This article has been accepted and is currently in press with the journal *Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historiques,* due to be released 2017.

**Title: African Dawn: Keïta Fodéba and the Imagining of National Culture in Guinea**

**Abstract:**

This article addresses the cultural activity of Keïta Fodéba, a popular musician, poet, dramatist and latterly prominent member of the independent Guinean government. His experiences during the 1950s reflect emergent trends during this period of profound negotiation, in which the terms of the ‘postcolonial’ world were established.

Fodéba was a formative figure in the emergence of Guinean National Culture but also played an important role in providing Guinea's independence movement with a renewed impetus beyond Marxist ideology and demands for political equality. Using archival material that reveals French Metropolitan fears about his activities, we gain an insight into the networks of anti-colonial activism with which he engaged. Following Fodéba from his triumph on Broadway to his death at Camp Boiro, gives new perspectives on his challenging work and offers greater insight into the transfers and negotiations between Metropole, colony and beyond that characterised the decolonization process.

**Keywords:**

**Decolonization, France, Guinea, Culture, Nationalism**

**Article:**

The tattered 1950 edition of *Poèmes Africains* reads rather differently than its post-Independence reissue. Within the small pamphlet-like book is the first published poetic collection of Keïta Fodéba,[[1]](#endnote-1) the prominent poet, director and latter cabinet member in the young Guinean Republic. In particular, the final verse of the poem *African Dawn* stands out:

“Yes, it was the dawn. The first rays of the sun lightly brushed the surface of the sea, gilding the foaming crests of the waves.”[[2]](#endnote-2)

Here, the experience of the Second World War and the tragedy of the Thiaroye massacre, as described in the poem, fade against the timeless rhythm of village life and the seasons, echoing the coming of another dawn. Yet, after independence, the addition of a new line to the poem, republished in a 1965 volume, seems to indicate a change in its meaning, and adds a new portent to the dawn:

“Yes, it was the dawn… *the dawn of African freedom.”[[3]](#endnote-3)*

The story of these five words is compelling, as is the story of their author, Keïta Fodéba. In the difference between these editions lies a fascinating insight into the complicated narrative of decolonization and the many varied strands upon which it drew.

Independence was not an immediate break that forbade political influence and inheritance, nor a year zero after which national culture was rewritten afresh. By analyzing actors with many roles within the decolonization process, this essay offers new insights into the transitional phase that surrounded the end of empire. The global stage on which decolonization was performed saw figures like Fodéba demonstrate the tangible interaction of personal and political processes necessary to “imagine a community”.[[4]](#endnote-4) Within this story, we can see the coexistence of multiple epochs during this turbulent time, of distorted presents and emancipatory futures, of “the gap between the actual, the possible and the desirable [which] was often infinitesimal yet seemingly unbridgeable.”[[5]](#endnote-5)

Studies of the legacy of Guinea’s ‘First Republic’ from 1958 to 1984 tend to focus on the prominent role of the country’s bombastic leader Sékou Touré. Furthermore, they draw out two notable characteristics of his regime: its successful creation of a strong national identity after Independence, and its brutal use of violence and repression against its own citizens.[[6]](#endnote-6) Keïta Fodéba provided a cultural foil to the revolutionary rhetoric of Touré, contributing to the creation of national culture, yet also serving as Touré's right hand during years of tyranny. This disjuncture between his “aesthetics and politics” is, in the model of Gary Wilder, a function of pragmatic anti-colonialism, “a warning against presumptively treating his political acts as self-evident or one-dimensional.”[[7]](#endnote-7) Fodéba was part politician and part broker of the arts, operating creatively in the contested transnational terrain of national culture. Using archival material that newly outlines the surveillance of Fodéba’s Parisian performances in the 1950s, we can discern the political import that colonial authorities perceived in his cultural activity. This sense of culture draws on Mary Renda’s description of culture outside of national frameworks, “a process involving translation and fertilization across differences of identity, experience, and understanding, either within a single community or in a geographical space where two or more communities overlap.”[[8]](#endnote-8) By considering Fodéba’s significance in the years after independence, we can broaden our view of culture and politics to understand something of the violent turn taken by the Guinean state, and also of the difficulties inherent in creating nations.

***A Global Stage for the Ballets Africains***

Fodéba was born in 1921 in Siguiri, a town in the North East of Guinea on the River Niger.[[9]](#endnote-9) Siguiri had a rich heritage of “singer-historians”, known as *griots* that played an important role in pre-conquest society, and became “agents of change” in the transitional times of the twentieth century.[[10]](#endnote-10) His primary education took place in Guinea's capital, Conakry, before he moved to Senegal to attend the École William Ponty, a technical school which formed the hallmark of French patronage by providing a Metropolitan style education and gateway into broader opportunities.[[11]](#endnote-11) He graduated from the École William Ponty in 1943 with a teaching degree, placing him firmly amongst French West Africa's qualified elite. Fifty percent of *Pontins* worked as teachers,[[12]](#endnote-12) and Fodéba spent two years teaching in Tambacounda and then Saint-Louis in Senegal after graduating, before leaving for Paris on a scholarship to study Law at the Sorbonne.[[13]](#endnote-13)

Fodéba published poetry to help fund his studies, and he became interested in performance, developing friendships with the Cameroonian singer Albert Mouangué, and the guitarist Kanté Facelli (whom he had met in Saint-Louis).[[14]](#endnote-14) This group of performers became the core of the *Théâtre Africain de Keïta Fodéba*, and toured cities across France and Switzerland until 1951, when the group became the *Ballets Africains de Keïta Fodéba*.[[15]](#endnote-15) The troupe remained cosmopolitan, drawing performers from across the Francophone world (Senegal, Guinea, Haiti, and Martinique) and indeed France itself.[[16]](#endnote-16) During its time in Paris in the early 1950s, Fodéba came into contact with his compatriot Touré, owing to his prominence as an artist and his presence in networks of anti-colonial activism. Both Fodéba’s visibility and his cultural education made him a challenging figure for French authorities, who saw fit to ban the circulation of his work in the colonies. His scholarship was terminated as official memos indignantly stressed that, as a graduate of the École William Ponty, he was now engaged in “resolutely anti-French attacks.”[[17]](#endnote-17) This was in direct contrast to the norm amongst graduates of this school, or Pontins as they were known. Tony Chafer quotes the expectation was of ‘loyalty, gratitude and often a strongly felt identification of themselves as French as well as African (despite their realization that they were neither fully equal nor could they fully adopt French culture).’[[18]](#endnote-18) Focusing on Mandinka culture (a prevalent West African ethnic group) and drawing on his time spent in the Latin Quarter of Paris, Fodéba became a renowned commentator on the interaction of colonialism and traditional cultures through the music produced by his *Ballets Africains* as it embarked on a series of world tours throughout the 1950s.[[19]](#endnote-19)

