmaker and his wife Edith Ouédraogo, and the continuing education arm of the National Film School of Denmark, which is overseen by Tina Sørensen. Capacity building in animation has been pursued through a partnership between Association Burkinabé du Cinéma d'Animation (ABCA) in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, and the Animation Workshop in Viborg, Denmark. The national broadcaster Radio Télévision du Burkina (RTB) also made an initial commitment to the project (which it did not honour) in connection with plans for an animated TV series, *Afrogames* (interview, Friis Pedersen).

In Burkina Faso, there were essentially two dimensions to capacity building in the area of film: improvement of the conditions for training at IMAGINE through the purchase of equipment and workshops (on cinematography, sound, editing and script to screen processes), all conducted at IMAGINE in Ouagadougou. The programme included an element of mobility, Kaboré having been invited to Denmark (for the purposes of selecting an appropriate Danish partner) and Daouda Zallé to the National Film School of Denmark. Implementation

of the programme has not always been smooth. Most problems appear to have been related to diverging conceptions of pedagogy, to cultural differences regarding hierarchy/authority and equality in professional interactions, and to the absence, in some cases, of a shared language (interview, Sørensen).

The animation project is generally seen as having been especially successful. More specifically, it is seen as having aligned well with aspirations, embedded in Burkina Faso's national poverty reduction strategy (Stratégie de Croissance Accélérée et de Développement Durable 2011–2015 (SCADD)), to enhance culture's contributions to economic growth and job creation. Resources were invested in training twenty animators in 2D techniques in Ouagadougou. Eight of these trainees then spent six months at the Animation Workshop in Viborg, where they developed a pilot for an envisaged TV series, *Afrogames*, in which children play “unusual games”.<sup>3</sup> The concept for *Afrogames* emphasises young people's ability to resolve problems, some of them related to inherited wisdom regarding practices such as female genital mutilation. The site featuring information about the series describes ABCA as a group consisting of “many ethnicities and backgrounds—animators, filmmakers, painters, singers and students”. These animators, we are told, “grew up watching American, Japanese, and European series” and are now “ready to share” their own stories with the “world” (*Afrogames-Burkina Animated* 2016). Resources for further developing the series have been sought through crowd funding, with Serge Pitroipa from ABCA appealing to the African diaspora to mobilise in support of what is essentially a “Pan-African project”. In addition to the *Afrogames* pilot, CKU's animation programme has allowed for the production of a documentary about the prospects for animation in Burkina Faso (*Cinéma d'animation—une nouvelle ère pour le Burkina* [Animation—a new era for Burkina, 2014, France/Burkina Faso, ABCA]), and two animated shorts (*Pawit Raogo et la vieille menteuse* [*Pawit Raogo and the old Liar*, 2015, France/Burkina Faso, ABCA] and *Imagine et donne vie* [*Imagine and give life*, 2014, France/Burkina Faso, ABCA]). The ABCA collective participated fully in these films' production and they thus served as a platform for broader capacity building in Burkina Faso. CKU project manager Louise Friis Pedersen identifies advocacy work on behalf of animators in Burkina Faso as yet another significant result of the collaboration between ABCA and the Animation Workshop. A lawyer, funded by CKU, was recruited to assist ABCA in seeking amendments to Burkina Faso's legal framework for cinema and the audiovisual sector, the point being to ensure that animation is specifically mentioned and appropriately considered (interview, Friis Pedersen).

The North/South partnerships funded through CKU in the context of a rights-based development strategy that fully recognises the transformative power of culture have been largely successful. There is considerable evidence to suggest that the partnerships have been constructive, mutually respectful and genuine, in part because stakeholders have been fully included in the design of the programmes. The human rights framework, far from functioning as an imperial or neocolonial imposition, establishes strategic priorities that leave considerable room for the articulation, by the practitioners themselves, of a wide variety of aspirations arising from the specificities of quite different sites. What is more, CKU's “management” of the programmes has been anything but bureaucratic, reflecting, rather, a genuine understanding of the practitioners' perspectives. Recalling her time as CKU Head of Projects, Munk Petersen points to the long-term effects of various programmes:

The collaboration produces much more than you pay for. It all continues long after the funding stops, and people end up collaborating in all sorts of ways. A lot of really solid friendships have emerged and I think that's really exciting.

(interview, Munk Petersen)

World Cinema, it would seem, can only be well served by the sort of transnational milieu-building efforts that CKU has supported, and that are now, sadly, being discontinued.

### Notes

- 1 The work described in this chapter was fully supported by a grant from the Research Grants Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China (RGC Ref. No. 340612/CB 1384, Lingnan University, 2013–2016).
- 2 The two best-known Lab films can be seen here: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2BnEXi3mgQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2BnEXi3mgQ); [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fu4ZkMtcSmE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fu4ZkMtcSmE), viewed 28 March 2016.
- 3 For the Afrogames pilot, see [www.youtube.com/watch?v=fh9u1n0k22o](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fh9u1n0k22o), viewed 28 March 2016.

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