



AFRICA IN MOVIMENTO / AFRICA ON THE MOVE

MACERATA 17 -20/09/2014

**TITLE: NOLLYWOOD - NEW CINEMATIC LANGUAGE AND
THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN POSTCOLONIAL DEMOCRACY**

AUTHOR: MELITA ZAJC, UNIVERSITY OF MARIBOR (melita.zajc@gmail.com)

ABSTRACT:

This paper focuses on Nigerian video as a particular cinematic language. Applying new technologies, first analog video and later digital technologies, filmmakers in Nigeria developed particular modes of production and distribution. Nollywood materialized the Third Cinema's ambition of resistance to mainstream narrative cinema and is today a vibrant alternative to dominant (Hollywood and Bollywood) cinemas. With Nollywood, a popular cinematic production thrives outside global media corporations, and also outside international art film circuits, which provide subventions and access to international festivals, but in exchange impose an international model of quality cinema. Nollywood is the first viable model of African film production, and scholars often praised the expansion of this model elsewhere in Africa and in global African diaspora. However, the power of the model is best represented by the success of Nollywood films in Nigeria, a country of various cultures and languages, and strongly divided along historical, religious and other lines. As the reason for this, the paper will consider the particular film language that developed along with Nollywood production and distribution, and a particular use of film media that reaches beyond the canonic distinction between entertainment and public media functions. More than other media, Nigerian video films facilitate articulation of the critical public. The paper will explore the possibility that this is grounded on a particular use of representational faculties of the image that reaches beyond Western notions of realism and identity, and is also supported by the themes dealt with in Nollywood films, from multiple identity plots to the issues of spacial and social mobility and notion of the self as the other. Finally, this particular use arouses the question of the relations of post-colonial cultural developments and post-democracy, and of the role of Nollywood in what Chatterjee defined as postcolonial democracy.

AUTHOR'S ACADEMIC PROFILE:

Melita Zajc is Assistant Professor in Media Communication at the University of Maribor. She holds PhD in Philosophy from the University of Vienna, Austria, and PhD in Anthropology from the ISH, Graduate Faculty for the Study of Humanities, Ljubljana, Slovenia. She was teaching Theories of the Visual at the Academy for Applied Arts in Vienna, and at ISH in Ljubljana. Her main focus is social potential of new technologies. This led to her conceptualization of the Social Media Dispositive and practical research on Nollywood.