According to research conducted amongst former members and using playbills, Joshua Cohen estimates that the *Ballets Africains de Keïta Fodéba* had passed through 170 European cities by 1954. They then visited French West Africa in 1955, returned to Europe in 1956, and visited Yugoslavia and Turkey amongst other destinations in 1957. After this tour, their venues expanded across the globe, taking in South America and Eastern Europe in 1958, finishing the year in Israel.[[20]](#endnote-20) The group performed in the United States for the first time in 1959, with a run of forty-eight performances on Broadway, helping to define the national culture of the young Guinean nation on an international stage. The Broadway performance was cast as a “Triumph in New York” by the African magazine *Bingo,*[[21]](#endnote-21)and was celebrated by luminaries like Miles Davis who praised the dancing and rhythms as “beautiful” and “powerful stuff”.[[22]](#endnote-22) This first tour was as a private company, recently arrived from Paris and only when they returned in 1960 were they ordained as the national company of the newly independent Guinea. Their appearance offered an important image of Guinean cultural diplomacy in a fraught racial environment in the USA, with the concurrent activity of the Civil Rights Movement ensuring that "strong connections across cultural and linguistic barriers were made with the first appearances of the national ballets of Guinea."[[23]](#endnote-23)

Both Fodéba and Touré built their later prestige in part upon outspoken sojourns in Paris early in their careers. Likewise, both had played active roles in a number of socialist organizations, as we shall see. Their prominence and politics brought them together in the mid-1950s, as Touré forged the political foundations of the future Guinean Republic on the foundation of the labor movement.[[24]](#endnote-24) Whilst Touré was still crafting the practical vision of political independence, Fodéba’s work had been altogether more aesthetic and cultural, though no less in service of the nation. Both were mutually reinforcing, although not always mutually compatible. Between Touré and Fodéba there was not a conflict of invention, but rather a conflict of intention. Both sought to actively define cultural traditions and play an active part in Guinean nation building, yet their visions clashed somewhat. Ultimately, they came together in the governance of the young Guinean state, before Fodéba was purged from the party and executed in a relationship that brooks comparison to Césaire’s *Un Saison au Congo*. The tensions and fratricidal violence of the postcolonial Guinean state bear a tragic resemblance to the execution of the charismatic independence leader Patrice Lumumba in Césaire’s dramatic tribute. As that play juxtaposes “dipenda” and “uhuru”, [[25]](#endnote-25) “formal liberty and substantive freedom”,[[26]](#endnote-26) so too can we read an analogue in the cultural foil Fodéba provided to Touré. Fodéba’s multiple roles during this period saw him first as educator, then as poet and later as the right hand of a tyrant. He was neither immune nor isolated from the tyranny of Touré’s Guinean Republic and played an active part in facilitating misrule in his role as Minister of the Interior. Yet, his multiple roles in the 1950s and early 1960s can help to draw out the ways in which the creation of a national culture and the creation of national structures clashed.

***Networks, Intellectuals and Surveillance***

The networks in which Fodéba operated were varied and significant. Both Fodéba and Touré shared left wing militancy, yet the means of their engagement differed considerably. For Fodéba, his route into internationalist networks came not through trade unionism as it had for Touré, but rather through networks of anti-colonial intellectuals. His work engaged with themes of pan-Africanism and Négritude, and this meant that it was swiftly adopted by metropolitan anti-colonial activists as an authentic African voice. Fodéba was thus rooted in an accepted vernacular of intellectual anti-colonialism, as opposed to the more visceral force of African Trade Unionism upon which Touré built his radical image. For the French government and colonial administration, intellectual elites may have been more palatable, though they remained dangerous. Yet, in managing this danger, it was easier to ban musical recordings than stamp out Trade Unions.

Recordings of Fodéba’s work were thus banned by French authorities right across French West Africa. On 28 October 1949, the Governor of Senegal explicitly outlawed the circulation of two discs, *L’Aube Africaine,* (African Dawn)and *Minuit* (Midnight)*.* Both discs were published by ‘Le Chant du Monde’, based in Paris. The record label specialized in work which supported Communist ideals, and Fodéba's discs contained poetry set against music, which the label considered did not in any way “incur the rigors of the law.” As such, the label’s owner Renaud de Jouvenel wrote to the Minister for Overseas France to express “extreme surprise” and protested that his freedom to trade was being infringed upon.[[27]](#endnote-27) De Jouvenel himself was a Communist fellow-traveler, who supported and provided an outlet for Communist intellectuals within Metropolitan France. The label was generally viewed as a fund-raising organization for the PCF, and released a motley collection of discs the genres of which, judging from their catalogue, surely skirted the boundaries of taste - 'Symphony Music, Popular Songs, Soviet Songs, French Folklore and a varied collection of Jazz'.[[28]](#endnote-28)

De Jouvenel's protest was echoed by a litany of other Communist organizations. The decision to ban Fodéba's work was protested against strongly by the *Ligue contre l’ignorance en Côte d’Ivoire* (League Against Ignorance in the Ivory Coast) in a letter dated 9 November 1949. This group was affiliated with the political party *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (RDA) as a Communist study group alongside the *Université populaire africain à Dakar* (Popular University of Dakar)*.*[[29]](#endnote-29) They denounced the banning of these discs and stated that: "We stand with the RDA youths and all cultural and artistic organizations of Africa to strongly combat this arbitrary measure of cultural oppression."[[30]](#endnote-30) In reality, however, this ban was far from an arbitrary decision, and played into a greater sense that Fodéba had begun to operate in distinctly Communist circles. There is within these anxieties an instructive example of the ‘bogey-men’ of the French establishment’s imagination.

The movements of Fodéba, both throughout Africa and on visits to Paris, were seldom unobserved by the *Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage* (SDECE, the French counterintelligence agency), which viewed his blend of colonial commentary, representations of traditional culture and musical innovation as a potent nationalist symbol. This suspicion was compounded by his touring of Eastern European countries on cultural exchanges,[[31]](#endnote-31) a move which accentuated the security risk he represented. Specifically, it was Fodéba’s stay in Romania which was highlighted by SDECE as a questionable activity which might herald some Marxist dalliance.[[32]](#endnote-32)

Likewise, the content of the two discs was particularly troubling for French authorities. The Governor General described *L’Aube Africaine* as the story of a worker, who was taken from his village to fight for France, returned to Dakar, and was killed during the Tiarroye [sic] incident.[[33]](#endnote-33) The Thiaroye Massacre involved the mutiny of West African troops at the end of November 1944 owing to a dispute surrounding pay and conditions. The mutiny was met with force and led to the shooting of thirty-five African soldiers by French soldiers guarding the Thiaroye camp. This incident was one of abiding resentment in French West Africa and represented a series of events which colonial authorities clearly did not want to be commemorated.[[34]](#endnote-34)

