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Férocité des Blancs, férocité du capitalisme*

Samir Amin**

Le livre de Rosa Amélia Plumelle Uribe devait être écrit ; il doit être lu. Les crimes contre l'humanité, perpétrés à grande échelle depuis 1492 – le génocide des Indiens, l'esclavage et la traite négrière – des siècles avant les crimes du nazisme, ne sont – ou ne devraient être – inconnus de personne. Mais la référence à ces crimes est immédiatement enfouie dans l'autosatisfaction des contemporains, du moins des ressortissants des Etats Unis et de l'Europe. Tout cela, c'est du passé – triste, ignoble – mais dont la page est heureusement *définitivement* (je souligne) tournée.

Nous vivons désormais dans le meilleur des mondes, engagés sur la route lumineuse du respect intégral des droits humains, de tous les humains, sur la route de la démocratie (pour tous). C'est « la fin de l'histoire », nous dit Fukuyama : la démocratie libérale a écrit le dernier chapitre de l'histoire, il n'y en aura pas d'autres après ; car ce système est capable de résoudre pacifiquement, sans violence, tous les problèmes de l'humanité ; il assure déjà et assurera toujours davantage l'accès à tous les bienfaits de la civilisation, matériels et moraux. Ces billevesées constituent, hélas, le pain quotidien de quelques centaines de millions d'êtres humains : probablement la majorité des 15 pour cent de l'humanité qui vivent aux Etats Unis et en Europe (auquel j'ajouterai le Japon – les Japonais étaient des « Blancs honoraires » aux yeux du régime de l'apartheid !), et un petit nombre de ceux qui vivent ailleurs sur la Planète – les fac-similés des « Occidentaux ».

L'ampleur des crimes décrits minutieusement par R. A. Plumelle Uribe ne fait l'objet d'aucune contestation, comme elle l'indique dans sa Préface. Peut-être quelques érudits spécialistes de ceci ou cela (dont je ne suis pas) pourraient-ils ajouter des précisions, voire corriger des erreurs (qui m'auraient échappé). Soit, mais rien au-delà ne pourrait être dit par un chercheur de bonne foi.

* Cette version française est publiée ici à titre posthume. Traduite vers l'anglais, elle est parue pour la première fois comme préface dans le livre de Rosa Amelia Plumelle-Uribe *White Ferocity: The Genocides of Non-Whites and Non-Aryans from 1492 to Date* (CODESRIA 2020).

** (1931–2018), Professeur agrégé de sciences économiques et ancien Directeur du Forum du Tiers Monde, Dakar, Sénégal.

Pour ma part, je ne sais pas exactement ce que pourrait être la définition d'un « Blanc ». L'idéologie – et même hélas la loi – classe les êtres humains aux Etats Unis en « *white* » (qualifiés je ne sais pourquoi de « Caucasiens » ! – probablement pas pour faire plaisir à Staline !) et « *colored* » (tous les autres). Tous les autres ! Soit, pour les Noirs et les métis de Noirs : aux Etats Unis – une « goutte de sang noir » vous déclasse – j'allais dire vous avilit. Mais que sont les émigrés venus de l'Inde d'Asie, ceux qui ont la peau « blanche » et parlent de surcroît une langue indo-européenne – comme les « Caucasiens » ? Que sont les hispaniques sans ancêtres Indiens – Ibériques et Italiens – « Blancs caucasiens », ou « *colored* » ? Il y a en Europe des Blancs de neige au Nord, et des Blancs basanés au Sud. Autant basanés que des Arabes (Blancs ou pas Blancs ?). Steve Biko, confronté à son bourreau habillé en juge, qui lui posait la question concernant sa couleur, a répondu avec humour : tous les êtres humains sont colorés, moi en noir, vous en rose plutôt qu'en blanc. Et les Juifs – dont je ne sais pas définir les critères de l'appartenance à cette prétendue « communauté » – sont-ils aussi Blancs que les Européens, ou basanés comme leurs cousins sémites arabes ? Un individu quelconque peut être beau ou laid, intelligent ou stupide, gentil ou criminel, quelle que soit la couleur qu'on voit sur sa peau. Et fort heureusement je ne suis pas le seul à le penser. Qu'on ait donc définitivement abandonné une para-théorie quelconque des « races humaines » (trois ou quinze races, peu importe) – dans les principes proclamés tout au moins, sinon dans la réalité des perceptions de tous les individus qui habitent notre Planète – me paraît certainement un pas en avant. Mais il ne doit pas devenir prétexte à oublier l'histoire, et sans doute même les questions encore posées par la réalité de ce monde.

L'ouvrage de R. A. Plumelle Uribe porte en sous-titre « de 1492 à nos jours ». Or 1492 n'est pas une date anodine. Elle n'est pas celle de « la découverte de l'Amérique » (eurocentrisme oblige), puisque j'imagine que les êtres humains qui l'habitaient à cette date l'avaient sans doute découverte plus tôt. Elle est la date de l'acte de naissance du capitalisme, s'il faut lui en délivrer un. Avec quelques autres, je parle des six siècles d'histoire de la modernité capitaliste (1492 à ce jour). Je n'entre pas ici dans davantage de détails concernant ma lecture – ou celle d'autres – de ces six siècles. Ce n'est pas le sujet.

Je me contente de rappeler ce que j'ai déjà dit (et bien avant moi Karl Marx entre autre) : que 1492 est la date du démarrage de la conquête des Amériques par des Européens venus des bords de l'Atlantique – Espagnols, Portugais, Anglais, Français et Hollandais. Qui est pour moi « conquête et destruction », destruction des sociétés de l'Amérique indienne (et donc

massacres organisés systématiquement à cet effet) et reconstruction de nouvelles sociétés façonnées pour servir le développement du capitalisme de l'époque dans l'Europe atlantique. La soumission des survivants indiens, réduits à des statuts d'inférieurs – quasi esclaves – puis l'établissement d'exploitations esclavagistes alimentées par la traite négrière (le second génocide étudié par R. A. Plumelle Uribe) ne prennent leur sens qu'à la lumière de l'analyse de ce que le « capitalisme historique » est réellement.

Il se trouve que ce capitalisme historique s'est constitué dans l'Europe atlantique. J'ai pour ma part avancé la thèse que la transition des formes d'organisations sociales antérieures à la modernité capitaliste était engagée plus tôt et ailleurs et que l'avancée tardive mais décisive de l'Europe dans ce domaine pouvait être expliquée autrement que par les mythes construits par l'historiographie idéologique euro-centrique (le « miracle européen » après le « miracle grec » etc.). Mais encore une fois, cela n'est pas notre sujet ici. Le capitalisme historique qui s'est imposé émergent du monde « européen atlantique », un signe d'égalité pouvait être imaginé : capitaliste égale européen (donc « Blanc »). Cette réduction/confusion perdure.

La férocité du capitalisme de l'époque qualifiée de mercantiliste – 1500 à 1800 en gros – est le produit des exigences de l'accumulation du capital, celle que Marx qualifiait de « primitive ». Férocité extrême exercée non seulement dans les colonies d'Amérique et par ricochet en Afrique, réservoir d'esclaves ; mais tout également en Europe même, par la destruction de l'économie paysanne ancienne, la condamnation de millions de paysans appauvris. Le plaidoyer de Marx jeune avocat en défense des « voleurs de bois » de Rhénanie témoigne avec éloquence de ce rapport entre accumulation du capital et férocité. En Angleterre, on prend un affamé pour un larcin ; et il a de la chance si on l'envoie seulement galérer en Australie.

Cette férocité s'atténue-t-elle avec le passage du mercantilisme et de l'accumulation primitive qui l'accompagne à la forme achevée du capitalisme, avec la révolution industrielle en Angleterre et la révolution politique en France, à la fin du XVIIIe siècle ? Certainement pas, même si elle prend des formes nouvelles, en Europe et aux Etats Unis qui voient le jour à la même époque, comme dans les Amériques ibériques, dans l'Inde devenant britannique et plus tard dans les colonies d'Afrique et d'Asie.

Pour ce qui concerne l'Europe, la férocité caractérise l'exploitation de la nouvelle classe ouvrière, qu'Engels décrit pour faire comprendre ce qu'implique le déploiement de la logique du capitalisme. Vous direz que cette page est tournée. En bonne partie, oui, grâce aux luttes victorieuses des travailleurs européens ; dont il faut se féliciter, et non certes déplorer !

La plus grande férocité a caractérisé le déploiement du capitalisme aux Etats Unis pendant tout le XIXe siècle. L'expansion vers l'Ouest a été accompagnée par certainement l'un des plus grands génocides de l'histoire, le massacre systématique organisé de tous les Indiens de la région. Et les films à la gloire des cow-boys massacrant les Indiens ont fait l'éducation des enfants de ce pays sauvage jusqu'à presque ce jour. Les Anglais allaient faire subir à peu près le même sort aux autochtones d'Australie.

En comparaison, ni les Français du vieux Canada et plus tard en Nouvelle Calédonie, ni les Espagnols en Amérique latine, ni les Tsars russes n'ont envisagé le génocide des peuples conquis. En Amérique latine, les communautés indiennes, décimées par la conquête sauvage, la dépossession de leurs meilleures terres, les formes de soumission brutales et barbares, ont survécu. Les Kanaks, les Samoyèdes également. L'Union Soviétique, héritière de l'Empire des Tsars a donné à ces derniers d'immenses territoires en Sibérie et a protégé leur culture. Les Etats Unis et le Canada n'envisagent pas même de reconnaître qu'ils ont été les auteurs de crimes contre l'humanité sans pareils. Ils n'ont pas de leçons à donner aux autres.

Alors comment expliquer cette barbarie particulière des Anglo-Américains ? Par leurs gènes, porteurs du crime plus que ceux d'autres peuples « Blancs » ? Certainement pas. La raison est que le capitalisme – plus avancé dans ses formes modernes en Angleterre et aux Etats Unis qu'en Espagne, en France ou en Russie – s'est révélé pour cette raison plus systématiquement efficace dans sa volonté de détruire les obstacles à son déploiement.

Aux Etats Unis le nouveau capitalisme triomphant, parti de la Nouvelle Angleterre, s'accommode sans problème de la férocité esclavagiste dans les Etats du Sud ; puis, tire bénéfice de l'abolition de l'esclavage pour soumettre le nouveau prolétariat – dont la composante noire s'amplifiera – à une exploitation qui, « féroce ou pas », demeure fondamentalement associée au racisme persistant.

Evolution parallèle en Amérique latine où les classes dirigeantes créoles (Blancs ou pseudo-Blancs) soumettent les péons indiens à des statuts ignobles.

Les seules révolutions que le continent aura connues sont : celle de Saint-Domingue (les Noirs se libèrent par eux-mêmes ; ils n'attendent pas « l'abolition de l'esclavage ») – concomitante à la révolution française (et saluée par les Montagnards : les esclaves de Saint Domingue ont conquis leur liberté, ce sont des citoyens) ; celle plus tard du Mexique (1910-1920) ; puis celle de Cuba, où le souvenir de l'esclavage demeurait encore vivant.

Encore une fois, tout cela, c'est du passé. Du moins c'est ce qu'on disait dans l'Europe de la première « belle époque » – 1890-1914 –. Finie la sauvagerie. Un discours en tout point analogue à celui de la seconde « belle

époque » un siècle plus tard – 1990 à nos jours et au-delà - (le discours de la « fin de l'histoire »). Bien entendu à l'époque (1890) on n'entend pas les voix des Africains soumis à la conquête coloniale. D'ailleurs on est allé là-bas pour les « civiliser », les sortir de la misère et de la férocité de leurs guerres intestines. Comme aujourd'hui l'OTAN n'intervient que pour établir la démocratie ... comme on le voit en Lybie.

Entre temps – entre la première et la seconde belle époque – il y a eu le nazisme. Et R. A. Plumelle Uribe a raison de dire que la férocité des Nazis n'est pas un produit aberrant, « inexplicable », mais s'inscrit dans la logique du déploiement de la férocité dont je dirai encore qu'elle est celle du capitalisme. Je constate, avec elle, que la pensée dans les pays « occidentaux » ne se déploie pas en direction du toujours meilleur, toujours plus humain, comme un long fleuve tranquille. Au contraire, son mouvement a préparé et conduit au nazisme.

Les Lumières du XVIIIe siècle ne sont pas uniformément racistes. Loin de là. Le courant anti-esclavagiste, le souci de définir des valeurs authentiquement universelles, préoccupent les meilleurs esprits. Sans doute cette pensée demeure-t-elle euro-centrique. Mais le « miracle européen » n'est pas attribué à la race, aux gènes (dont on ignore l'existence), mais à « l'ancêtre grec », au « miracle grec ». Qu'il s'agisse d'une construction mythologique, soit ? J'ai rappelé, comme l'auteur de *Black Athena*, que la Grèce antique n'est pas l'ancêtre de l'Europe ; elle appartenait à l'Orient ancien. J'ai pour ma part situé la construction de l'eurocentrisme dans ces formulations des Lumières.

C'est au XIXe siècle que le racisme va systématiquement prendre la place de l'ancêtre grec, pour fonder le nouveau mythe de la supériorité européenne (celle des Blancs). Une invention qui est française : Gobineau est le premier à formuler cette « théorie des races » – nouvelle. Mais son succès est fracassant. Des hommes politiques influents adhèrent d'emblée à cette nouvelle philosophie misérable de l'histoire ; comme Chamberlain par exemple, et beaucoup d'autres.

