Africa

Journal of the International African Institute

Revue de l'Institut Africain International

Volume 62, 1992

Edited by Murray Last

Reviews Editor Tom Young



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> Journal of the International African Institute Revue de l'Institut Africain International

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ACHILLE MBEMBE teaches History at Columbia University, New York. Since 1986 he has published several articles in French, in the journal *Politique Africaine* and elsewhere; in 1988 Karthala in Paris issued his book *Afriques indociles*. The article in this issue of *Africa* is the first of his to be published in English.

Directorship of the International African Institute

Professor DAVID PARKIN has kindly agreed to be the new Honorary Director of the IAI as from January 1992. He takes over from Professor Peter Lloyd, to whom we extend our thanks for his work on the Institute's behalf.