*Minuit* likewise offered a portentous message for French authorities. It focused on the son of a chieftain shot by the French to satisfy a grievance during the rule of Samori Touré, the nineteenth century leader of the Wassoulou Empire that had militarily resisted French rule in West Africa. By invoking the Mandingo Wars fought by the French against the Wassoulou, Fodéba’s work pitted a distinctly African state against a French aggressor. A key consideration in this work was the role of Samori Touré in validating Sékou Touré, his great grandson, who also sought to portray the concept of struggle as key to Guinean identity. As Césaire noted, Touré’s was not a claim based on “puerile genealogical vanity”. Instead, Gary Wilder states that this claim sought to repair “spatial solidarities and historical continuities”, placing Touré in a broader context of West African regional history.[[35]](#endnote-35) Both the poem and Touré’s reference to Samori Touré drew a direct comparison between the potent struggle against the French in the late nineteenth century and the mid-twentieth century.[[36]](#endnote-36)

In 1949 Fodéba played to a full-house in the S*alle Pleyel* in Paris yet, in a demonstration of French worries, the SDECE noted that only five members of the audience were black and the clearest common denominator was Soviet political engagement:

Indeed the room was full. We can estimate the number at 200, including Communist "Intelligentsia" and the like, with many pre-Christian type foreigners belonging probably to the Soviet bloc, and a few ethnologists and amateur African folklorists. *By contrast, there were only five blacks.[[37]](#endnote-37)*

At the start of the event and between each number, an announcer took to the stage to offer commentary. The SDECE observer helpfully recounts the most remarkable interjections which began with a denunciation of conscription: “Bring us freedom!”

It has been said that blacks are devoid of logic in the western sense. You will see that this is nonsense. This is a school ground lie. Moreover, Keïta Fodéba will demolish this belief. [[38]](#endnote-38)

What seemed even more galling for authorities was the way in which the banned discs were promoted by the announcer, who seemed gleefully aware of the subversive nature of his commentary. The banned disc of *Minuit,* which, he announced “had roused the Governor of Senegal from his slumber”, was for sale from attendants in the foyer.[[39]](#endnote-39)

The event took place from 5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m., with a recital of songs and display of Guinean dance. The *Salle Pleyel*, in theEight Arrondissement, was a prestigious central venue for the divisive colonial critic but, as we shall see, it was also a center for dissenting groups and formed something of a hub for this genre of politics. The event on 26 November 1949 was organized by the *Comité National des Ecrivains*, the former resistance group which was becoming ever more clearly a satellite group of the PCF. There was accordingly a long article in the Communist newspaper *Ce Soir* which focused on the event.

Nodes like the *Salle Pleyel* were crucial in these anti-colonial networks. Fodéba’s prominence in Paris was not simply because of his poetic skill, though it certainly did not harm his profile. Rather, the way in which Fodéba’s work addressed itself to existing networks allowed him to maximize his impact. From the internationalists surrounding the PCF or the *Comité National des Ecrivains*, to those developing ideas of pan-Africanism or Négritude, as we shall see, the richness of Fodéba’s work connected him into transnational networks of influence. That there was also the possibility of broadcasting this work only increased the area in which his influence could be felt.

On 24 July 1950 a performance by Keïta Fodéba at the *Palais de la Mutualité* had been rebroadcast on national radio. This performance actually included the banned *Minuit*, a fact which caused consternation for the Governor General of French West Africa who protested that its censure in the colonies ought to preclude Metropolitan airtime.[[40]](#endnote-40) It was “shocking to have seen the National Radio offering its microphone to someone who has never passed up the opportunity to criticize France and present her actions overseas in a bad light.”[[41]](#endnote-41) This presented a considerable risk to public order in French West Africa, it was claimed, especially if Fodéba “seemed to be endorsed by an official French radio organization.”[[42]](#endnote-42) As such, it was requested that those in charge of commissioning broadcasts were a little more judicious and refused to broadcast the work of Fodéba in particular.[[43]](#endnote-43) In this exclusion, we catch a glimpse of Fodéba’s growing popularity within Guinea, to which the airtime devoted to his lyrical poetry was crucial. His fame is reported to have reached right across West Africa, with “taxi drivers carrying his picture in their windows”.[[44]](#endnote-44)

The idea that something be banned in French West Africa and not in the Metropole was not, in fact, an entirely new phenomenon. The banning of French Guyanese writer René Maran’s novel *Batouala* from the colonial market, for its subdued reminders of French Enlightenment promises, for example, had been no impediment to his winning of the literary *Prix Gondjout* in 1921.[[45]](#endnote-45) Fodéba’s work "which a banning in West Africa [had] made even more famous", profited from the airtime it had received in France, and he became a star on both continents.[[46]](#endnote-46) Jouvenel, the aforementioned owner of *Le Chant du Monde*, took it upon himself to continue promoting the work. Jouvenel waxed lyrical on Fodéba in the programme for a performance at the Celestins Theatre in Lyons on 19 January 1950:

Keïta Fodéba’s admirable troupe, with its simplicity, its good humor, and its tone can do more to make men understand the brotherhood of peoples than the prohibition of poems can do to delay emancipation. [[47]](#endnote-47)

Jouvenel’s support shows an engagement with Fodéba’s work (in his marketing of the banned discs at the *Salle Pleyel* and his supportive introduction in the program), and not simply an ideological attachment. Alongside his continuing association with the PCF and his role as a key communicator of Metropolitan Communist culture, Jouvenel also makes broader points about the necessity for cultural contact.

In this vein, Fodéba and his group had taken part in several events organized by the Communist party and had attended the World Congress of Partisans for Peace in Warsaw.[[48]](#endnote-48) The idea of a cultural figure enjoying some celebrity on several continents and engaging with international communist networks can perhaps explain some of the trepidation felt by metropolitan officials. Sékou Touré was also at this event in his role as a member of the World Federation of Trade Unions’ General Council, and was actually made a Councilor of the Congress.[[49]](#endnote-49) To see two future leaders of Guinea together in 1950 under the auspices of internationalist networks is striking, though their mutual trajectories to arrive there remained distinct. The World Peace Congress was a Communist party initiative which had been scheduled to take place in Sheffield in 1950, although deliberate obstruction undertaken by British Authorities had forced the conference to shift to Warsaw.[[50]](#endnote-50) The first Congress had taken place in Paris in 1949, attracting a 2,005 strong audience representing seventy-two countries to the self-same *Salle Pleyel*, only six months before Fodéba performed there himself.[[51]](#endnote-51) In Warsaw, commentary on race and imperialism fell to a Black American speaker, Charles Howard, who intoned that “the oppressed peoples had the right to use ‘any means at their disposal’ to secure their freedom.”[[52]](#endnote-52) Likewise, Fodéba might have heartened to hear the famed composer Shostakovitch address the audience in a call for greater cultural engagement between blocs to underpin peace, including a plan to “organize musical festivals to acquaint listeners with the music, national, folk and modern, of other countries.”[[53]](#endnote-53)