La lecture des classements racistes popularisés par ces maîtres penseurs des deux derniers siècles est fort amusante. Les Allemands se placent en tête, suivis par les autres anglo-saxons ; les Anglais adoptent la même liste, mais se placent au-dessus des Allemands ; les Français justifient leur position privilégiée par un argument dont j'avoue qu'il m'est sympathique – ils sont les héritiers de la Révolution ... qu'ils ont néanmoins trahie. Au milieu de la liste toujours à peu près les mêmes – les basanés de l'Europe du Sud et d'Amérique latine. Et les « jaunes » ? Les Chinois en bas, mais les Japonais en haut. Comprenne qui pourra. Les Indiens de l'Inde, en bas, en dépit de

leur langue « indo-européenne ». Plus bas encore le plus souvent les Juifs et les Arabes. L'antisémitisme est une invention européenne. Les Musulmans se sentent plus proches du Judaïsme que même du Christianisme ; et pour cette raison n'ont jamais été « antisémites ». Il est interdit aujourd'hui de rappeler cela : les Israéliens (et donc les Juifs) doivent être placés dans les têtes de la liste bien sûr, les Arabes restent misérablement traités. Tout en bas, bien entendu, presque toujours, les Nègres (terme en usage alors) ; certainement parce que leur condition avait été synonyme de celle de l'esclave, l'animal qui parle.

La hiérarchie dans ces classements accompagne le déploiement des conquêtes coloniales : les Noirs (les Africains) en sont les victimes premières. Là où ce fut possible, comme en Afrique du Sud, ils ont été alors soumis à un statut discriminatoire particulièrement féroce et humiliant. Car l'apartheid n'a pas été inventé par les Boers, qui se contentaient de chasser les Noirs des terres conquises, mais par le gouverneur britannique de l'Union Sud-Africaine, cultivé et admirateur de l'éloge de l'esclavage par Platon. Le nouvel Etat « boer » a bien sûr hérité du système, qu'il a systématisé. Il ne s'agissait pas d'une aberration, d'un vestige du passé, comme on dit, mais bel et bien d'un système parfaitement efficace pour le fonctionnement du capitalisme. Les médias dominants ont voulu nous faire croire que l'idéologie des « libéraux » était anti-apartheid. Non. L'apartheid a bénéficié du soutien des Etats Unis et des pays européens jusqu'à son dernier souffle. L'apartheid politique a été mis en déroute par les luttes du peuple noir du pays, et par personne d'autre.

Hitler n'a pas inventé grand-chose sur ce terrain. Son crime a été de traiter d'autres « Blancs » comme on ne pouvait traiter que des « races » classées « de couleur ».

Césaire avait parfaitement raison de faire remarquer que ce qu'on reprochait aux Nazis, c'est d'avoir étendu à d'autres « Blancs » le traitement réservé aux autres. Une anecdote : en revoyant le film (anglais) « le Pont sur la Rivière Kwai », je sursaute en entendant l'officier britannique s'en prendre à son geôlier japonais : « ils nous traitent comme des Indiens » !

Pour comprendre l'origine de toute cette férocité, ancienne et contemporaine, cherchez la logique du Capital : accumulez, accumulez, quel qu'en soit le prix (humain). Le capitalisme est un système – le premier – fondé sur le principe selon lequel « la richesse est source de pouvoir ». L'amour de l'argent – dont le respect doit être absolu tant il est vital pour la reproduction du système – « pousse au crime ». Crime à peine visible des pantouflards qui, sans se joindre aux brigades d'assaut féroces, se taisent sur les crimes accomplis, parce qu'ils tirent un petit bénéfice matériel de la situation ; et ils le savent. Crimes individuels des patrons, de toutes sortes : filouterie, abus de pouvoir (sexuel) à l'égard d'employées etc. Mais véritables

crimes contre l'humanité ordonnés et mis en œuvre par les politiques aux postes de commande, aujourd'hui autant qu'hier. Ces hommes (et quelques femmes) savent ce qu'ils font et connaissent les conséquences de leurs décisions : ils protègent la finance ; rien d'autre.

C'est pourquoi, en dépit du discours « libéral » qui se livre à l'éloge des temps modernes, sans grande nuance, la férocité reste à l'ordre du jour du quotidien et menace toujours davantage. Le regain de popularité du fascisme en Europe n'augure rien qui justifie l'optimisme à cet égard.

Mais en même temps il faut prendre conscience que les peuples dominés ne répondent pas toujours par une résistance lucide et noble au défi que constitue la férocité des moyens de leur oppression.

Les exemples tristes de ces types de réaction sont légion, en particulier en Amérique latine, précisément parce que cette grande région du Sud a été façonnée par la colonisation capitaliste plus tôt que les autres. Tout le continent des Amériques, de l'Alaska à la Terre de feu, est, de ce fait, marqué jusqu'à ce jour par une violence barbare particulière, dont témoigne l'exemple de l'assassinat programmé des enfants des rues au Brésil.

On connaît les glissements sur la pente criminelle et stupide de l'organisation de massacres entre peuples des périphéries comme on l'a vu en Yougoslavie et dans de nombreux pays au Moyen Orient, en Afrique et en Asie du Sud Est. Ces massacres – féroces bien entendu – sont parfois visiblement commandités par les dirigeants du monde (« occidentaux », ou plus exactement maîtres de la décision politique dans les pays impérialistes majeurs), à défaut ils sont au moins ouvertement ou sournoisement soutenus. La raison ? Ces « conflits » absurdes servent la cause : perpétuer la domination non de « l'Occident », mais du capital financier. L'analyse des raisons et des mécanismes à l'origine de cette férocité est nécessaire, mais elle ne doit pas servir d'alibi pour l'excuser, elle doit devenir le moyen de mobiliser les peuples pour y mettre un terme.

Bien que l'ouvrage de R. A. Plumelle Uribe ne traite que de la férocité à partir de 1492, je crois utile de dire quelque chose en rapport avec la férocité à travers l'histoire antérieure à la modernité capitaliste. Car la férocité, hélas, est vieille comme le monde. Mais il importe de savoir quelles sont les raisons qui la motivent et donc les mécanismes par le moyen desquels elle opère, pour la combattre plus efficacement.

La violence ancienne trouvait sa source dans la course au pouvoir, pas à l'argent. Avec le capitalisme l'argent devient source de pouvoir, avant lui c'est le pouvoir qui est la source de la richesse. Les exemples de férocité barbare mis en œuvre par les conquérants du passé sont innombrables : les centaines de milliers de têtes humaines coupées sur les ordres de Tamerlan par

exemple. Ces actes n'ont pas été moins le fait de Noirs, de Jaunes ou d'autres couleurs que de Blancs. Et généralement leurs victimes appartenaient à leur propre « groupe racial » (si ce terme a un sens), tout simplement parce que les moyens de l'époque ne permettaient pas de conduire les expéditions guerrières aux confins de la Planète.

La différence entre la férocité motivée par la course des Anciens au pouvoir, et celle motivée par l'accumulation moderne du capital, tient aux moyens à la disposition des sociétés en question. Aucune commune mesure, hélas, entre les moyens des Anciens et les armes de destruction massive des temps modernes. Et c'est pourquoi les responsables de décisions de mise en œuvre de ces moyens, aujourd'hui, sont les plus grands auteurs de crimes contre l'humanité qu'on ait connus ; et les Présidents des Etats Unis en occupent le premier rang.

Alors, à quoi attribuer ce penchant pour le crime ? Aux gènes particuliers aux peuples associés à leur mise en œuvre ? A ceux des individus qui les ordonnent ? Certainement pas. Alors ? À la *carnalitas* propre à la race humaine dans son ensemble, comme le suggèrent quelques anthropologues ? Je ne m'estime pas compétent pour trancher cette question. Mais je conclurai simplement en disant qu'il faut la combattre – si elle existe – et que pour le faire il faut remettre en question le mode de fonctionnement des logiques doubles du capital et du pouvoir. Combat utopique pour la reconstruction de l'être humain et de la société ? Peut-être ; mais utopie créatrice ; la seule qui vaille la peine qu'on y consacre toutes ses forces, idéologiques et politiques.



Ferocity of Whites, Ferocity of Capitalism*

Samir Amin**

Rosa Amelia Plumelle-Uribe's book needed to be written; now it must be read. The crimes against humanity perpetrated on a huge scale since 1492, centuries before the Nazi crimes – the genocide of Native Americans, the Atlantic slave trade and slavery – are known, or should be known, to everybody. But any reference to these crimes is immediately buried in the complacency of the public today, at least the citizens of the United States and of Europe. All this belongs to the past, albeit a sad, sickening one, but nonetheless a page of history that has fortunately, *definitively*, been turned (my emphasis).

We now live in the best of all worlds, striding forward on the radiant path of full respect for human rights, for all humans, on the road towards democracy (for all). It is the “end of history” we are told by Fukuyama: liberal democracy has written history's last chapter and there will be no more hereafter because this system is capable, by peaceful, nonviolent means, of solving all the problems faced by humanity. It already allows access and will increasingly allow access to all the benefits of civilisation both material and ethical. This nonsense is unfortunately the daily fare of some hundreds of million human beings: probably a majority of the 15 per cent of humanity that lives in the United States and Europe (to which I would add Japan, it being “honorary Whites” in the eyes of the apartheid regime!), and a small number of those who live elsewhere on the planet, i.e. “Western” facsimiles.

The magnitude of the crimes described in detail by Uribe is not disputed, as she points out in her preface. There may be here and there some eminent specialists (and I am not one of them) who could add some details, maybe correct some errors (that escaped my notice). That could be, but no researcher could, in good faith, claim any more than that.

* Translated from the French version, was first published posthumously as a foreword to Rosa Amelia Plumelle-Uribe's book *White Ferocity: The Genocides of Non-Whites and Non-Aryans from 1492 to Date* (CODESRIA 2020).

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As for me, I do not know exactly what the definition of a “White” is. Ideology – and the law too, alas – categorises human beings in the United States as “White” (I have no idea why, as “Caucasians”! Perhaps to please Stalin!) and “Coloured” (everyone else). Everyone else! In the case of Blacks and people of mixed Black ancestry: in the United States, a “single drop of black blood” downgrades you – I nearly wrote *degrades you*. But how about the emigrants that came from Asian India, those who have a “white” skin and furthermore speak an Indo-European language, just like the “Caucasians”? And how about the Hispanics who are not from the indigenous peoples: Iberians and Italians? Are they “White Caucasians” or “Coloured”? In Europe there are those who are snow white in the North, and the dark-skinned Whites of the South. Are they as dark-skinned as the Arabs (White or not White?). Steve Biko, confronted with his torturer, disguised as a judge, who asked him a question about his colour, good-humouredly answered: “Why do you call yourselves white? You look more pink than white.” And the Jews – for whom the criteria for belonging to this so-called “community” I am unable to define – are they as white as the Europeans, or are they dark-skinned like their Semitic Arab cousins? Any individual can be good-looking or ugly, intelligent or stupid, kind or criminal, regardless of his or her skin colour. And very fortunately, I am not the only one to believe this. To definitively set aside some sort of para-theory about “human races” (be they three or fifteen matters very little) – at least in stated principles if not in the actual perceptions of all the individuals that inhabit our Earth – is in my view certainly a step forward. But it should not be an excuse to forget history and the questions that still affect the reality of our world.

The year 1492 in the subtitle of Plumelle-Urbe’s book is not a random date. Not the year of the “discovery of America” (in Eurocentric parlance), since I suppose that the human beings that lived there at the time had discovered it earlier. But if a date of birth had to be found for capitalism, this would be it. Along with a number of others, I talk about the six centuries of the history of capitalist modernity (1492 to the present day). Here is not the place to go into any further detail about our understanding of those six centuries.

Let me just recall what I have already said (and before me, Karl Marx and others): 1492 is when the conquest of the Americas by the Europeans from the Atlantic coasts – the Spaniards, Portuguese, British, French and Dutch – began. I call this “conquest and destruction”, destruction of the societies of American Indians (and therefore massacres methodically organised for that purpose) and then reconstruction of new societies shaped to serve the development of capitalism at the time in Atlantic Europe. The subjection of the surviving indigenous peoples and their reduction to the status of inferior

beings – quasi-slaves – followed by the establishment of plantations based on slave labour supplied by the Atlantic slave trade (the second genocide studied by Plumelle-Urbe) can only be meaningfully interpreted in the light of the analysis of what “historical capital” truly is.

It is a fact that historical capitalism originates in Atlantic Europe. I have put forward the thesis that the transition of forms of social organisation that pre-dated capitalist modernity had begun earlier and elsewhere, and that there is another explanation for the belated but decisive advance of Europe in this area than the legends built up by Eurocentric ideological historiography (“the European miracle” that comes after the “Greek miracle”, etc.). But again, this is not the topic of this foreword. Because historical capitalism emerged from the “Atlantic European” world, an equal sign might come to mind: capitalist equals European (hence “White”). This reduction/confusion still prevails.

The ferocity of the capitalism of what was called the mercantilist era (roughly 1500 to 1800) arises from the demands of what Marx refers to as “primitive capital accumulation”. This extreme ferocity was practised not only in the colonies of America and indirectly in Africa, which supplied the reservoir of slaves, but also in Europe itself, through the destruction of the ancient peasant economy, condemning millions of peasants to extreme poverty. Marx’s pleadings as a young lawyer in defence of the “wood thieves” of the Rhineland eloquently demonstrate this relationship between capital accumulation and ferocity. In England, the starving masses were caught for petty thefts and were lucky if they were sentenced only for deportation to Australia as convict labourers.

