

Nollywood, the Orange Economy and the Appropriation of Nigeria's Soft Power

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Abstract

From the earliest contact with the Europeans to the post-colonial era, a single narrative has been propagated of Africa as a backward continent with an anti-developmental cultural orientation and worldviews. Unfortunately, the governance deficits, an endemic culture of political corruption, violence and large-scale human rights violations which are characteristic of Nigeria and other post-colonial African states have assisted in substantiating these disparaging portrayals of the continent. However, Nigeria and many other countries in the region have diverse cultural and creative resources that have impressive global economic value and soft power appeal. Apart from contributing to Nigeria's economic development, Nollywood which is rated as the world's second-largest movie industry continues to achieve transnational spread, recognition and admiration. Arguably, Nollywood is one of Nigeria's most phenomenal cultural exports that has significant economic potential and soft power implications. Despite the transnational acceptance and global adulation that Nigeria enjoys by virtue of its movie industry which can be appropriated not only to augment its diminishing revenue base but also to challenge the demeaning effects of negative stereotypes of the country to rebrand its dented image, the country has yet to unravel Nollywood's economic prospects and foreign policy value. This chapter critically examines Nollywood as part of the orange economy and the foreign policy prospects this may offer by interrogating the appropriation of its vast potential as a tool for economic and cultural diplomacy.

Keywords

Cultural and creative industries, Nollywood, Soft power, Orange economy, Cultural diplomacy