Both the observation of Fodéba's concert in 1949 and the color matching of the audience by security forces were exemplary of French concerns surrounding the stability of their colonial territories. There was a clear understanding that the most challenging political force in the post-war colonial setting was the elite the French had promoted, yet also a realization that the greatest danger they presented was in shifting their allegiance from France to Communist powers. Thus the interaction of such luminaries was discouraged, hampering the development of a broad consensus movement for change. When combined with the vernacular of cultural nationalism, the questionable political allegiance of elites courted the risk of external interference. The audiences and the ideologies that gathered around Fodéba’s poetry and dance highlighted its appeal and its significance beyond the boundaries of Guinea. Yet, as we shall see, it also drew creative inspiration from a multitude of traditional cultures and blurred traditional ethnic, tribal and cultural boundaries. Thus, Fodéba’s work was not only transnational in its inspiration, but in its performance and reception. This was the “translation and fertilization across differences of identity, experience, and understanding” apt in the creation of culture outside of existing national frameworks.[[54]](#endnote-54) His importance to the transnational networks surrounding anti-colonialism, such as those of socialism and music, would prove exceptionally useful in his later political career, when the prestige and contacts built up during his years of transnational engagement were put into the service of Guinea’s national project.

***Imagining Nations and National Culture***

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon examined the concept of 'National Culture'*.* He described the extent to which the reclamation of hegemonic authority had to preface the birth of any truly independent spirit amongst young independent states. Fanon cast the stages of postcolonial identity formation as: assimilation, recollection and then combat. With a similar emphasis on the control of cultural identities, Amilcar Cabral, the leader of the independence movement in Guinea-Bissau, made a speech entitled *National Liberation and Culture*.[[55]](#endnote-55) Within the speech, he advocated the seizure of the “commanding heights of culture” as a key facet of generating an authentic post-independence cultural identity.[[56]](#endnote-56) So too did Kwame Nkrumah call for the genesis of a specifically "African personality" as a foundation for future prosperity and pan-African unity in his 1963 work *Africa Must Unite.[[57]](#endnote-57)* Robert July termed this "an independence from the ethical and aesthetic standards of the west."[[58]](#endnote-58)

Yet ideas of independence and authenticity are tightly bound, especially in the context of colonialism. If Fodéba’s work marked the “dawn of African Liberation”, then it did so having developed in a period of dialogue with French and West African influence. Indeed, Fodéba had a relaxed attitude to the need for his compositions to speak of a fixed historical period. Rather, he actively saw himself as shaping culture as it developed, as he outlined in *Présence Africain*:

We often heard the word “authenticity” used lazily in relation to folkloric spectacles! Really, authentic in relation to what?! To a mostly false idea that is held about the sensational primitivism of Africa? No! . . . For us, authenticity is synonymous with reality . . . with living expression . . . that is why the folklore of modern Africa is as authentic as the folklore of ancient Africa, both being the real expression of life in our country at two different moments of its history. […] In fact, it would be even more absurd to fix our folklore only to the past of our country, since no folklore in this world is not partly hybrid.[[59]](#endnote-59)

Fodéba here outlined his desire to enliven and enrich African culture by deliberately blending different ethnic traditions into one style of performance.[[60]](#endnote-60) It was ‘neither “one” nor “other”’[[61]](#endnote-61) and as such presented a tantalizing image of cultural hybridity. This was a problematic and challenging task, especially considering the image of African culture within Europe. As Fodéba said of the ethnographic museum in Paris: "Since I arrived in France, I had never encountered such a stiff and pathetic image of Africa."[[62]](#endnote-62) Through a rhetorical discussion with one of the tribal masks hung in this museum, Fodéba outlines the heritage of his compositions, their African provenance and their ancient inheritance. In the model of African cultural assertiveness in the 1950s, he seems to conjure up the “nostalgic reconstructions or reimaginings of mythic, pre-colonial traditions that would serve to counteract the negatives of colonial experiences and assert a sense of cultural pride and uniqueness.”[[63]](#endnote-63) To create a unitary vision of West African culture, Fodéba blended different ethnic cultures from across West Africa. This vision would be redeployed as a fundamentally Guinean culture after independence became a reality and the work of national definition began in earnest.

Fodéba’s story also illustrates the tensions that exist within theories of National Cultures, especially when the work of creating them is not an article of historical experience, but a live issue coinciding with manifest political realities. Such was the case with Guinea. Whilst Fodéba’s work set about crafting the language of a national culture, Sékou Touré’s leadership of the newly independent state had to confront the technical aspects of actually delivering a cultural policy that would strengthen the national identity of Guinea. At the second Congress of Black Writers and Artists in Rome in 1959, Sékou Touré offered his views on the importance of National Culture:

To take part in the African revolution it is not enough to write a revolutionary song; you must fashion the revolution with the people. And if you, fashion it with the people, the songs will come by themselves and of themselves.[[64]](#endnote-64)

When Frantz Fanon meditated on National Culture, he chose to quote wholesale from Fodéba’s poem, *African Dawn,* within which lay the obvious double meaning of an awakening both physical and cultural. Fodéba, he said:

did not play any tricks with the reality which the people of Guinea offered him. He reinterpreted all the rhythmic images of his country from a revolutionary standpoint. But he did more. In his poetic works which are not well known, we find a constant desire to define accurately the historic moment of the struggle and to mark off the field in which actions will unfold, the ideas around which the will of the people will crystallize.[[65]](#endnote-65)

Fodéba’s work certainly provided a marker around which Guinean culture could be actively constituted. Miller surmises that it is "surprising that the French colonial government, Fanon and his [Fodéba’s] critics as well have seen his work as Marxist in tendency or highly nationalistic in a Fanonian sense."[[66]](#endnote-66) Although it is, as he states, difficult to imagine a time when the mere presentation of African ethnicity (such as in the program of Négritude) was revolutionary, Fodéba’s involvement with networks of Communist intellectuals seems to indicate that his work did more than simply connote revolution.

Yet it is interesting that for many he has to be either one or the other – the Marxist anti-colonial activist or the traditional cultural icon. This can be seen in the manner that the text of his poems that were reissued after Guinean independence was altered. The two new phrases added to *African Dawn* offer an understanding of the way in which the meaning of Fodéba’s cultural expression had changed. His cultural prominence in the 1950s offered a platform for framing the language of Guinean national culture, yet as he became increasingly involved in the active development of this culture, his early work garnered an increasingly Fanonian relevance.