Does this ferocity abate with the passage from mercantilism and its accompanying primitive accumulation to the accomplished form of capitalism with the industrial revolution in England and the political revolution in France at the end of the eighteenth century? Certainly not, although it takes on new forms that emerge in Europe and the United States concurrently, as well as in the Iberian Americas and India, which by then was British, and later on in the African and Asian colonies.

In the case of Europe, ferocity characterises the exploitation of the new working class, which Engels describes in an explanation of what the implications of deploying the capitalist rationale are. One might be tempted to say all this belongs to the past. In many ways, yes, thanks to the victorious struggles of European workers that deserve respect and should be congratulated, and certainly not deplored!

An epitome of ferocity was reached with the expansion of capitalism in the United States throughout the nineteenth century. The extension westwards went hand-in-hand with what was no doubt one of the greatest genocides in

history, the organised, methodical massacre of all indigenous peoples in the region. And films that glorify cowboys who slaughter indigenous peoples are still served to educate children in this savage country almost to this very day. The British treated the indigenous peoples of Australia almost the same.

By comparison, neither the French of old Canada nor later on those of New Caledonia, the Spaniards in Latin America or the Russian Tsars planned the genocides of the peoples they conquered. In Latin America, the indigenous communities already decimated by the vicious conquest, dispossessed of their best land, the brutal, barbarian methods of subjection, survived nonetheless. So did the Kanaks and the Samoyeds. The Soviet Union, heir to the empire of the Tsars, gave the Samoyeds huge territories in Siberia and protected their culture. The United States and Canada have not even contemplated recognising that they were the perpetrators of unparalleled crimes against humanity. They are in no position to preach to others.

How can this special brand of barbarity of the Anglo-Americans be explained? Certainly not through their genes that can be speculated to be more criminogenic than those of other “White” peoples. No, the reason is that capitalism – because it was more advanced in its modern forms in the United Kingdom and the United States compared to Spain, France or Russia – proved to be systematically more efficient in its will to destroy the obstacles to its expansion.

In the United States, the triumphant new capitalism that started out from New England had no problem in accommodating the ferocious slavery of the southern states. After that, it turned the abolition of slavery to its advantage to subject the new proletariat – now supplemented by an additional black component – to an exploitation which “whether ferocious or not”, remained fundamentally associated with entrenched racism.

There was a parallel development in Latin America where the Creole ruling classes (Whites or pseudo-Whites) debased the indigenous peoples, reducing them to abject conditions.

The only revolutions experienced by the continent are the Saint-Domingue revolution (Blacks liberated by Blacks, not waiting for the “abolition of slavery”) – concomitant with the French Revolution (and commended by the *Montagnards*: the slaves of Saint-Domingue fought and won their freedom, they are citizens); and the later revolution of Mexico (1910–1920) followed by Cuba, where memories of slavery were still fresh.

Again, all this belongs to the past. At least, that was what was said in Europe during the first Belle Époque, 1890–1914. Savagery was over and done with. This discourse is very similar to the one in the second Belle

Époque, a century later (1990 to the present day and beyond) with “the end of history” discourse). Needless to say, at the time (1890), the voices of the Africans subjected to the colonial conquest went unheard. And anyway, the purpose of going there was to “civilise” them, to pull them out of poverty and from the ferocity of their internecine strife. Just as today NATO intervenes only to establish democracy... as clearly is the case in Libya.

In the meantime – between the first and second Belle Époque – there was Nazism. Plumelle-Urbe is right to say that the ferocity of the Nazis is not an anomalous, inexplicable occurrence. It is integral to the rationale for implementing ferocity, which, I once again stress, is inherent to capitalism. She and I both see that the ideology of “Western” countries does not always go in the best, the most humane direction, quietly advancing on the right track. On the contrary, its progression laid the foundations for and led to Nazism.

The eighteenth century Enlightenment was not uniformly racist, far from it. The anti-slavery movement, the preoccupation with defining genuinely universal values, occupied the thoughts of the best minds. Undoubtedly, that thinking remained Eurocentric. The “European miracle” was not attributed to the race, to the genes (whose existence was yet to be discovered), but rather to the “Greek ancestor”, the “Greek miracle”. This is a mythological construction, so be it. I have pointed out, along with the author of *Black Athena*, that ancient Greece was not the ancestor of Europe. Ancient Greece belonged to the ancient Orient. I have shown that Eurocentrism was built up from formulations originating from the Enlightenment.

It was in the nineteenth century that racism systematically took over the place of the Greek ancestor, thereby founding the new myth of European superiority (the superiority of Whites). This is a French invention: Arthur de Gobineau was the first to formulate this new “theory of races”. It was a resounding success. Influential politicians such as Chamberlain immediately adhered to this miserable new philosophy of history.

It is amusing to read the classifications of race popularised by these intellectual leaders of the last two centuries. The Germans rank themselves at the top, followed by the other Anglo-Saxons; the English have the same list, but put themselves above the Germans; the French justify their top position with an argument that I must admit is likeable: they are the heirs of the Revolution... which they nonetheless betrayed. The middle positions of the lists were consistently taken by more or less the same dark-skinned inhabitants of Southern Europe and Latin America. What about the “Asians”? The Chinese were at the bottom but the Japanese at the top. Baffling. The Indians of India, down at the bottom in spite of their “Indo-European” language. The

Muslims felt closer to Jews than to Christians, which is why they have never been “anti-Semitic”. Nowadays, it is taboo to mention that the Israelis (and hence the Jews) were placed way down the list of course, with the Arabs in a miserable position. Right at the very bottom, needless to say, as nearly always, the Negroes (as they were called at the time); no doubt because their status had been synonymous with that of a slave, an animal that speaks.

The hierarchy in these classifications was in line with the colonial conquests for which Black people (Africans) were the prime victims. Where it was possible, such as in South Africa, they were subjected to a particularly savage and humiliating regime of discrimination. Apartheid was not invented by the Boers, who were content with driving the Blacks off conquered land, but by the British Governor of the South African Union, a cultivated admirer of Plato’s praise of slavery. The new “Boer” state did of course inherit and apply the system on a large scale. This was no aberration, no remnant from the past, but a truly efficient system for the functioning of capitalism. The dominant media would have us believe that the ideology of the “liberals” was anti-apartheid. No. Apartheid was able to avail itself of the support of the United States and European countries until its very last gasp. Political apartheid was routed by the battles of the country’s Black people, and no one else. Hitler did not come up with anything very new in this area. His crime was to treat other “Whites” in the same way as the “races” categorised as “Coloured” were.

Césaire very rightly calls attention to the fact that what the Nazis were criticised for was that they extended to “Whites” a treatment that had heretofore been confined to others. An anecdote: I was watching the British film *Bridge on the River Kwai* again and I jumped when the British officer complained to his Japanese jailer that “they treat us like Indians!”.

To understand where this ferocity originates, look at the logic of capital: accumulate and accumulate, regardless of the price (in human terms). Capitalism is a system, indeed the first system that is founded on the principle whereby “wealth is source of power”. The love of money – to which utter devotion is owed because it is vital for the system to reproduce itself – “drives you to crime”. A crime hardly perceptible to the “stay-at-homes” who, although they might not join the ranks of the ferocious combat squads, keep quiet about the crimes perpetrated because they derive some tiny material benefit from the situation. And they know it. Individual crimes of all sorts committed by those that wield power: swindling, abuses (sexual) against employees, etc. But also crimes against humanity ordered and carried out by politicians in positions of command, both past and present. These men (and a few women) know what they are doing and the consequences of their decisions: they protect high finance and nothing else.

This is why, in spite of the “liberal” discourse, which indiscriminately sings the praises of modern times, ferocity is still on the daily agenda and ever more menacing. The revived popularity of fascism in Europe bodes of nothing that can justify optimism in this respect.

But at the same time, one should be aware that people under domination do not always respond with intelligible, noble resistance to the ferocity of the instruments for their oppression that they are confronted with.

There are innumerable examples of this type of sorry reactions, in particular in Latin America, precisely because this huge region of the South was shaped by capitalist colonisation earlier than the others. As a result, the entire continent of the Americas, from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego, is still today marked by a particular brand of barbarian violence, as illustrated by the example of the planned assassination of street children in Brazil.

We all know the criminal and stupid descent into organised massacres between peoples in the peripheries, such as Yugoslavia and many countries in the Middle East, Africa and South East Asia. These ferocious massacres were sometimes visibly ordered by the leaders of the world (“Western” or more precisely by those empowered to take political decisions in the major imperialist countries), or else sneakily or openly supported by the latter. For what reason? These absurd “conflicts” serve the cause: perpetuating the domination, not of the “West”, but of financial capital. An analysis of the reasons and mechanisms behind this ferocity is necessary, but it should not be used as an alibi to excuse it. It must become a means for mobilising peoples to end it.

While Uribe’s work deals with ferocity from 1492 onwards, I believe it is useful to dwell a little on ferocity preceding capitalist modernity because ferocity, alas, is as old as the world. It is important to know the reasons that foster it and hence the mechanisms through which it operates, so as to be able to better fight it.

Ancient violence was rooted in the battle for power, not money. With capitalism, money became a source of power. Previously, power was the source of wealth. There are innumerable examples of barbarian ferocity perpetrated by conquerors in the past: the hundreds of thousands of human heads cut off under the orders of Timur, for instance. These misdeeds were committed no less by Blacks, Asians, or people of other colours than they were by Whites. And generally the victims belonged to their own “racial group” (assuming this term is in any way meaningful), quite simply because the means at the time did not permit military expeditions to be carried out at the fringes of the planet.

The difference between the ferocity motivated by the battles for power of the Ancients and the ferocity motivated by modern accumulation of capital arises from the means available to the societies concerned. There is unfortunately no comparison between the means the Ancients had and the weapons of mass destruction of modern times. This is why those who have responsibility for the decisions to make use of these means are today the most colossal perpetrators of crimes against humanity ever to have existed, with the presidents of the United States in the lead.

How can this inclination for crime be explained? By the genes specific to the peoples associated with perpetrating them? By those of the individuals that give the orders for their perpetration? Certainly not. So what then? To the carnality inherent to the human race as a whole, as some anthropologists suggest? I am not qualified to settle this question. I would conclude simply by saying that this inclination, assuming it exists, must be fought and to do so requires questioning the *modus operandi* of the dual rationales of capital and power. A utopian struggle for the reconstruction of mankind and of society? Maybe... but a creative utopia, the only one that is worth devoting all one's strength, both ideological and political, too.



Eurocentrism and the Contemporary Social Sciences

Lansana Keita*

Abstract

The contemporary social sciences emerged in the West from the eighteenth century as new modes of technology and scientific research developed. There is no doubt that technological advances led to the triumph of empiricism over metaphysics. This was the basis for the transformation of the nomenclatures of natural philosophy and moral philosophy into natural science and moral science respectively. As the empiricist methodologies of the natural sciences became successful, the social sciences chose to emulate their techniques. Thus, the methodological claim was made that the social sciences and their division of labour compartmentalisation of the social world reflected that world in objectivist terms. But the fact that humans themselves were involved in describing and explaining the behaviours of other humans meant that a subjective element would be always be involved unless serious attempts were made for cognitive correctives and a self-conscious regard for consistent objectivity. While research in archaeology is relatively objective in its scientific findings, this is not the case with the other social sciences – especially anthropology and history. There has been an arbitrary Eurocentric creation and reification of theories and terms founded on whimsical and unsupported claims concerning the evolutionary status of *Homo sapiens Africanus*.

Keywords: Social sciences, Eurocentrism, archaeology, history, anthropology, political economy, economics, sociology, linguistics

Résumé

Les sciences sociales contemporaines émergent en Occident à partir du XVIII^e siècle au fur et à mesure que se développent de nouvelles technologies et de nouveaux modes de recherche scientifique. Il est indéniable que les progrès technologiques ont mené au triomphe de l'empirisme sur la métaphysique. C'est la base de la transformation des nomenclatures de la philosophie

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naturelle et de la philosophie morale dans les sciences naturelles et les sciences morales, respectivement. Le succès des méthodologies empiristes des sciences naturelles a poussé les sciences sociales à imiter leurs techniques. Ainsi, il a été affirmé méthodologiquement que les sciences sociales et le compartimentage du monde social de leur division du travail reflétaient ce monde en termes objectivistes. Mais les humains étant eux-mêmes impliqués dans la description et l'explication des comportements d'autres humains signifiait qu'un élément subjectif serait toujours présent, à moins de sérieuses tentatives de correctifs cognitifs et d'un respect conscient de l'objectivité cohérente. Si la recherche en archéologie est relativement objective dans ses découvertes scientifiques, ce n'est pas le cas dans les autres sciences sociales, en particulier l'anthropologie et l'histoire. Il y a une création et une réification eurocentriques arbitraires des théories et des termes fondées sur des affirmations fantaisistes et non étayées sur le statut évolutif de l'*homo sapiens africanus*.

Mots-clés : sciences sociales, eurocentrisme, archéologie, histoire, anthropologie, économie politique, économie, sociologie, linguistique

Introduction

The contemporary social sciences that are taught in the West derive from the earlier attempts to describe human behaviour in descriptive and proto-scientific terms. In post-Renaissance times, there were just two approaches to knowledge: moral philosophy and natural philosophy. Later, the European Enlightenment, with its emphasis on secular knowledge, witnessed attempts to study human behaviour on the same basis that the natural world was being studied. Consider the pre-Enlightenment works of Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Descartes, Spinoza, and others in this regard. The European Enlightenment produced a set of scholarly works that set the foundations for the modern social or human sciences as they developed out of the philosophical works of researchers such as Kant, Buffon, D'Holbach, Diderot, Helvétius, and others. Later, scholars such as Darwin, Blumenbach, Mill, Hegel, Marx, Comte, and others of the French school such as Lévy-Bruhl, Lévi-Strauss, and Durkheim helped in the maturation of the European social sciences.

