

post-apartheid context") (p. xiv) is somewhat consonant with the Foreword, in particular in its vocabulary. The author calls his piece nothing less than "spectres of 'Communism' in post-apartheid South Africa (p.177), even if his review of the book chapters hardly justifies this title.

*Post-Apartheid Fragments. Law, Politics and Culture* can be recommended for libraries with interest in legal and South African studies.

Vladimir Shubin

Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences

## Sociology

Adam Haupt

### **Stealing Empire: P2P, Intellectual Property and Hip-Hop Subversion.**

Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council Press, 2008.

264 pp. R160 pap. ISBN 9780796922090

[Eurospan Group]

*Stealing Empire* is an engaging and highly theorized discussion of cultural production in post-apartheid South Africa. Inspired by Hardt and Negri's study *Empire* and developing ideas drawn from Habermas and Stiglitz, and from a range of cultural critics including Baudrillard, Deleuze and Guattari, Stuart Hall and Dick Hebdige amongst others, Haupt argues that South African youth culture both resists and appropriates globalism. The study is in essence a critique of globalism and multinational power. In his view the UN, WTO, IMF and the World Bank are post-imperialist postcolonial organizations created and used by former empires to maintain global hegemony, so as to control world markets, emergent technologies and cultural forms. In this context, he considers how peer to peer (P2P) file-sharing, digital sampling, MP3 technology, open source software and hip-hop music, provide networked individuals with the means for expressing and producing subaltern counter-politics, in order to prevent the erosion of democracy by the mass media, specifically the attempt to limit the commons. This book will thus be of wide ranging relevance to social science libraries not only as regards the study of media, politics and popular culture in Africa, but also for its contribution to the historical study of the concepts of the commons and intellectual property rights, the public sphere and democracy.

Haupt relates how the internet (as an ever expanding experiment in peer to peer cultural production) and each of these media phenomena emerge from a culture of sharing and "tinkering." He argues that they were initially driven by a desire to achieve social justice in the context of the digital divide and the practical aims of achieving more efficient forms of sharing information and music. Describing how file sharing strategies and open-source ware were integral to the development of the internet, he writes passionately against the notion of hackers as "security breakers", but rather champions them as creative programmers working to prevent the enclosure of the information commons - in fact serving as driving forces for developments in digital technologies and communications. In the last chapters on hip-hop as a subaltern counter-public space, that is, not simply as a form of U.S. cultural imperialism, he proposes that some hip-hop artists work to resist

globalism and hegemonic control from within Empire, in similar sub-cultural ways to hackers. They do so through advancing activist and educational ends while experimenting with culture jamming and free speech.

In short, in addressing the pervasive influence of American popular culture in Africa, Haupt's study makes an interesting contribution and thus is a worthy addition to social science libraries. Beyond academia perhaps, P2P developers, hackers and hip hop artists might find *Stealing Empire: P2P, Intellectual Property and Hip-Hop Subversion* a useful resource for the evasion of the application of international corporate law and for devising future experiments in creative subversion.

Jonathan Zilberg

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Chidi Ikonné

### **Links and Bridges: A Comparative Study of the Writings of the New Negro and Negritude Movements.**

Ibadan: University Press, 2006.

338 pp. \$34.95 pap. ISBN 978030939X

[African Books Collective]

*Links and Bridges* builds on Chidi Ikonné's work in *From Du Bois to Van Vechten*. In *Links and Bridges*, he often returns to the same material, but now expands it to make a broader case for the interaction between these movements. Ikonné's strength is his ability to navigate a complex and voluminous set of historical sources — and this becomes the book's most valuable contribution. Ikonné points to significant moments of interaction between the Negritude and New Negro Movements, but seldom elaborates on them or interrogates the importance of these links.

While the historical referencing is meticulous and impressive, the lack of contemporary contextualization is disconcerting. There is no mention of seminal texts by Paul Gilroy that would place this work in a broader transatlantic context. Nor is there any mention of the important re-visioning of the Harlem Renaissance done by scholars like Henry Louis Gates, Houston Baker. These are serious drawbacks. A similar criticism can be leveled against the analysis of Negritude, where works by the likes of Stanislas Adotevi, Marcién Towa, Iyay Kimoni and Peter Thompson are conspicuously absent.

Despite these criticisms, *Links and Bridges* is a fascinating study that is a valuable contribution to the study of both movements. It is recommended for anyone interested in transatlantic studies, twentieth century intellectual history and African-American studies.

Peter Midgley

University of Alberta