The boom in Francophone West African cultural products in the post-war period, and notably poetry and music, helped to recondition French as a potential 'national vocabulary' of nationalist movements in French West Africa. *Présence Africaine* was founded in 1947 by the Senegalese born philosopher and academic Alioune Diop and united many of the figures already mentioned in a journal published in Paris but conveying a strong sense of African identity and, very notably, serving as a greenhouse for the Négritude movement (Fodéba himself was published in the journal in 1957, with an article entitled ‘La danse africaine et la scène’). Indeed, this came as part of a post-war surge in interest in African literary works within the Metropole.

*Les Éditions du Seuil*, founded by members of the Christian left in 1937, had expanded its operations greatly after the Liberation, playing host to a new crop of editors. In 1945, it published the Senegalese luminary Leopold Senghor's *Chants d'Ombre*, and in 1947 *Hosties noires*. Senghor's success as a poet established a clearly successful model for presenting African culture, voiced in the French language, to the French public. The commitment of *Les Éditions Gallimard* to Aime Césaire was also an important indication that this post-war period represented a new wave of African poetry. Further, in 1949, the launch of *Les Éditions Présence Africaine* seemed to forge a path for African literature in France, developing the work already done in the journal to produce discrete pieces.[[67]](#endnote-67) Pierre Seghers and Pierre-Jean Oswald also played an important part in creating a market for African poetry. In 1950, Seghers released *Poèmes africains* by Fodéba, and then also released in 1952 *Le Maître d’école* and *Minuit*. These were the very same compositions exhibited at the *Salle Pleyel* and banned in French West Africa. Fodéba’s role in defining the early entry of African poetry into the Metropolitan market highlights his important role in acting as a cultural mediator and also in framing the French language as an acceptable national vocabulary.

Fodéba's mixing in the circles of those who elided pan-Africanism, internationalism and anti-colonialism cannot but have influenced his own presentation. His poems and their circulation helped reclaim French as a national vocabulary of his Mande roots. The expression of these roots to form a national culture was, in part, bound to the project of creating a nation. Fodéba's closeness to power in Guinea, and his role in helping shape post-independence Guinean culture, ensured that he had a direct and tangible role in the formation of this National Culture. As one of the most prominent of Guinea’s cultural elite, Fodéba presented an important and validating figure for the young Guinean state.

Fodéba’s creation of a National Culture owed much to the fact that his work spoke beyond his Mandinka roots. From the very start, in 1949, his group had featured a variety of different ethnicities and nationalities and was never exclusive in the reference to ethnic groups which it drew. When Kwame Nkrumah had led Ghana to independence in 1957, he prioritized the shift away from ‘regional parties’, banning them in favor of national bodies.[[68]](#endnote-68) This even included the National Liberation Movement (NLM), which prioritized Assante nationalism. So too in Guinea did Touré seek to promote a national identity that cut across class and ethnic boundaries in a move termed the “programme of social emancipation”.[[69]](#endnote-69) This programme sought to dissolve any semblance of a class struggle in Guinea, but also repositioned traditional social roles like that of the griot*.* Now, griots were in service of the nation as a whole, drawn into considered frameworks to produce work which stressed Guinean national identity within the context of revolutionary struggle as “artists of the people”.[[70]](#endnote-70) Mohamed Saliou Camara considers this “recycling of the griots” a key element of understanding Touré’s regime and the way in which it communicated with its people and the world more broadly. Traditional Mande roles and functions were folded into European structures, wherein journalists and cultural actors become “griots of the revolution”, supporting and developing the work of the state.[[71]](#endnote-71)

Fodéba gifted the *Ballets Africains* to the nation of Guinea,[[72]](#endnote-72) and, as a wealthy and prominent figure, became an important member of Touré’s inner circle. His relationship with Touré, it seems, was one of reciprocal validation. In 1958, Fodéba was named Minister of the Interior and amassed a sizeable portfolio. In the first years following independence, Touré conducted government in open collaboration with the network of advisers with which he surrounded himself. As early as 22 October 1958, Fodéba was part of a three and a half hour discussion with Touré and the American consul in Dakar, Donald Dumont, about US recognition of Guinean independence.[[73]](#endnote-73) Details of Guinean visits to the USA in 1960 to discuss potential aid packages included figures like Fodéba as Minister of the Interior (and four other Guinean ministers), and American officials passed comment on the fact that “Guinea’s leadership is collective in a real sense.”[[74]](#endnote-74) Fodéba’s influence in Guinean government was important, and his value on a trip to the USA (where he had directed a Broadway performance only a year before) was heightened. This can be seen again in 1963, when Fodéba accompanied another delegation to the USA. Officials noted that “the Ministers who came on this mission were the last ones who needed convincing [that the] best road for Guinea and for Africa is through cooperation with the United States.”[[75]](#endnote-75) His image as an intelligent and cultured member of the inner circle softened the hard image of Touré’s revolutionary republic; Fodéba was singled out by US officials as one of the “most competent and influential” of Touré’s retinue.[[76]](#endnote-76) Fodéba was seen by the Americans as an acceptable interlocutor, and he met with the US ambassador in Guinea, John Morrow, in both a personal and professional capacity. Even with other African nations Fodéba was an active and approachable representative of Touré, visiting Senegal in 1962 to discuss the technicalities of the Malian union with Leopold Senghor.[[77]](#endnote-77) That the *Ballets Africains* had been based in Senegal for the previous four years (1958–1962), again ensured that there was an existing relationship between Fodéba the artist and Fodéba the politician.

Fodéba’s many roles ensured that he played an important part in governance, not only by having created the prestige that allowed him to function in government, but also in allowing him to continue working in service of defining national identities. Touré praised Fodéba’s gift to Guinea:

Take the example of the ballets of our comrade Keita Fodeiba [sic] which for several years have been touring the world to reveal through the medium of that traditional mode of expression, African dancing, the cultural, moral, and intellectual values of our society. And yet it was not at the Paris Opera or the Vienna Opera that these artists were initiated. Their choreographic initiation merely started from their authentically African education and the national consciousness of our artistic values.[[78]](#endnote-78)

For Touré, the importance was that authenticity could be marshaled in service of the nationalist project. Other musicians were appointed as civil servants, and the *Studio de la Voix de la Révolution* was charged with creating an authentically Guinean musical style.[[79]](#endnote-79) The ‘Voice of the Revolution’ was the party-controlled radio station that was accountable to Touré and operated, according to Camara, under a “sword of Damocles” at perpetual risk of Touré’s disfavor.[[80]](#endnote-80) The effort to generate and disseminate culture was tightly bound to the state’s control mechanisms, demonstrating Touré’s instrumentalization of culture and of cultural organizations in service of PDG rule.