The development of the European natural and social sciences advanced *pari passu* with Western Europe's technological prowess that allowed its expansion into the Americas, Asia, and Africa. This technological prowess was also employed in the area of scientific research. Thus, over time, Western Europe became dominant not only in the natural sciences, but also in the human sciences. The result was that the social science paradigms dominant in Europe were transplanted to African scholarship centres at the time of the independence of Africa's new nations. This meant that, during the modern

era, the early historians of Africa were West Europeans hailing especially from Britain, France and Germany. The works of the Ancient Egyptian historian Manetho and other African historians such as Ibn Khaldun, Sadi, Kati, and others were more or less ignored. Similarly, scholars such as Plotinus, Zara Yakob, Ahmed Baba, and others are usually not included in the literature on the history of ideas.

The modern social sciences and their paradigms were simply transferred to Africa during the colonial era and expressed in the languages of the colonisers. Given the obvious imbalance of power in the colonial relationships, the European description of the history and sociology of Africa took on decidedly Eurocentric modes of expression. A special social science colonial lexicon was developed for just that purpose. For example, terms such as primitive, tribe, negro Africa, black Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, true negro, negroid but not negro, Hamite, tribal dancing, tribal warfare, savage, fetish, and so on were created specifically to describe African modes of being. For example, in the case of sociological appellations such as 'tribe', one might note that this term is never used to describe the people of Europe. Western sociologists never refer to, for example, 'the Gypsy tribe', 'the Jewish tribe', 'the Flemish tribe', or 'the Welsh tribe'.

Similar considerations apply to other social sciences such as economics/ political economy, political science, and linguistics. The structure of economics/ political economy as pedagogy in the universities and practised by the governments of Africa derive directly from the West's research efforts in its academies. During the Cold War, socialism, as state capitalism, was the preferred mode of economic expression for those African nations aligned with the Soviet Union. Those aligned with the West expressed support for capitalism, privatisation of public enterprises, and the market economy. Western neoclassical economics was the dominant pedagogy in African universities. Political science as taught in the African university and understood by Africa's governments was an acceptance *grosso modo* of the West's structuring of the world into the conflicting ideologies of socialism and democracy as defined in the West's academies of political science. The major ideological exceptions were the 'wars of liberation' and conflicts in the Portuguese colonial territories, South Africa, and Namibia. One-party state socialism as opposed to multiparty democracy was the preferred political mode of governance. But the key point here again is that most of the theoretical political science research of Africa was monopolised by researchers and theorists not based on the African continent. There are a few exceptions, for example the works of the late Claude Ake such as *Democracy and Development in Africa* (1995). Similar considerations apply to the area of linguistics, where the main research

efforts by Africans have been carried out by C. A. Diop (1977) and Theophile Obenga (1993), both of whom provided views on the origins and structure of Africa's languages that opposed those of Western linguists such as Meinhof (1912) and Greenberg (1966).

In sum, the modern social sciences in an African context developed according to subjectively Eurocentric modes of expression. This article seeks to analyse and unpack the modern social sciences as they operate in Africa. The areas it will discuss are archaeology, history, anthropology, political economy and economics, sociology, and linguistics. The goals are to show the evident lack of objective content and objective modes of analysis utilised by Western scholars of Africa, and to suggest that social science modes of expression should be as objective as possible.

Archaeology

The virtue of empirical science is that its methods and experimental results are replicable. Phenomena to be tested must be isolated and examined as objectively as possible, and results recorded for future reference. In this regard, the orthodox theory concerning human origins is that humanity has its origins in Africa some 200,000 years ago after a series of evolutionary attempts by *hominins* that resulted in the ultimate success of *Homo sapiens*. Scientific analysis enters the picture by examining fossil remains and dating them by the relevant methods of physics, chemistry, and biology. The noteworthy and interesting issue here is that, although Africa is viewed as the geographical area where humankind originated, very few African researchers are engaged in anthropological research on the continent. Thus, the scientific nomenclature chosen to describe the scientific findings on the archaeology and anthropology of the continent were all proposed by researchers in the West. The situation is the same for DNA analysis of human archaeological remains. From *Ardipithecus ramidus* to the set of *Australopithecus* forms on to *Homo habilis*, *Homo erectus*, *Homo neanderthalensis*, and finally *Homo sapiens*, the classifications have all been of Western origin. The key question is: are archaeological classifications Eurocentric or not?

Anthropology

Anthropology has assumed a great importance in the study of humankind. Even though the whole of humankind can be studied anthropologically, most of the studies are done at Euro-American universities. This means that findings necessarily come with a veneer of Eurocentricism. Little independent work on Africa's anthropology is carried out by African scholars themselves.

The standard classification is that there are three races and that they are distinguished by evident morphological traits such as osteological and skull structures, pigmentation, hair form, eye form, etc. The earliest race theorists were researchers such as Linnaeus (Sweden, 1707–1778) who in his *Systema Naturae* (1735, 1806) classified humankind into four types: *Homo Americanus*, *Homo Africanus*, *Homo Europaeus*, and *Homo Asiaticus*. There were no African inputs into any of these works, which probably explains why the depictions of *Homo Africanus* were quite unflattering. The term ‘race’ was later used by Buffon (1707–1788) to classify humans. The German Johann Blumenbach changed Linnaeus’s race classification from four races to five: Caucasian, Ethiopian, Malay, Mongolian, and American. This new classification was not principally based on geographical location, but rather on human physical structures. Blumenbach’s classification scheme was decidedly Eurocentric in his choice of the term ‘Caucasian’ after he found ‘the most perfect skull’ in the Caucasus mountains of Southern Russia. Clearly, Blumenbach’s claim that his found skull was ‘perfect’ was purely arbitrary, but it gained currency over the years so that ‘Caucasoid’ skulls were found on all continents. Obviously, this was a case of blatant Eurocentric vanity.

Given Europe’s technological ascendancy over all other continents, the idea of the biological superiority of *Homo Europaeus* over all the other geographical populations in the world went unchallenged. Skull shape, cranial capacity, facial angle, physiognomic structure, and even facial aesthetics were the criteria applied to ‘prove’ the biological superiority of *Homo Europaeus*. Other population groups that approximated the European morphology were given higher status. Africans were placed on the lowest rung, along with the Tasmanians and Australian Aborigines. This anthropological template buttressed by a racial biological argument was used to justify the enslavement of Africans in the Americas for purely economic reasons. The fictitious ‘curse of Ham’ of Western religious lore was thenceforth buttressed by the fictions of phrenological pseudoscience.

Given that Africa was the original home of humanity, and that the basic template for the world’s diverse physiognomic morphologies came from there, it would follow logically that certain physiognomic morphologies would approximate those of Europe and Eurasia. This was the basis for Eurocentric anthropology to claim that certain African physiognomic structures were ‘Caucasoid’. This was the case for the Tutsis of Rwanda and Burundi, the so-called Hottentots of Southern Africa, some Hausa and Yoruba of West Africa, Sahel-dwelling Africans, and East Africans on the Horn of Africa. Seligman’s (1930) *Races of Africa* reinforced this Eurocentric anthropological argument. The Seligman thesis, also known as the Hamitic

hypothesis, claimed that any semblance of creative cultural or civilisational structures in Africa derived from Asian Hamites entering Africa during the primeval past to conquer and exercise dominion over Africa's indigenous populations. As a result of Seligman's work, Africa's populations were classified according to the Eurocentric paradigm as 'Caucasoid' Hamites, half-Hamites, quarter Hamites, etc.

The German colonisation of East Africa was accompanied by pseudo-scientific theories of race which sought justification by appeal to cephalometry, with its calliper-measured cephalic indices, further supported by the metrics of nasal and facial angles. It was this kind of Eurocentric vanity that led to German and later Belgian colonialists boosting Tutsi ethnic domination over the majority Hutus from 1894 to Rwanda's independence in 1962. The pseudoscientific content of the 'Hamitic hypothesis' assumed that the Tutsis were 'Caucasoid Hamites' destined to rule over the so-called 'Negroids' such as the Hutus and Twa. The consequences of the pseudo-anthropological Hamitic hypothesis were the civil war in Rwanda from 1990 to 1994.

The historical existence of Ancient Egypt, a very early civilisation lasting some 3,000 years on the African continent, was a seeming anomaly. German philosopher Hegel in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* argued that human history in its progress from East to West under the aegis of *Geist* touches Africa only at the point of Egypt, which, though on the continent of Africa, was more Oriental in spirit than African (Hegel 1837, 2001: 109–17). The same tendency to argue for the idea that Africa is incapable of civilisation was expressed by Joseph Arthur de Gobineau in his work *The Inequality of the Races*. He claimed that humankind consisted of 'three great and clearly marked types, the black, the yellow, and the white' (Gobineau 1853, 1966:205). Of these three human varieties, de Gobineau conjectured that the 'negroid variety is the lowest, and stands at the foot of the ladder' (Gobineau 1853, 1966:205). His basic premise is as follows:

Such is the lesson of history. It shows that all civilisations derive from the white race, that none can exist without its help, and that a society is great and brilliant only so far as it preserves the blood of the noble group that created it, provided that this group itself belongs to the most illustrious branch of our species (Gobineau 1853, 1966:210).

This racial theory implicitly exists in the world today in the Americas as expressed in racial caste systems that stem from the legacy of the enslavement of the African. These systems provide more economic and social privilege for those descendants of slaves who increasingly approximate the European phenotype. A cultural and historical anomie afflicts the erstwhile ethnic African, now transmogrified into a race-defined artificial creation of Europe.

The ethnic African transplanted to the Americas has been maximally domesticated into the Eurocentric conquest cultures and is now a perpetual occupant of the lowest caste rung of those societies. His or her vision for the future is limited and without self-ascribed agency. The transplanted ethnic African envisions the future mainly in terms of the *bonne volonté* (goodwill) of the dominant settler classes of those Eurocentric societies.

Arnold Toynbee, the well-known twentieth century 'historian of civilisations', maintained in *A Study of History* (Toynbee 1934-1961) that none of the twenty-six civilisations he identified were African – despite having written extensively on Greek intellectual history which would have included the observation of Herodotus in *The Histories* (430 BC, 2004: p. 104) that the Ancient Egyptians were 'black-skinned and woolly haired'. As an eminent historian of Greek civilisation, did Toynbee read Aristotle's *Physiognomica* (300 BC, 1927) where it is written that 'too black a hue as in the case of Egyptians and Nubians marks a coward; similarly too white a hue as with women' (ch. 6, 812a-12)? Aristotle, in his *Problemata* (c. 300BC, 1927) also muses on the curliness of the hair of Egyptians and Nubians: 'why are Egyptians and Nubians bandy-legged? Is it because of the heat of their countries that bends their hair as heat bends planks of wood? After all, their hair is the curliest of all nations' (Aristotle, *Problemata*, c. 300BC, 1927, Vol. 7, Book 14, Paragraph 4). Apparently, Toynbee, a master scholar of Greek civilisation, was not aware of how the Greeks portrayed the Ancient Egyptians.

But the question always remained for Western scholars of how to explain the presence of such an impressive civilisation on the African continent. The easy *ad hoc* explanation was that the founders of Ancient Egypt were migrants from West Asia. For example, researchers like Petrie (1896) proposed the argument that Ancient Egypt was created by some dynastic race invading North East Africa from Asia to establish that civilisation. Similar tendentious genetic arguments have been proposed to explain the civilisation of Nubia by way of classifying Meroitic, the written language of Nubia, along with the Ancient Egyptian language as Afroasiatic (Rowan 2006). The creation of the fictitious language group labelled as Afroasiatic should be seen as just another intellectually Eurocentric ploy to attach Ancient Egypt and Ancient Nubia to West Asia.

The contentiousness concerning the African civilisation of Ancient Egypt continues, despite the comprehensive research carried out by C. A. Diop (1977). Suffice it to say that serious Eurocentric considerations are at play in maintaining the thesis that the civilisation of Ancient Egypt was essentially non-African in structure, despite being founded on the African continent. The problem again is that there are very few African researchers in this area,

and that the findings of the anti-Eurocentric research carried out by Diop and others have not been much disseminated in Africa's universities.

Certain empirically provable scientific facts cited by, among others, Stringer (2003), and referred to as the OOA/RAO (Out of Africa/Recent Africa Origin) model, say that humankind began, and that all population clines derive from, Africa. DNA analysis has also shown that the important African y-haplogroups of E as E1b1b and R1b are also found in Europe and elsewhere. The same principle is at work for mtDNA: U6 as U6a, L1b and H. Their densest concentrations are found in the Sahel and further north. The noted Eurocentric error here is that when haplogroups found in Africa are also found in Europe and elsewhere, the largely unanimous assumption by Western researchers is that there must have been some 'back migration' into Africa. There was indeed some back migration, but this is relatively recent, with invasions from West Asia into North Africa from the Hyksos, Syria, Persia, Phoenicia, Greece, Rome, Arabia, Turkey, France, Italy, and Britain. The key point to note here is that the classic civilisations of Ancient Egypt and Nubia were indigenously founded African civilisations created by African populations who founded civilisations along the banks of the Nile in a South-North direction.

