



Cultured States: Youth, Gender, and Modern Style in 1960s Dar es Salaam

Andrew Ivaska

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Cultured States is a vivid account of the intersections of postcolonial state power, the cultural politics of youth and gender, and global visions of modern style in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, during the 1960s and early 1970s. Andrew Ivaska describes a cosmopolitan East African capital rocked by debates over youth culture, national cultural policy, the rumored sexual escapades of the postcolonial elite, the content of university education, leftist activism, and the reform of colonial-era marriage laws. If young Tanzanians saw themselves as full-fledged participants in modern global culture, their understandings of the modern conflicted with that of a state launching “decency campaigns” banning cultural forms such as soul music, miniskirts, wigs, and bell-bottoms. Promoted by the political elite as a radical break from the colonial order, these campaigns nonetheless contained strong echoes of colonial assumptions about culture, tradition, and African engagements with the modern city. Exploring the ambivalence over the modern at the heart of these contests, Ivaska uses them as lenses through which to analyze struggles around gender relations and sexual politics, youth and masculinity, and the competition for material resources in a Dar es Salaam in rapid flux. *Cultured States* is a major contribution to understandings of urban cultural politics; national political culture; social struggles around gender, generation, and wealth; and the transnational dimensions of postcolonial histories too often conceived within national frames.

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