Fodéba’s attempt to negotiate this process demonstrated the extent to which his multiple roles were central to his position. Yet, even as Fodéba had embarked on creative work outlining Guinean culture, Touré’s “demystification campaigns” sought to ensure that Guinean society looked increasingly modern and that “traditional culture” (as featured by Fodéba’s performers) was increasingly “folklorized.”[[81]](#endnote-81) This minimized the role of existing religions and sought to replace them with a focus on the state, denouncing as “fetishistic” those practices which continued to fuel traditional beliefs. Thus, cultural institutions like the national ballets enabled the state to actively “folklorize” culture they typified as outmoded, whilst also interpreting and redeploying it as a facet of national identity.

As Minister of the Interior, Fodéba also created the foundations for Guinean National Arts system, scoring it in the chords of the Eastern bloc for the young Revolutionary People’s Republic of Guinea. He created youth groups right across the villages and districts of Guinea, named, as in the German Democratic Republic, ‘National Pioneers’.[[82]](#endnote-82) These were mandated to form arts companies which were integrated into a central system and encouraged to produce their own cultural work to be presented at a federal level. The presentation took the form of a competition, which aimed to invigorate national culture and offered the winners participation in a two-yearly national festival.[[83]](#endnote-83) This system was a key part of Sekou Toure's attempt at "reinvigorating the arts" in his search for authentic national culture.[[84]](#endnote-84) These musical and cultural festivals were recorded and released by the state-owned Syliphone label, which ensured that the ‘Voice of the Revolution’ always retained a strong, party-approved playlist.[[85]](#endnote-85) Syliphone, as noted by Graeme Counsel, “was a medium for distribution of government policy to the people, with the *griots* being the effective voice of the state.”[[86]](#endnote-86) Youth groups, part of the Jeunesse de la Révolution Démocratique Africaine (Youth of the African Democratic Revolution), were organized along the same federal structures as the state party, ensuring that performing culture and the service of Guinean National Culture was bound into the state’s education and training policy.[[87]](#endnote-87) Wide-ranging regional auditions in late 1962 helped to ensure that the national ballets likewise remained well-stocked, with young performers “really conscripted as if for military service,” before being packed off to Conakry to train.[[88]](#endnote-88) After this became instituted, it effectively represented a pipeline for the national ballets. Thus, the ballets, which had become a useful tool of international cultural diplomacy became co-opted by the state as a symbol and embodiment of national culture, the creation of which helped to refine that culture.

The notion of state identity changed in Guinea, as daily life became ever more aligned with Touré’s vision of politicized revolutionary culture. Yet, interestingly, control over national identity swung firmly into the hands of the *Parti Démocratique du Guinée* (PDG, the party created form the Guinean wing of the RDA after Independence), and away from the negotiated process of the post-war period. Kelly Askew (writing on Tanzania) posited that by studying newly independent African nations we can see that:

Rather than an abstract ideology produced by some to be consumed by others, nationalism ought to be conceptualized as a series of continually negotiated relationships between people who share occupancy in a defined geographic, political or ideological space.[[89]](#endnote-89)

In the case of Guinea, the work of defining that ideological space overtook the need to define the geographic and political structures of the state, as Touré became an increasingly autocratic figure at the head of the PDG and his rule became increasingly uncompromising. In Tanzania, the Socialist project overtook the concept of national culture being a more aesthetic concern: “socialism determined both the “object” (a young nation struggling out from under the weight of an oppressive colonial past) and the “objectives” (a truly egalitarian, self-reliant socialist society) of national cultural production.”[[90]](#endnote-90) This also applied in Guinea and, in the decade after independence, the image of Guinea became more readily associated in the West with its Warsaw pact associates than its balletic prominence.

Although Fodéba fostered new ideas on cultural policy, his influence was not always so benign, nor his legacy so laudatory. Indeed, as Straker states: “Many Guineans feel that Keïta, in his last years, had become deeply instrumental in many of the abusive dynamics of PDG power, including increasingly brutal forms of social policing and interrogation.”[[91]](#endnote-91) As Minister of the Interior (and later of Defense) Fodéba had been responsible for the re-opening of the former Republican Guard Camp at Camayenne, which would be renamed Camp Boiro, and serve as a concentration camp for Touré’s feverishly identified and increasingly numerous ‘fifth columnists’. That the re-opening of this camp was carried out with Czechoslovakian support was a cruel irony given both the suspicions of the SDECE officers that had observed him in Paris, and Fodéba’s personal courting of Czechoslovakian military aid after independence.[[92]](#endnote-92) Lansiné Kaba said of Fodéba that by 1964, he:

had become the second 'strong man'. Through the discipline and the loyalty he had created within the police and the army, and the respect he had commanded within the bureaucracy, it was assumed by some that he could seize power anytime he wished. Instead, he created the repressive system which has characterized contemporary Guinea, and put it at Touré's disposal, thereby expressing his loyalty.[[93]](#endnote-93)

Within this context, we do not see the Fodéba of cultural creation, but rather the state functionary creating the apparatus of repression. Fodéba’s multiple roles here seem to jar, increasingly difficult to reconcile for the historian looking for a simple narrative. This piece does not seek to explain the violence of Touré’s regime through postcolonial theory or by foregrounding cultural concerns; that work has been done elsewhere, notably by Mairi Macdonald, who draws out Kaba’s comparisons of Guinean state violence to French Revolutionary Terror and traces the influences and reasons behind the violent campaign.[[94]](#endnote-94) Rather, this article tries to acknowledge the difficulties in dissecting national identities by tracing the multiple roles of Fodéba across the period of decolonization and during the first decade of independence.

The Foulaya seminar of 1962 was a chaotic gathering of Guinea’s political elite that exposed cracks within the unity of the PDG. The politburo remained loyal to Touré whilst a majority of delegates objected to plans to expand commercial centralization, seemingly indicating Touré’s increasing appetite for personal control. Touré recollected in *Stratégie et Tactiques de la Révolution* (1970) how he had advised that “those who were tired [of the struggle] could leave, as for us we would remain intransigent on Party principles.”[[95]](#endnote-95) This was the battle between ideas of “dipenda” and “uhuru” that Césaire had foregrounded.[[96]](#endnote-96) With this, the leading dissenters were imprisoned, allowing Touré to tighten his grip on power against challengers in his own party. The experience seemed to chasten him, however, and from this point Touré advanced a rhetoric that focused on ‘the permanent plotting’ of those around him and a suspicion of intellectual challenges.[[97]](#endnote-97) From November 1964, Touré promulgated a *Loi Cadre* that established African Socialism as the unalterable path lain out for Guinea. This moment, only delayed from the schism revealed at the Foulaya seminar, marked a turning point for Touré, as it seemed to be an outright acknowledgement of his descent into tyranny and the end of any political pluralism (no matter how limited) within the PDG. So too was the concept of a national culture decoupled from any sense of growth, and monopolized by the party as a means for reinforcing control.