History

Until recently, Eurocentric anthropological arguments have also served as a basis for interpretations of African history. However, it must be admitted that African historians have done much to refute the Eurocentric interpretations of African history that became current, *pari passu* with the anthropological arguments. The German philosopher Hegel is well-known for his negative ruminations on African history, specifically by arguing that the movement of world history as made manifest by *Geist* left Africa untouched (Hegel 1837, 2001). This suggests that there is no African history in the sense of a rationality that motivates human history. Similar arguments have been made by the British historian Hugh Trevor-Roper in *The Past and the Present* (1969). For him, Africa entered world history only when it was penetrated by outside forces during the colonial era. In *A Study of History*, (Toynbee 1934–1961), this influential British historian noted that none of the world's noted civilisations were African.

African historians have attempted to rectify matters by studying the history of Africa more objectively. The eight-volume *UNESCO General History of Africa* (1981–1993) is a notable contribution in this regard, and the eight-volume *Cambridge History of Africa* is a clear attempt to place the history of Africa in proper perspective. Even so, Africa has a serious lack of adequate infrastructures such as publishing houses and journals

that are able to accommodate the growing need for an African history that rectifies the Eurocentric view that has been in place since the colonial era. C. A. Diop and others have argued for the history of Ancient Egypt to be included as an integral part of the history of Africa. The colonially inspired Eurocentric distinction between sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa has been challenged.

Another shortcoming is not seriously broaching the idea of the history of Africa as something which extends beyond the confines of the continent of Africa. The forced migrations of the people of West Africa into the Americas, for example, is an important part of African history, but this is yet to be fully recognised. In general, the descendants of those who were captured and transported to the Americas to be used as forced labour inputs crucial for the development of commercial capitalism of the triangular trade between Western Europe, West Africa and the Americas have some idea of their historical past. However, the artificial Eurocentric construction of their history has created great cultural alienation for many.

The victims of the Atlantic slave trade endured a maximal reduction of their sense of human agency. As a result, they suffer from their own history having been denied or truncated, and this may explain their anomie. One important point to note here is that, in the writing of the history of Africa, the Eurocentric model is still dominant, even for African historians. According to the Eurocentric model of African history, the contours of African history are restricted to the geographical boundaries of what is called 'sub-Saharan Africa', and the histories of the Africans exiled to Brazil, Haiti and other places are disregarded. This is also true for the African people exiled to places like Iraq, Turkey, and India.

These two considerations probably explain the deliberate political path of China in contemporary times. The subconscious historical memory of China as an impressive and long-lasting civilisation, the Cathay Middle Kingdom, would no doubt be shared with China's populations as they strive to eclipse all other nations on the technological front. Such a sensate drive for advancement based on an impressive history is missing in contemporary Africa.

Political Economy and Economics

Much has been written on the political economy and economics of Africa, but again most of the research has been of Euro-American origin and published in Euro-American publishing houses. Economic activity in Africa ranging from barter to trans- and extra-continental trade has been taking place over millennia. This fact has not always been recognised by the economic historians of Africa, especially those of Euro-American provenance. The

medieval African empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhay engaged in extensive intra-continental trade into North Africa and West Africa, but this has not been fully explored by Africa's economic historians, with the exceptions of Joseph Ki-Zerbo, and J. F. A Ajayi and Michael Crowder.

Modern economics began in the seventeenth century and culminated with the path-breaking work of Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776). This text set the foundations for the role of money under the rubric of what later was described as 'free market capitalism'. Smith's core thesis was that the optimal way to obtain economic progress and growth is a free market with minimal government intervention. Smith was also anti-mercantilism, because he believed that free markets over an as expansive a space as possible yielded the best possible outcomes. Following Smith's magnum opus, British political economy continued to grow in stature with works by David Ricardo and Thomas Malthus. There were also notable inputs from other political economists such as J. B. Say who argued that the market economy would attain equilibrium with the full utilisation of all resources. In other words, $\sum D_i = \sum S_i$ for all economic periods.

However, the growing militancy of workers in the new industrialising societies meant that wages as a factor of production could not be just reduced so that full employment could be realised. The actual facts were that demand was not always equal to supply in terms of the logic of the developing capitalist economies. At this point Marx stepped in and offered explanations in *Das Kapital*. His solution was for workers under capitalism to seize power and establish socialist societies as prelude to communist ones. But the key issue here was what exact role the workers would play in the post-capitalist society. Would they control society directly, or would communist parties rule on their behalf? History would prove that workers in the post-capitalist societies yielded power to the communist parties, as was the case in the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, etc. Lenin's argument was that statist political economy was the optimal way to confront the expansive capitalist economies of the West.

John Maynard Keynes was the foremost theorist regarding how to deal with the regular instabilities of capitalism. Keynes's arguments served as the foundations for the modern welfare state where government serves as a supervisor of the market economy through its central bank ministrations, and provides relief for citizens affected by its periodic depressions. Universal taxation of workers and businesses directs funds back into the economy to cover education and health costs. This is the case for Europe and its overseas states such as Canada and Australia. The United States has shown itself to be more market-oriented in respect of such considerations. There

is much ongoing political debate concerning the abilities and limitations of the market.

There has not been much input from African scholars who have preferred to follow the Keynesian mixed economy model in recent times. During the Cold War, there was much consideration as to whether Soviet or Maoist models of economic expression were preferable to the mixed economy models of the West. Ghana's socialist model, in which the state assumed a monopoly role for developmental purposes, did secure much progress, but the overthrow of Kwame Nkrumah in 1966 put an end to that experiment. The economic model that Nkrumah touted for Africa was not just a state economic monopoly for rapid development, but also the political unification of Africa as the basis for its economic unification. This idea is mapped out in clear terms in his text *Africa Must Unite*. As he put it:

An African Common Market, devoted uniquely to African interests, would more efficaciously promote the true requirements of the African states. Such an African Market presupposes a common policy for overseas trade as well as for inter-African trade, and must preserve our right to trade freely anywhere (Nkrumah 1963:162).

In Tanzania, Julius Nyerere's *Ujamaa* was an attempt to implement 'African socialism' on the grounds that traditional African village society was 'socialistic'. Senegal's first president Leopold Senghor also argued for African socialism as being most representative of post-independence African society. However, in all the intellectual debates concerning the optimal economic systems for Africa, only Samir Amin persistently theorised and researched this topic. One might also mention Arthur Lewis for his development theories and his work with Ghana in this regard.

The result is that the West has maintained a firm control over the economic lives of Africa's peoples. This is evidenced by the inordinate power that the Eurocentric Bretton Woods institutions of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) exercise over the nations of Africa. The Eurocentric rule concerning both organisations is that the head of the World Bank must be a European, and that of the IMF must be an American. These post-World War economic institutions ensured the dominance of the economies of Europe and North America with the political fiat that the dominant and international exchangeable currencies would be the major currencies of Europe (now the euro) and the United States dollar as the world's reserve currency. Eurocentric economic dominance was also guaranteed by the rules of trade and tariffs all geared to Euro-America's advantage. The World Trade Organization founded in 1995 to replace the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade had very little African input.

In practice, the result of such Western dominance over Africa's economies is that African labour is rendered very unproductive on account of the constant devaluation of Africa's currencies. Nigeria is Africa's largest economy and the naira:dollar exchange rate is about 380:1. The South African rand:dollar exchange rate is about 17:1, which is the best in Africa. Certain currencies trade at over 1,000 units to a single dollar. These currency machinations all derive from the economic myth that currency devaluations are necessary to boost exports. In effect, the ongoing strangulation of Africa's currencies constitute a seemingly insurmountable impediment to intra-Africa trade because repaying loans to the IMF, the World Bank and international creditors requires earning the so-called hard currencies. But such currencies can only be earned by exporting to hard currency areas such as Euro-America and Japan. The solution to this impasse would be the creation of more robust regional currencies. However, such potential solutions are not much explored by African researchers in monetary economics at the government and university level.

The ongoing result of Africa's nations relying on the IMF and World Bank for guidance on economic development is these nations perennially remaining on Level Four of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) annual national human development metrics. Africa's governments and their economic planners seem totally uncreative in matters concerning economic development. They are all victims of neocolonialism and economic dependence. An objective assessment of the situation is that Africa's governments have accepted the market economy *diktats* of the IMF, the World Bank and the West's international credit agencies.

What is required is the rethinking of what economics should mean in terms of human sustenance and development progress. The goals of economic activity have always been about creating the conditions for human sustenance throughout human history. Yet, despite centuries of technological change, the conditions necessary for basic survival have been abused by the market economy founded on the principles of individual gain which are viewed as optimal behaviour by market economics theorists. Humans have always been social animals living in groups according to what is possible given available land and resources, viable labour, and available capital. The modalities of these interactions have usually been determined by what have been called 'social contracts', formal or informal. The key issue here has always been the rights and obligations of individuals and groups, which have always been a political matter. Politics has always shaped economic behaviour, which means that genuine economics has always been political economy.

The economic conditions in Africa require serious attention to address the dire conditions that exist on the continent. The structure of the market economy model must therefore be examined from the standpoint of political economy. Do individuals have rights to shelter and employment? Market economy theorists say no, but say rights to property must be protected. Another issue is the wage issue. Do individuals have 'minimum wage rights'? The point here is that Africa's rank imitation of the market economy model in all its dimensions has not been good for the continent's economies. Scandinavia's economies are 'mixed economies' that display a mixture of market economics and a well-supported welfare base, especially in the areas of education, health, and welfare security, to mitigate the ongoing risks of instability in the capitalist market economy. The fundamental question of economics has always been how to combine land and resources, human labour, and capital so that the distribution of the products of these three factors of production can be equitable. This question has been vigorously debated in the context of religion and secular ideologies from the earliest of times. The four economic ideologies offered in modern times have been the pure market economy, the mixed economy, socialism, and communism – accompanied by discussions about individual and group rights and freedoms.

In all of this, the fundamental problem remains: how can the post-colonial nations of Africa free themselves from the subaltern economic positions they hold vis-à-vis the West and the developed nations of East Asia? C. A. Diop and Samir Amin are the only African scholars who have offered potential solutions. However, Diop's *Black Africa: The Economic and Cultural Basis for a Federated State* (1987) has not been much debated in the African context. The late Samir Amin has written extensively from a Marxist standpoint on 'dependency theory' and the unequal relationship between the Global South and the industrialised West, but he has not been extensively studied by Africa's academic economists either. Amin's text *Unequal Development* (1977) is an example of his critical work concerning the neocolonial economic status of Africa's post-colonial nation states as subordinate appendages to the West.

The economic destiny of Africa is now being determined by acclaimed Western economists such as Paul Collier, Erik Reinart, Jeffery Sachs, Ha-Joon Chang, and Thomas Piketty. A noted critic of the generally patronising approach to the economics of Africa has been William Easterly in his book *White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done so Much Ill and Little Good* (2006). Works from the West such as *Why Nations Fail* (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012) and *Guns, Germs, and*

Steel (Diamond 1997) have elicited few reactions from African scholars. Diamond's 'geography' hypothesis is founded on Eurocentric assumptions and is properly understood as being overly simplistic. Acemoglu and Robinson argue that 'inclusive' institutions are necessary conditions for political and economic development and 'extractive' institutions have been the major impediments to economic development for the nations of the South.

It is incumbent on Africa's economists to rethink economics and devise an appropriate approach that maximises equity, efficiency, and democratic freedoms. There must certainly be solutions to the problems that breed a persistent underdevelopment in Africa – the flight of trained human capital, financial capital flight, and the unending and humiliating flight of labour capital to Euro-America by any means possible. Other key problems that contribute to Africa's intractable underdevelopment problem are rent-seeking corruption and unsatisfactory attempts at human capital development.

Contemporary economics seems to have adopted a gratuitous emphasis on mathematical expression in its attempts to be viewed as some species of natural science or engineering. This can be seen in, for example, *An Essay on the Nature and Significance of Economic Science* by the British economist Lionel Robbins (1932). However, this approach is problematic because ultimate explanation, which is the goal of empirical science, cannot be met in economics. The measurement of utility cannot reliably capture human sensate experiences. Despite attempts to resolve this issue by appealing to behavioural economics and neuroeconomics, an empirical economics basis for human decision making remains elusive. Ultimate explanation yields predictability, which has not been achieved either in microeconomics or in macroeconomics. At the microeconomic level, a plethora of equations garlanded with Lagrange multipliers and bordered Hessians would surprise the average consumer on a shopping trip as a description of his or her behaviour. Similar criticisms can be applied to macroeconomic theory. In spite of massive amounts of quantitative research, no economist predicted the global financial crisis of 2008.

More fundamental questions about the structure of the economic landscape should attract the attention of Africa's economists. First order questions include the valuation of currencies, why some currencies are convertible and others not, and the *diktat* that the dollar should be the world's reserve currency. Currency is simply a convenient medium for the exchange of goods and services produced by human labour conjoined with

capital in the form of some kind of technology. Yet the valuation of products deriving from similar labour inputs differs greatly. In his text *How Rich Countries Got Rich and Why Poor Countries Stay Poor*, Erik Reinert (2007) asks: 'Why is the real wage of a bus driver in Frankfurt sixteen times higher than the real wage of an equally efficient bus driver in Nigeria, as the World Bank recently calculated?'

