Contents

List of Illustrations	ix
Foreword	xv
Preface: The Beauty/Character Binary: A Note about "Beautiful Maidens"	xix
Acknowledgments	xxi
1 Introduction to Mbopo Ritual	1
Part I: Anatomy of Beauty: Uyai Mbopo Rev through Time, Transformation, and Trans	
I The Puppet and the Girl	13
Time: A Culture of Initiation and Aesthetics of Seclusion	
II Ekuk Mbopo	31
III Nwo-Nwo: The Seclusion of Little Girls	43
IV Ekuk Mbopo at the Ebiene Atai Village	61
V The School for Womanhood	71
Transformation: Mbopo as the Portrayer/Progenitor of Sanguinity and Extravagance	87
VI Body Inscriptions and the Wellness Performance	91
VII Adorning Comfort	111
Transition: From the Enclosure to the Marketplace: Indelible Marks of Femininity	121
VIII Impressions of Seclusion	125
IX The Clitoridectomy Rite	135
X The Staging of a Female Icon	149



Part II: The Scepter and the Flywhisk: Mbopo Theatre, Corporeal Dialogues, and the Revelation of the Bride

	anisms in Uyai: Rewriting Her Body with Accouterments auty and Power	169
XI	Power Symbols	175
XII	The Crest and the Crown	201
XIII	The Uyai Anointing	217
,	vo Nation: Returnee Mbopo and the Emergence of Objective pretation	231
XIV	The Story of Akon Ekwere	237
XV	Contemporary Iterations and Bride Residue	253
Cond	clusion: New Possibilities in Mbopo Discourse	277
Glos	sary	283
Note	es	291
Bibli	ography	295
Inde	x	307