Fodéba, for so long a firm ally of Touré, fell victim to the party’s pernicious purges and became an inmate of the infamous Camp Boiro, when he was indicted in the ‘Kaman-Fodéba Plot’ of 1969.[[98]](#endnote-98) Eventually, this plot was rolled into a narrative that concluded with the Portuguese invasion of Guinea that took place in 1970, seemingly confirming the treachery of Fodéba in the eyes of the state.[[99]](#endnote-99) Fodéba’s death marked an end to a period of limited democratic engagement within Touré’s Guinea, though it was a representative marker of this change rather than a determinant. From this point, state terror tightened its grip on the country and the inspiring audacity of Guinea’s ‘no’ vote back in 1958 faded into history. Fodéba’s legacy for Guinea was bound to both the characteristics of the state outlined in the introduction: its strongly articulated and strongly felt national identity, and the tyranny directed against its own people. Fodéba had crafted the tools for both these engines to function, and is thus bound into the turbulent legacy of this troubled state.

***Conclusion***

The many roles of Fodéba across the decolonization period help to illustrate some of the complexity surrounding the idea of transfer and the negotiations that surround national identities. Specifically, his story gives us insights into how cultural elites negotiated the changes that surrounded the end of empire. Fodéba’s work in defining how Guinean culture was understood on the world stage, helped to define how it asserted itself after independence. Yet, we can also see from the way in which the colonial state observed Fodéba, that there was more than African nationalism at play in the colonial imagination. Fodéba’s interaction with networks of intellectuals in Paris and beyond saw him become involved fairly explicitly with the politics of international communism.

The *Ballets Africains* became ambassadors across a bi-polar divide for a community still being imagined. By juxtaposing this story of transnational networks with the reality of the post-independence experience for Guinea, we gain a greater insight into the challenges which faced young nations in formulating their national culture. Looking beyond the revolutionary rhetoric of Fanon or Cabral, the creation of national culture relied on the interplay of competing forces embodied within actors like Fodéba, wherein the legacies of colonial patronage mingled with disparate anti-colonial political networks and the unfettered creative work of cultural expression. Fodéba was not a martyred saint of Guinean cultural potential, but neither was he solely the scheming party-official on the make who plotted against Touré. His legacy is far more nuanced, yet to study its importance gives us a useful insight into the ways in which one man’s many roles could traverse the multiple strands of the process of decolonization. As an important actor on the global stage of decolonization, Fodéba’s dawn became that of African liberation and all the revolutionary language that entailed, yet this conversion over time neither overwrote nor erased the poetic dawn of his early years.