Reinert's explanation is that persistent underdevelopment in the Third World is due to an uncritical acceptance of Ricardo's theory of free market comparative advantage. Putting this theory into practice would mean that countries whose main production and exports were agricultural goods would be doomed to remain at a low level in perpetuity. He argues, '... there are other and much better arguments for free trade than Ricardo's comparative advantage, and ... the theory of comparative advantage actually may lock poor countries into a poverty trap, into primitivation: specializing in being poor' (Reinert 2007:304).

The question that arises is how those countries that developed in the technological sense did it. First, there must be a national sense of purpose, as was the case in Germany and China. Germany developed technologically and was able to compete successfully with Britain and France because it adopted autarky (economic self-sufficiency), as recommended by the German economist Friedrich List. After its 1948 revolution, China embarked on an autarkic economic programme that resulted in its contemporary economic success. Japan's Meiji Revolution, which had economic and technological development as its goal, also practised a form of autarky that made it the dominant economic power in East Asia in the early twentieth century. While South Korea's goal was also technological and economic development, it is somewhat different in that it received many capital inputs from the United States in order to stave off China and the Soviet Union.

Can the development growth paths of the aforementioned countries be emulated in Africa? This would be possible if: the declared motivation was for a type of development based on unified political and economic regional structures; that use very few convertible intracontinental currencies; and that have a 1:1 exchange rate with currencies such as the dollar and the euro. One obstacle to this is governments which display unquestioned acceptance of the West's structures and theories of economic decision making. Another is the continuing false consciousness that has metastasised into the colonial Eurocentric concepts of 'Francophone', 'Anglophone', and 'Lusophone' Africa.

Political Science

As is the case with the other social sciences, political science is heavily structured on Eurocentric assumptions. In the immediate post-independence period, the new governments of Africa accepted the kinds of political systems already set in place by the colonials. Existing governing structures were superseded by the systems of government set in place by the French, British, Portuguese, and Spanish colonists. In some areas, one-party Soviet-type political structures were set in place, the result of Soviet influence in conflicts and struggles for independence. Fledgling governments in Ghana, Somalia, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Angola, Sudan and Namibia introduced political structures based on the one-party state as a result of having received military assistance from the Soviet Union, the Soviet bloc, and China.

With the dismantling of the Soviet Union in 1991, African attempts to emulate Soviet-style political structures were no longer seen as viable. Western-style democracies were henceforth seen as the best model under the watchful eye of Euro-America with the World Bank and the IMF as the ultimate enforcers. A number of models were tested in Africa, ranging from parliamentary systems to an American-style presidential system of government. The model that seems most popular is the run-off or second-round style model in which, if no presidential candidate receives more than 50 per cent of the votes cast in the first round, the two candidates with most votes stand in a second round of voting. Many African elections are marred by massive corruption and violence. There has been minimal African intellectual input on the best form of political system in the African context because Western political science theory is still being taught in Africa's universities.

The Berlin Conference of 1884 and 1885 was a Eurocentric imposition on Africa that resulted in the division of the continent into colonial states and formal colonial spheres of European interests. Only Liberia and Ethiopia avoided the structured Euro-colonial configuration that remains intact some fifty years after colonisation ended. Macro-state colonial configurations such as French West Africa, French Sudan, and the East African conglomerate of Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda arose for strictly economic reasons. The vast Congo was deemed a personal possession of Belgian King Leopold II. The methods of production combined with inordinate demand for rubber resulted in the tragic loss of eight million lives in the Congo.

Another macro-colonial configuration was dividing up the African continent into 'Negro Africa' and 'North Africa'. When the European term 'negro' fell into disrepute, the region was named 'black Africa'. This term

replaced by the transparently euphemistic 'Sub-Saharan Africa'. North Africa remains consistently hived off from the rest of Africa only to be conjoined with the 'Middle East' as a Eurocentric political configuration referred to as MENA (Middle East and North Africa). (The terms 'Middle East', 'Near East', and 'Far East' are all British colonial geographical terms.) Africa's political scientists have not challenged this one-sided postcolonial imposition, founded on spurious racial and geopolitical considerations.

By accepting the artificial nation-state boundaries drawn at the Berlin Conference that created the nationalities of modern-day Africa, contemporary Africa has accepted the pseudo-nationalist conflicts that continue to arise. Colonial incongruities have produced a jigsaw puzzle of truncated African states with many tiny, non-viable states.

African political scientists have not questioned the viability of the post-colonial African state in a geopolitical world operating on the sub rosa principles of Realpolitik. They have not seriously discussed questions concerning regional groupings, free movement of peoples, nationality and ethnic issues, all in the context of creating a post-colonial Africa. Nor have they discussed the important question of how exactly the African state should be optimally configured. Underlying all these thorny issues is how African political theorists should deal with the problems of dislocation and damage caused by the ongoing conflicts between adherents of the imported and culturally diffused religions of Christianity and Islam. The result of this subordination of the African psyche has been significant psychic alienation.

In the case of Christianity, its earliest presence in Africa was in Ethiopia and Egypt in the form of Coptic Christianity, but this early version of Christianity has been ignored by the rest of Africa, whose populations prefer the versions of Christianity from Western Europe. While there are other versions of Christianity such as Russian Orthodox and Greek Orthodox, there is as yet no African Orthodox denomination. Much of Africa's Christian religious fealty is to European headquarters in the Vatican City and Canterbury.

The same holds true for Islam which holds great sway on the African continent, even though the spiritual home of that religion is located in Saudi Arabia. Again, the psychic costs are a very noticeable psychic alienation.

The point is that the religion plays such an important role in the lives of the people of Africa that it necessarily plays an important role in politics. It is therefore incumbent on Africa's political theorists to examine this issue critically, in conjunction with other social scientists.

Linguistics

The study and classification of the languages of Africa has been the monopoly of Western linguists in the modern colonial and post-colonial era. The only notable exceptions were the analyses of C. A. Diop (1977) and Theophile Obenga (1993) who argued for close relationships between all the languages of Africa, including the language of the Ancient Egyptians. The colonial paradigm concerning the languages of Africa closely followed the pseudo-racial model set up to classify African humanity in the Eurocentric hierarchy of races. The orthodox Eurocentric and colonial model held that there were 'negro languages' spoken by those inhabitants whose languages did not seem to have extra-continental linguistic affiliations. Then there were African languages deemed as Hamitic (those of Ancient Egypt and Ancient Nubia). There were two considerations here: Ancient Egypt and Ancient Nubia were viewed by European scholars as impressive civilizations that antedated those of Europe.

Given the view of African cultures held at the inception of the study of Africa's classical civilisations, the languages of Africa were classified according to prevailing race theories. The implicit rule was that the more developed an African culture or civilisation was seen to be, the less African it was considered to be. Thus the languages of Ancient Egypt and Nubia were considered to be Hamitic (from the Biblical Ham) sharing roots with Semitic (from the Biblical Shem). The assumption here was that the Hamitic languages had full or partial origins in Asia, not Africa. This model for the languages of Africa all tied in with Seligman's (1930, 1957) Hamitic hypothesis that Africa was incapable of producing *sui generis* independent civilisations.

Postcolonial sensitivities saw to it that the old Hamito-Semitic language grouping was replaced with the label 'Afroasiatic languages', again determined by Eurocentric language scholars. But logical analysis would lead to the very plausible hypothesis that all the Afroasiatic languages originated in Africa, given the anthropological fact that humankind originated in Africa and later migrated to other parts of the globe. Both Hamitic and Semitic had origins in East Africa. The plausibility of this hypothesis is supported by the research of Christopher Ehret (1995) which refutes the orthodox Eurocentric thesis that Afroasiatic languages have their origins in the West Asian Levant.

There was also evidence of this in Joseph Greenberg's *The Languages of Africa* (1963). But from a strictly logical point of view, it would seem that all the languages of West Asia are derivatives of African languages, given that

humanity itself has its origins in Africa. In this regard, it would be more accurate to classify all the Afroasiatic languages of Africa, with the exception of Arabic, as African languages. Arabic is the only so-called Afroasiatic language that could be properly labelled as Afroasiatic.

The idea of Afroasiatic languages derives from the fallacious Eurocentric kind of reasoning that ushered in the Hamitic hypothesis founded on spurious correspondences between phenotype and language. Carl Meinhof, Felix von Luschan and others were involved in framing African languages according to the Hamitic hypothesis in the sense that African ethnic groups that were described as Hamitic were assumed to speak Hamitic languages as distinct from Bantu or 'Negritic' languages (Pugach 2012). The pseudo-racial basis for this thesis was that the important written languages of Africa such as Ancient Egyptian and Meroitic – which antedated Greek and Latin, the founding written languages of Europe – were not of African origin, but had roots in Asia and migrated into Africa as the so-called Hamitic languages.

The argument that that the so-called Afroasiatic languages derive from 'return to Africa migrants' from West Asia is less tenable than the reverse, which is that the African migrants who crossed over into West Asia carried their languages with them. Such languages were then partially adopted by previous migrants into the areas such as the Arabian Peninsula. This would be the explanation for the proto-Semitic foundations of languages such as Arabic. The reverse migrations from West Asia into Africa are well documented historically, and are fairly recent.

The earliest invasions were from across the Sinai Peninsula into Ancient Egypt, namely the Hyksos invasion of 1650 BC, the Persian invasion of 550 BC, and the Syrian invasions during the 25th dynasty. The last Egyptian dynasty was the Nubian 26th dynasty that lasted from 744 to 656 BC. These invasions set precedents for later invasions by Ancient Greece (Alexandrian Greece), Imperial Rome, Islamic Arabia, then finally by colonial France and Britain. The point being made here is that the 'back tracking' from Asia into North Africa was relatively recent – approximately 4,000 years ago. The Semitic language of Arabic only entered North Africa some 2,500 years ago.

Logical analysis offers a plausible resolution to this linguistic issue. According to archaeological research, humans evolved to the level of *Homo sapiens* some 160,000 to 200,000 years ago in Eastern-Southern Africa. It is also claimed that the most successful egress from Africa occurred some 70,000 years ago. Thus, the sole habitat for *Homo sapiens* for 65 per cent of its existence was in Africa. This suggests that all human languages have their *urheimat* somewhere on the African continent. Of course, over time,

original languages split into dialects then into distinct languages that are mutually incomprehensible. This is the basis for the classification of languages into linguistic groupings. But the key point is this: languages that are geographically proximate and share proto-linguistic origins, as in the case of East African *proto-Asiatic*, would most probably have their *urheimat* in Africa itself, given that Africa was the archeological and anthropological origin of humanity.

Conclusion

The social sciences serve as the platform according to which human behaviour in all its dimensions is studied. Since the social sciences are also classified as sciences, their self-ascribed goal is to emulate the methodologies of the natural sciences as much as possible. That goal would be to describe phenomena in the most objective ways possible, explain empirically observable phenomena according to general or statistical laws, then, if required, offer recommendations for managing those phenomena.

Neutrality and experimental modes of replication are the preconditions for objectivity in research methods, and objective research eventually leads to disinterested consensus among researchers in the field. However, the serious epistemological problematic of 'value-laden human interest' is present in social science research. This is not to say that objective social science research is indeed possible, it is only to say that caveats are in order when some particular social science phenomenon is being researched.

During the colonial era, the social science research on Africa was undermined by blatant value judgments that assumed the biological inferiority of the generic populations of Africa. The epistemological error here was that the social science research on Africa's populations, from archaeology to linguistics, was assumed to be value-free and objective, even though the basic assumptions were patently based on value judgments. This article points out that most of the social science research on Africa from Western scholars is not much more than a species of Eurocentric vanity.

It is incumbent, therefore, on African scholars to offer corrective research that is more objective, value-neutral, and epistemologically robust. The social sciences are generally researched on the basis that objective findings serve as the template for optimising social conditions for the studied populations. The task is not an easy one, given the iron grip of culture which in many cases has fused with the corrupting amoralities of post-colonial culture.

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Moving forward to African Monetary Integration: Lessons from the CFA Franc¹

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Abstract

The CFA franc was established in 1945 as a colonial currency. As such, its rationale was to transfer economic surpluses from the French colonies in West and Central Africa to the metropolis. Despite formal decolonisation, this currency shared by 14 countries still performs the same function and remains under the political control of the French government. Recently, the CFA franc has been increasingly challenged by a growing number of African intellectuals and Pan-Africanist social movements demanding its abolition. The objective of this article is to derive lessons about African monetary integration, building on this special but heuristic case. Following a brief history of the CFA franc currency arrangement and a description of its economic shortcomings, this article discusses the options for moving out of the monetary status quo. The author argues that, in the current circumstances, a system of solidary national currencies is the best way forward for African monetary integration.

Keywords: CFA franc, colonialism, monetary integration, ECOWAS, Eurozone.

Résumé

Le franc CFA a été créé en 1945 comme monnaie coloniale. En tant que telle sa logique était de transférer les surplus économiques des colonies françaises d'Afrique de l'Ouest et centrale vers la métropole. Malgré la décolonisation formelle, cette monnaie partagée par 14 pays remplit toujours le même rôle et reste sous le contrôle politique du gouvernement français. Récemment, le franc CFA a été l'objet de la critique d'un nombre croissant d'intellectuels africains et de mouvements sociaux panafricanistes, qui réclament son abolition. L'objectif de cet article est de tirer des enseignements en vue de l'intégration monétaire en Afrique, en s'appuyant sur ce cas particulier mais heuristique. Après un

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bref retour sur l'histoire de cet arrangement monétaire et une description de ses lacunes économiques, cet article examinera les options de sortie du *statu quo* monétaire. L'auteur soutient que, dans les circonstances actuelles, un système de monnaies nationales solidaires est la meilleure voie à suivre pour l'intégration monétaire africaine.

Mots-clés : franc CFA, colonialisme, intégration monétaire, CEDEAO, zone euro.

Introduction

Issuing a currency is always a political act. The European colonial powers knew that too well. They managed to partition the African continent into different colonial currency blocs cemented by their political rule. While the sterling area, the peseta zone, the Belgian monetary zone and the dollar zone would be dismantled following the decolonisation process in Africa (Mensah 1979), the Franc Zone, originally created in 1939, escaped that fate until now, albeit with minor changes in its membership and in the workings of its organising principles. Created in 1945 as the *franc des Colonies françaises d'Afrique*, the CFA franc is, with its twin – the *franc Pacifique* – the last colonial currency still in use. The West African CFA franc is the currency of the eight West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) countries, and Central African CFA franc is used by the six belonging to the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CAEMC). These fourteen countries plus the Comoros constitute the African member countries Franc Zone. The longevity of the African Franc Zone, the oldest monetary zone still in operation, is illustrative of how the promise of African independence was jeopardised at the outset by the particular ways in which independence was achieved. However, this colonial anachronism is increasingly being contested by intellectuals and Pan-Africanist social movements demanding its abolition.

The objective of this article is to derive lessons about African monetary integration, building on the special but heuristic case of the Franc Zone. Following a brief history of the CFA franc currency arrangement and a description of its economic shortcomings, this article discusses the options for moving out of the monetary status quo. The author argues that, in the current circumstances, a system of solidary national currencies is the best way forward for African monetary integration. A single currency for West Africa would be premature, given the minimal level of political unity among African countries at present.

The last colonial currency

When the European powers conquered territories in Africa and seated their political domination, they immediately sought to destroy the indigenous monetary practices and replace them with practices that met the requirements of capitalist accumulation (Guyer and Pallaver 2018; Pallaver 2015). This 'monetary transition' (Saul 2004) was necessary, as the control of the production and exchange circuits required the control of money production and its circuits. French colonialism did not escape the rule. In the wake of the creation of the AOF (*Afrique-Occidentale française*) in 1895 and the AEF (*Afrique-Équatoriale française*) in 1910, the colonial government began by banning the indigenous currencies and then sanctioning anyone who did not accept the French currency in market transactions and the payment of taxes (Saul 2004; Diallo 2005; Pigeaud and Sylla 2018:14–8). Until 1945, the metropolitan franc circulated in the French colonies in Africa, with monetary signs differentiated from one place to another. This situation was referred to as 'monetary unity' (*unicité monétaire*), that is one currency for a whole colonial empire (d'Almeida-Topor 1998; Comité monétaire de la zone franc 1953).

Money in the colonial economy, in the French case as elsewhere, was an instrument to drain economic surpluses from the colonies to the metropolis. Credit production was provided to sectors producing agricultural goods and other raw materials needed by the metropolis, whereas consumption credit was destined to create a colonial demand for the goods exported by the metropolis (Pouemi 1980; Dieng 1982). Metropolitan businesses could invest and disinvest freely, as well as repatriate easily their incomes with limited exchange rate risk. Having a single currency helped reduce monetary transaction costs (Helleiner 2002) for the metropolis administrations and enterprises at the expense of the colonies whose exchange rates were not determined on the basis of their economic needs/ fundamentals.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the French economy was in ruins. There were frequent shortages. Foreign exchange reserves had decreased considerably. Inflation had reached levels higher than those observed in its African colonies, England and the United States (BCEAO 2000a: 451). A devaluation of the metropolitan franc was needed. The issue then was: should there be a single rate of devaluation in the colonial empire in order to maintain monetary unity? Or should there rather be different rates of devaluation taking into account the fact that the impacts of the war had been uneven in various parts of the empire? The second option was chosen by the French Ministry of Finance (d'Almeida-Topor 1998). And so the CFA franc was born – that is the franc of the French colonies in Africa

(FCFA) – on 26 December 1945, when its parity was declared to the newly established International Monetary Fund. On the same day, the French Constituent Assembly ratified the Bretton Woods agreements. The initial exchange rate was 1 CFA franc to 1.70 francs. In 1948, after a devaluation of the metropolitan currency which was not applied to the colonies, 1 CFA franc was exchanged with 2 francs. The birth of this overvalued colonial currency contributed somewhat to the reconstruction of a weakened French economy (Pigeaud and Sylla 2018).

First, it allowed France to regain control of its African colonies' foreign trade. During the war, the latter had diversified their trading relationships which resulted in a sharp decline of France's share of trade with its colonies (Godeau 1995:35). An overvalued CFA franc, coupled with protectionist trade measures, helped reverse this trend. Second, France could save its scarce foreign exchange reserves by making it possible to pay for its African imports in its own currency (Conseil Economique et Social 1970) and below international market prices (Tadei 2017). Indeed, if France had to pay its African trade partners in US dollars, this would have further damaged the franc, a weak and unstable currency, at a time where France was much more integrated with its colonies than its European neighbours. Finally, the control by the metropolis of the monetary and financial system of its colonies presupposed and reinforced its political control. Economic, commercial, monetary and financial decisions concerning colonial territories were taken in Paris.

At the end of the 1950s, when formal decolonisation appeared inevitable, France made a deal with the leaders of its former colonies in sub-Saharan Africa which had meanwhile been renamed 'Overseas Territories'. Most of those leaders were trained in France and had political connections with the French ruling strata (Stasavage 2003). Independence was granted, provided the newly independent states agreed to sign 'cooperation agreements' in areas such as raw materials, foreign trade, currency, diplomacy, armed forces, higher education, and civil aviation. For France, the objective was to ensure political control of all these areas despite the formal independence of its former colonies. Gabon signed the 'cooperation agreements' on the day it became independent. On the monetary front, France worked hard through repression and cooption to keep most of its former African colonies in the Franc Zone, the only colonial monetary zone to have survived the formal independence wave (Pigeaud and Sylla 2018).

Nevertheless, some countries left the Franc Zone to adopt their own national currencies – Guinea (1960), Mali (1962–1967), Madagascar (1972), and Mauritania (1972). Similarly, from the mid 1970s, the central banks' headquarters were moved to Dakar – Banque Centrale des États de

l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO), the central bank of West African states, and Yaoundé – the newly renamed Banque des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale (BEAC), the central bank of Central African states, and their staff was Africanised. The monetary signs were Africanised while the acronym CFA had changed meaning: it became 'African financial community' in West Africa and 'financial cooperation in Central Africa' (Pigeaud and Sylla 2018). In 1985, Equatorial Guinea joined the CFA monetary union in Central Africa but Guinea Bissau joined WAEMU in 1997. Despite these changes, the core currency arrangements between France and its former African colonies remain untouched. As in the colonial era, they are still structured by four working principles.

First, the exchange rate of CFA currencies is pegged to the French currency (franc then euro). Second, income transfers and capital movements are free within the Franc Zone. Third, the French Treasury promises to lend francs (now euros) to the central banks of the Franc Zone if their foreign exchange reserves are exhausted. This is the so-called 'convertibility guarantee' of the CFA franc. In exchange for this 'guarantee', since 2005 each central bank of the Franc Zone must deposit at least half of its foreign exchange reserves in a special 'operations account' of the French Treasury (Lelart 1998). In the aftermath of independence, the mandatory deposit ratio was 100 per cent, but this was reduced to 65 per cent between 1973 and 2005. This is the fourth principle: the centralisation of foreign exchange reserves. All euro/CFA franc currency conversions pass through the operations account. When this account is in credit, the French Treasury pays interest. When it is in debit, the French guarantee is active, a scenario which happened only in the 1980–1993 period (Pigeaud and Sylla 2018:114–5).

In addition to the mandatory deposit of part of their foreign exchange reserves, there is another counterpart to the French 'guarantee': France is represented in the organs of the central banks of the Franc Zone. As a matter of fact, it has an implicit veto power over statutory issues and controls the implementation of monetary policy. No major decision can be made without its consent. Since the arrival of the euro, the CFA franc's administrative management has been under the authority of the (European) Economic Monetary Union (EMU). Indeed, in November 1998 France made a deal with its European partners: the value of CFA francs is pegged to the euro, but the EMU authorities will have their say. For example, France must give prior notice to the Economic and Financial Committee if the pegged value of the CFA franc to the euro is to be changed. Likewise, a European consensus is needed if the French convertibility guarantee is to be modified and if the Franc Zone is to be enlarged (Pigeaud and Sylla 2018:117–23).

A constraining currency arrangement

Regarding the socio-economic record of the countries which use the CFA franc as currency, the facts speak for themselves. From a long-term perspective, an inflation rate far lower than for the rest of the continent has been their single 'achievement'. However, they have the world's worst health and education indicators. Five CFA franc countries were in the bottom eight places of the 2017 United Nations Development Programme Human Development Index (HDI), with Niger and Central African Republic having the worst HDI scores of 189 countries (UNDP 2018). Average annual economic growth rates per capita were negative between 1960 and 2014 for some countries (Senegal, Central African Republic and Niger). These rates have been low and very volatile in the other CFA franc countries. Côte d'Ivoire, the biggest economy in the Franc Zone, had a real per capita income in 2014 that was 41 per cent lower than its best level obtained at the end of the 1970s (Sylla 2016). Despite the sharing of a common currency, trade remains very weak within the Franc Zone. In 2017 intra-zone trade stood at 5.3 per cent in the CAEMC and less than 13 per cent in the WAEMU (see Table 3). Currency arrangements do not explain this whole pattern of underdevelopment on their own, but they carry their share of responsibility on three counts.

First, the CFA franc's pegged value to the euro (and the French franc before the advent of the euro) deprives the BCEAO and the BEAC of the possibility of having autonomous monetary policies. Their policies mirror those of the European Central Bank whose anti-inflationary obsession is out of step with the priorities of poor countries that must grow by building local productive capacities. Moreover, the euro, since its birth, has tended to appreciate vis-à-vis the dollar, the currency in which the Franc Zone countries receive their export incomes. Whenever the euro appreciates, the value in CFA francs of export revenues collected in dollars is reduced. As a matter of fact, the WAEMU countries, with the exception of Côte d'Ivoire, have recorded chronic trade deficits since independence, due notably to the overvaluation of the CFA franc, a fact recognised by the BCEAO itself (BCEAO 2000b:47). On the eve of the launch of the euro, African economists warned about such outcomes (Hammouda and Kassé 2001) but neither African heads of state nor France would listen.

Secondly, because they must maintain a fixed peg to the euro, these central banks are forced to restrict the growth of domestic bank credit. As the countries of the Franc Zone have low levels of economic diversification, bank credits will partly stimulate imports, which in turn tend to reduce foreign exchange reserves and put pressure on the capacity to defend the fixed peg with the

euro, so these central banks' reasoning goes. Thus, credits to the economy are relatively low: about 22.9 per cent on average in the WAEMU zone, and about 16.5 per cent in the CAEMC zone in 2016 (Pigeaud and Sylla 2018: 179). In addition to the low volume of bank loans, lending interest rates set by commercial banks are particularly prohibitive, especially when measured in real terms. This is why the latter enjoy the highest interest margins in the world (Diop 2015). Moreover, given the recent restrictions placed on the statutory advances that central banks can provide to states and the existence of ceilings on the volume of domestic bank loans to states refundable at the central bank, states increasingly tend to borrow funds on international financial markets (Magnan-Marionnet 2016).

Finally, the principle of free transfer entails huge financial bleeds. Net income payments, i.e. the difference between Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross National Product (GNP), are of colossal proportions in resource-rich countries of the Franc Zone. For example, in Equatorial Guinea, a small oil-producing country, annual net income payments average nearly 50 per cent of GDP during the decade 2000 (Sylla 2016). Countries of the Franc Zone, despite not ranking among the biggest African economies, suffer terribly from this scourge fuelled significantly by external debt. For Cameroon, for example, illicit financial flows between 1970 and 2008 accounted for almost 13 times the volume of its external debt stock (Ndikumana and Boyce 2012:144).

The reason the CFA franc continues to exist more than 70 years after its creation is that it still suits the needs of both major French enterprises which used to obtain monopoly positions in Francophone Africa – for example, low exchange rate risk, free convertibility and free transfer – and those of the French government (political control of African monetary policy at low cost). Despite its declining competitiveness at the global level, including in the Franc Zone, France continues to maintain regular trade surpluses with Africa, and especially with the Franc Zone. African elites also benefit from the existence of the CFA franc, as they can easily repatriate their financial assets and profit from an overvalued exchanged rate which makes importing luxury goods cheaper. The political longevity of Francophone African heads of state has always been premised on their consent to remain in the Franc Zone. In Central Africa, the long reigns of Paul Biya in Cameroon, Denis Sassou Nguesso in Congo Brazzville, Idriss Deby in Chad, and Obiang Nguema in Equatorial Guinea (a former Spanish colony) would not have been possible without their commitment to the so-called 'Françafrique'. The same goes for the Gnassingbé dynasty in Togo (Verschave 2003; Pigeaud and Sylla 2018; Koddenbrock and Sylla 2019).