1. There is a degree of confusion about the order in which Fodéba's name is written. Joshua Cohen specifically asserts that the name should be recorded Fodéba Keïta and that the presentation as I have used is the relic of the French tendency to list surnames first. Christopher Miller, however, contends that Keïta Fodéba's daughter, Mariam Fodéba's usage of the surname indicates the correct usage. Cohen specifically refutes Miller's usage, but offers no real reason for doing so. There are a vast volume of documents and published sources using either, and also a custom in both Guinea-Conakry and Guinea-Bissau that sees sons take the father's surname as a *jamu* or patronymic surname. Following Frantz Fanon’s usage, I have opted for Keïta Fodéba. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. K. Fodéba, *Poèmes Africains* (Paris: Séghers, 1950), 25. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. K. Fodéba, *Aube Africaine* (Paris: Séghers, 1965), 79. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 1-7. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. G. Wilder *Freedom Time: Négritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 166 [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. A. Arieff and M. McGovern, ‘“History is stubborn”: Talk about Truth, Justice, and National Reconciliation in the Republic of Guinea’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 55 (2013), 198-225. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Wilder, *Freedom Time,* 21. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. M. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of US Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 23. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. J. Straker, *Youth, Nationalism and the Guinean Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 91. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. G. Counsel, ‘The Griots of West Africa: Agents of Social Change’, *Context,* 14 (1998), 44 [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. For the importance of teachers as a social group amongst Pontins, see Jean-Hervé Jézéquel, ‘Les enseignants comme élite politique en AOF (1930-1945)’, *Cahiers d’études africaines*, 178 (2005), 519-543. On the extent to which education policy represented an attempt to limit dynamism amongst elites see Peggy R. Sabatier, ‘"Elite" Education in French West Africa: The Era of Limits, 1903-1945’, *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 11:2 (1978) , 247-266. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. T. Chafer, ‘Education and Political Socialisation of a National-Colonial Political Elite in French West Africa, 1936-47', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 35:3 (2007), 444. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. E. Charry, *Mande Music: traditional and modern music of the Maninka and Mandinka of Western Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 248. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Ibid, 248. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. J. Cohen, ‘Stages in Transition: Les Ballets Africains and Independence, 1959 to 1960’, *Journal of Black Studies,* 43:11 (2012), 19. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. V. H. Flaig, *The Politics of Representation and Transmission in the Globalization of Guinea's Djembé.* PhD Thesis, University of Michigan (2010). [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Letter from Governor-General to Minister for Overseas France 22/01/1951. Archives National d’Outre Mer, Aix-en-Provence [hereafter ANOM] 1AFFPOL/2127/10. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Chafer, 'Education and Political Socialisation of a National-Colonial Political Elite in French West Africa, 1936-47', 443. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. L. Kaba, ‘The Cultural Revolution, Artistic Creativity, and Freedom of Expression in Guinea’, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 14:2 (1976), 202. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Cohen, 'Stages in Transition', 13 [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Charry, *Mande Music*, 212 n.16 [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Cohen, 'Stages in Transition', 12 [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Ibid, 17 [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea, 1946–1958* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007), 60. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. A. Césaire, *A Season in the Congo* (London: Seagull, 2010), 155 [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Wilder *Freedom Time*, 202 [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. ‘Letter from ‘Chant du Monde’ to Minister for Overseas France’, 18 November 1949. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2127/10. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. J. Suret-Canale, *Groupes d’études communiste (GEC) en Afrique Noire* (Paris : L’Harmattan, 1994),26. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. ‘Notice of protest from *Ligue contre l’ignorance en Côte d’Ivoire’,* 9 November 1949. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2127/10 [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. Kaba, ‘The Cultural Revolution’, 203 [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. ‘Letter from Governor General of AOF to Minister of the Interior’, 17 January 1951. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2127/10 [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. J. Fargettas, ‘La révolte des tirailleurs sénégalais de Tiaroye’, *Vingtième Siècle,* 4:92 (2006), 117-130. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. Wilder *Freedom Time*, 181-182. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. M. Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule in French West Africa* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), 52. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Compte-Rendu du Recital Donné par Keita Fodéba à Paris 26/11/1949. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2127/10. (Original Emphasis) [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. ‘Letter from Governor General of AOF to Minister of the Interior’, 17 January 1951. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2127/10. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. ‘Minister for Overseas France to the Minister of the Interior’, n.d. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2127/10 [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. A. Watson, ‘Guinea Dance’, in N. Juang and N. Morrissette, *Africa and the Americas: Culture Politics and History* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio, 2008), 536. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. L. Rice, ‘African Conscripts/European Conflicts: Race, Memory, and the Lessons of War’, *Cultural Critique*, 45 (2000), 140. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. ‘Programme for Performance by Fodeba, Celestins Theatre, Lyons. 19 January 1950’, Accessed 22 January 2014, www.memoire.celestins-lyon.org. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. ‘Programme for Performance by Fodeba, Celestins Theatre, Lyons. 19 January 1950’, Accessed 22 January 2014, www.memoire.celestins-lyon.org. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. ‘Minister for Overseas France to the Minister of the Interior’, n.d. ANOM 1AFFPOL/2127/10 [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea*, 60. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. # See P. Deery, ‘The Dove Flies East: Whitehall, Warsaw and the 1950 Peace Congress’ *Australian Journal of Politics & History*, 48:4 (2002), 449-468.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. ‘Note on the World Congress of Partisans of Peace held in Paris from 20-25th April 1949’, 9 July 1949. The National Archives, Kew [hereafter TNA] FO 1110/271. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. ‘Report on the Warsaw Peace Congress’ 1 December 1950. TNA FO 1110/349. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. ‘Speech of D. Shostakovitch at the Second World Congress of Partisans of Peace’ 23 November 1950. TNA FO 1110/349. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. Renda, *Taking Haiti*, 23. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. Delivered at Syracuse University in New York in February 1970 in memory of Eduardo Mondland, the leader of the first independence movement in Mozambique who had been killed in 1960. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. C. Miller, *Theories of Africans*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 46-47. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. K. Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1963), 174-175. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. R. July, *An African Voice* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987), 12. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. K. Fodeba, ‘La danse africaine et la scène’, *Présence Africain,* 14-15 (1957), 205-206. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. Schmidt, ‘Top Down or Bottom Up?’, 988. n.48. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. H. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1994), 127. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. M. Huet and K. Fodeba, *Les Hommes de la Danse* (Lausanne, 1954), Preface. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. E. Harney, ‘Postcolonial Agitations: Avant-Gardism in Dakar and London’, *New Literary History*, 41:4 (2010), 738. [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. F. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth* (London: Penguin, 1977), 166. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. Ibid, 183. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. Miller, *Theories of Africans*, 53. [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. J. Hage, ‘Les littératures francophones d’Afrique noire à la conquête de l’édition française (1914-1974)’, *Gradhiva*, 10 (2009), 89-94. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. Cooper, *Africa Since 1960*, 69 [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. M. Saliou Camara, *His Master’s Voice: Mass Communication and Single Party Politics in Guinea under Sekou Touré* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2005), 41. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. Ibid, 42. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. Ibid, 45. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
72. Watson, ‘Guinea Dance’, 536. [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
73. S. Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War:* *The USSR in West Africa and the Congo, 1956-1964* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 61. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
74. Quoted in MacDonald, “The Challenge of Guinean Independence, 1958–1971”, 90. [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
75. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
76. Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 73. [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
77. MacDonald, “The Challenge of Guinean Independence, 1958–1971”, 165. [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
78. Touré, *The Political Leader as the Representative of a Culture* (Newark, N. J: Jihad Publishing, 1971), 9. [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
79. Charry, *Mande Music,* 252. [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
80. Camara, *His Master’s Voice*, 104. [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
81. D. Berliner, ‘An “impossible” transmission: Youth religious memories in Guinea–Conakry’, *American Ethnologist*, 32 (2005), 581. [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
82. Guinean National Commission for UNESCO, *Cultural Policy in the Revolutionary People’s Republic of Guinea,* Studies and Documents on Cultural Policies 51 (Paris: UNESCO, 1979), 63. [↑](#endnote-ref-82)
83. For a comparable structure of cultural competitions in the Soviet Union, see A.A. Zvorykin, *Cultural Policy in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic,* Studies and Documents on Cultural Policies 8 (Paris: UNESCO, 1970), 44. [↑](#endnote-ref-83)
84. Counsel, ‘The Griots of West Africa: Agents of Social Change’, 46. [↑](#endnote-ref-84)
85. MacDonald, “The Challenge of Guinean Independence, 1958–1971”, 56. [↑](#endnote-ref-85)
86. Counsel, ‘The Griots of West Africa: Agents of Social Change’, 49. [↑](#endnote-ref-86)
87. UNESCO, *Cultural Policy in the Revolutionary People’s Republic of Guinea*, 59-83. [↑](#endnote-ref-87)
88. Flaig, *The Politics of Representation and Transmission in the Globalization of Guinea's Djembé*, 72-73. [↑](#endnote-ref-88)
89. K. Askew, *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 12. [↑](#endnote-ref-89)
90. Ibid, 191. [↑](#endnote-ref-90)
91. Straker, *Youth, Nationalism and the Guinean Revolution,* 231 n.51. [↑](#endnote-ref-91)
92. Macdonald also outlines the difficulties encountered when international scrutiny fell upon Czechoslovak arms shipments to Guinea on 20 and 27 March 1959, although the regime protested they were a ‘’gracious’ gift without political conditions’. Mairi S. MacDonald, “The Challenge of Guinean Independence, 1958–1971,” PhD thesis, University of Toronto (2009), 77-78. Also, for Fodéba’s personal role in seeking arms, see Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 63-75. [↑](#endnote-ref-92)
93. Kaba, ‘The Cultural Revolution’, 213. [↑](#endnote-ref-93)
94. M. S. MacDonald ‘Guinea's Political Prisoners: Colonial Models, Postcolonial Innovation’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 54 (2012), 898-899. [↑](#endnote-ref-94)
95. Camara, *His Master’s Voice,* 61. [↑](#endnote-ref-95)
96. A. Césaire, *A Season in the Congo* (London: Seagull, 2010), 155. [↑](#endnote-ref-96)
97. Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea,* 183-186. [↑](#endnote-ref-97)
98. This plot saw officers from the military suspected of planning a coup d’état with the support of senior officials like Fodéba. See Arieff and McGovern, ‘“History is stubborn”’, 201 n.5. [↑](#endnote-ref-98)
99. Camara, *His Master’s Voice,* 116. [↑](#endnote-ref-99)