Options to exit the status quo

During the last ten years, especially since 2016, the CFA franc has been increasingly challenged by a growing number of African intellectuals and pan-Africanist social movements demanding its abolition (Koulibaly 2009; Mbaye 2009, 2014; Dembélé 2010; Nubukpo, 2011; Yao 2012; Fassassi 2013; Agbohoun 2016; Nubukpo *et al.* 2016). For them, the existence of the CFA franc denotes a lack of sovereignty, both political and economic, and constitutes an obstacle that frustrates democratic aspirations. Having previously been taboo subject, now the CFA franc issue is featuring widely in the public debate in Francophone African countries (Sylla 2017). A November 2017 Afrobarometer opinion poll shows that 66 per cent of Togolese think that the CFA franc benefits chiefly French interests and that it should be abolished (Akinochi 2019). Though there is some unanimity about the need to move out of the current monetary status quo, strong disagreements are observed about what is to be done. Four contending perspectives can be distinguished.

First, there is the perspective I call 'symbolic reformism', which consists in touching only the visible symbols of monetary coloniality without touching the fundamentals of the CFA system. These include proposals such as changing the name of the CFA franc, having banknotes and coins manufactured outside France, and even further reducing the deposit rate of foreign exchange reserves at the French Treasury. During his November 2017 visit to Burkina Faso, French President Emmanuel Macron praised the 'monetary stability' provided by the CFA franc to African countries. After saying that every member country is free to leave the franc zone, he confessed being open to changing the 'name' of the CFA franc and its 'perimeter' – that is enlarging the zone to a country like Ghana! (*Jeune Afrique*, 2017)

Second, there is the perspective I call 'adaptive reformism', that is reforms that aim to adapt the CFA zone to the current context marked by the economic and geopolitical decline of France and Europe, but with the ultimate objective of maintaining it. This is the case, for example, of those who want the CFA franc's exchange rate to be made more flexible. Two arguments are generally made for this reform proposal: on the one hand, the peg to the euro is too rigid and undermines the price competitiveness of African zone franc export products which are denominated in US dollars; on the other hand, the geography of their trade flows is increasingly moving from Europe toward countries trading in US dollar such as China. These well-founded observations provide a rationale for the CFA franc's exchange rate to be pegged to a basket of currencies (Nubukpo 2016; Berenger 2018). The issue with this proposal is that it seems to ignore the functioning of the Franc Zone. Exchange rate

flexibility is not an option in the CFA system because the convertibility guarantee is offered at a fixed rate and in the currency of the guaranteeing authority. The demand for exchange rate flexibility is incompatible with the maintenance of France guardianship. It is one or the other!

A good example of ‘adaptive reformism’ is provided by a 2018 report by Dominique Strauss-Kahn. Sensing that the Franc Zone is no longer sustainable in its current form, the former International Monetary Fund (IMF) managing director and former French Minister of Finance proposes to go beyond ‘symbolic’ reforms of the type described above. The major reforms of his self-declared ‘revolutionary option’ are the following: the CFA franc’s exchange rate moving from a fixed peg to the euro to being pegged to a basket of currencies; the CFA franc’s external convertibility would still be guaranteed by France, but this would be co-managed by African monetary authorities in tandem with chosen independent international managers who would replace the French representatives; a ‘significant part’ of the foreign exchange reserves of the African Franc Zone countries would be held in euros at the Bank of International Settlements rather than the French Treasury; the Franc Zone would be enlarged to include Ghana which he describes as ‘landlocked in the Franc Zone but separated monetarily from its neighbours’, as well as to the other West African countries, but not to Nigeria, as the African economic giant wouldn’t fit (Strauss-Kahn 2018; author’s translation). As usual, this exercise of European wishful thinking pays no consideration to what African themselves think might be best for their continent.

Unlike these reformist proposals, there are two other perspectives articulating an abolitionist agenda in so far as they advocate a project of monetary integration requiring the demise of the Franc Zone. For example, the Heads of State of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) committed in 2000 to accelerate regional integration through the launching of a regional single currency. This project is often presented as an alternative to the CFA franc, but it raises technical and political issues. Technically, no country yet fulfils the convergence criteria copied from the Maastricht Treaty and defined as prerequisites for entry into the new monetary zone. The lack of ‘nominal convergence’ explains to a certain extent why the initial deadlines have been rescheduled several times (Bakoup and Ndoye 2016). The latest deadline for its launch has been set for 2020. Politically, since 2017 Muhammadu Buhari, the current Nigerian President, has been asking as a prerequisite that the eight West African countries using the CFA franc provide a divorce plan from the French Treasury (Premium Times, 2017). But, until now, the WAEMU countries have remained silent

about his demand. Alassane Ouattara and Macky Sall, the current heads of state of Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal respectively, the two leading WAEMU economies, have adopted an ambiguous stance, as they maintain that the CFA franc is a 'good currency' while declaring their commitment to the ECOWAS single currency. From the perspective of the French government, a single currency for ECOWAS member states would mean the end of the Franc Zone in West Africa. Under these circumstances, the prospect of seeing ECOWAS countries sharing a single currency any time soon seems highly unlikely.

However, even if the major political and technical issues were fixed, a single currency for ECOWAS is not the best option for the region in the current circumstances, not to mention that it would not provide an alternative to the CAEMC countries which are devoid of any similar regional currency project beyond the CFA franc. Indeed, this project is not currently economically justified for at least three reasons.

Table 1: Population of West African countries (in thousands)

Countries	2015	2020	2050
Benin	10576	12123	23930
Burkina Faso	18111	20903	43207
Cabo Verde	533	567	734
Côte d'Ivoire	23108	26172	51375
The Gambia	1978	2293	4562
Ghana	27583	30734	51270
Guinea	12092	13751	26852
Guinea-Bissau	1771	2001	3603
Liberia	4500	5104	9804
Mali	17468	20284	44020
Mauritania	4182	4784	8965
Niger	19897	24075	68454
Nigeria	181182	206153	410638
Senegal	14977	17200	34031
Sierra Leone	7237	8047	12972
Togo	7417	8384	15298
Total	352610	402575	809715

Source: United Nations, <https://population.un.org/wpp/>, accessed 24 March 2019.

First, there is the economic and demographic asymmetry between Nigeria which accounts for half of the population of the region (Mauritania included) and around two-thirds of its GDP (see Tables 1 and 2). This fact implies that the monetary and exchange rate policy within the zone would be dictated by the economic cycle and the needs of Nigeria. It is certainly unrealistic to expect the largest African economy to surrender its formal monetary autonomy to its neighbours or to an 'independent' regional central bank. Actually, there is no big state – in economic or demographic terms – that does not issue its own currency, except for the Eurozone countries such as Germany or France. Given also that Nigeria's population will double between 2020 and 2050 to reach the 400 million mark, it is likely that Nigeria will never be part of a currency area where it does not have the final say.

Table 2: GDP and GDP per capita in West African countries in 2017

Countries	GDP 2017 (in current billion USD)	GDP 2017 per capita (in current USD)
Benin	9.2	827
Burkina Faso	12.3	642
Cabo Verde	1.8	3244
Cote d'Ivoire	37.4	1538
The Gambia	1.5	709
Ghana	59	2046
Guinea	10.5	823
Guinea-Bissau	1.3	724
Liberia	3.3	694
Mali	15.3	827
Mauritania	5	1137
Niger	8.1	378
Nigeria	375.7	1968
Senegal	21.1	1329
Sierra Leone	3.8	500
Togo	4.8	610
Total	570.1	1533

Source: World Bank World Development Indicators, accessed 24 March 2019.

Second, there are differences in economic specialisation between the countries of the region: Nigeria is an oil producer (and this will be soon the case with Senegal) whereas most of ECOWAS member countries are net oil importers (UNCTAD 2017). This implies that economic cycles will not probably be synchronous between net oil exporters and net oil importers. Ideally candidates for a monetary union should face similar economic cycles as they will be subject to a single monetary and exchange rate policy. The differences in economic specialisation are not an insurmountable constraint, provided there are schemes of fiscal transfers allowing countries suffering from asymmetric negative shocks to receive funds to mitigate the fact they would no longer be able to use their nominal exchange rate to adjust. However, for now, such a type of fiscal/political integration is not contemplated. As a result, given the limitations in terms of public deficit and public debt that member States are expected to face, 'internal devaluation' – that is austerity policies or policies that impoverish further already poor countries – would be the main mechanism of adjustment when asymmetric negative shocks occur.

Third, as intra-ECOWAS trade is weak, even lower than intra-WAEMU trade, the benefits of sharing a common currency are very limited (see Table 3). The argument that the sharing of a single currency promotes regional trade by reducing currency transaction costs does not hold empirically, as can be clearly seen in WAEMU and CAEMC after more than 70 years of monetary integration (see Table 3). In the case of the Eurozone, it seems that the arrival of the euro did not stimulate regional trade (Phelan 2015:408). One can also observe that China is more commercially integrated with African countries taken individually – including those of the Franc Zone – than African countries are with each other, despite China not sharing a common currency with any of them.

Overall, one should also note that the ECOWAS single currency project shares the same orthodox/neoliberal conception of monetary management as the CFA system – the 'sound finance' view, a view articulating fiscal conservatism and a preference for so-called 'independent'/non-democratically accountable central banks whose mandate is to fight inflation instead of worrying about unemployment and financing development. Indeed, within the context of the 1994 devaluation of the CFA franc, the WAEMU (distinguished from the West African Monetary Union which began in 1962) and the CAEMC have been set up as frameworks of economic and monetary integration that more or less replicate the Eurozone's institutional parameters, economic methodology, and policies (Hallet 2008). As such, the WAEMU is a compelling case of a 'regional integration as a transfer of rules' (Claeys and Sindzingre 2003).

Table 3: Regional Trade in CAEMC, WAEMU and ECOWAS

	1995		2000		2010		2017	
	Regional Trade (in current million USD)	Share of regional trade (%)	Regional Trade (in current million USD)	Share of regional trade (%)	Regional Trade (in current million USD)	Share of regional trade (%)	Regional Trade (in current million USD)	Share of regional trade (%)
CAEMC	236	2.6	228	1.9	2434	4.3	2164	5.3
WAEMU	1408	10.1	2018	15.1	4774	10.9	7202	12.7
ECOWAS	3725	9.0	5565	11.0	16785	8.4	17487	9.4

Source: UNCTAD online data, accessed 24 March 2019.

To the extent that the ECOWAS single currency project tries to replicate the Eurozone ‘model’, it entails the risk of inheriting all the flaws of the Eurozone (Papadimitriou and Wray 2012) without having already achieved a strong level of trade and financial integration. With hindsight, some European central bank authorities acknowledge the failure of the ‘convergence’ agenda through the observation that ‘nominal convergence’ in the Eurozone (in terms of inflation, public deficits, etc.) – has not proved adequate for achieving ‘real convergence’ (in terms of output growth, unemployment rates, etc.) (Dombret 2017).

A monetary union is not a bad idea in itself, but it is doomed to fail if it is not based on political federalism, and fiscal federalism in particular. Maurice Allais, the French liberal economist and Economics Nobel Prize winner, warned in 1992 that:

The achievement of a monetary union and a single currency is inconceivable without the prior achievement of an appropriate political Community, with limited and expressly specified powers and involving without exception all the Member States of the European Community. If we reject this political community, we must reject the creation of a monetary union and a single currency (Allais 1992: 39, author’s translation).

Recently, the “stubborn” Wolfgang Schäuble, former German Federal Finance Minister, proved him right by acknowledging that: ‘The original mistake was in trying to create a common [i.e. single] currency without a “common economic, employment and social policy” for all Eurozone member States’. (quoted by Chazan 2019) It bears noting that the UK decision not to join the Eurozone also rested on the clear understanding that this move would involve a loss of monetary sovereignty as well as a shrinking democratic space (Phelan 2015).

In West Africa, countries are currently far from the minimal threshold of political unity needed to embark on such a project. Those who want to substitute the CFA franc with an ECOWAS single currency adhere to the ‘neoliberal abolitionism’ perspective, i.e. an exit from the CFA franc that follows the neoliberal monetary integration model as typified by the Eurozone – an experience of monetary integration devised in order to ‘discipline’ European states by submitting them to the vagaries of global finance (Abdelal 2009; Palast 2012).

Finally, there is the extreme minority ‘sovereign abolitionism’ perspective which was advocated in the 1970s and 1980s by some first-rate African economists like Samir Amin (1972) Mamadou Diarra (1972) and Joseph Tchundjang Pouemi (1980). Sovereign abolitionism is an exit from the CFA franc that breaks with the colonial and neoliberal models of monetary

integration while strengthening the sovereignty of African countries individually and collectively. This perspective starts from the observation that the Franc Zone, as a currency area, is a colonial relic that no longer has any economic justification. In their survey of the empirical literature testing the hypothesis of whether the Franc Zone is an optimal currency area (OCA), Laskaridis and Toporowski (2016:11) wrote: ‘Most authors who go down the OCA route conclude that the franc zone cannot be assessed in OCA terms [...] The reasons for the franc zone’s creation and durability are more adequately explained on political rather than economic grounds’. Therefore, given that economic fundamentals, levels of development and productive dynamism are not the same, and given that it is possible to devise a strong monetary integration based on a system of solidary national currencies, each member country of the Franc Zone should have its own national currency. The author’s preferred option is as follows:

- Each country has its own national currency with its national central bank.
- Exchange rate parity is determined according to the fundamentals of each country.
- Each currency is linked by a fixed but adjustable parity to a common unit of account managed by an African Monetary Fund. This will give African countries the possibility of using their exchange rates to make economic adjustments and will also limit the volatility of African exchange rates.
- Countries share a common Pan-African payments and clearing system (see Manders 2018 for initiatives along these lines by Afreximbank). Payments between African countries are settled in the common unit of account, not in dominant foreign currencies. This is intended to create an African demand for African currencies and lessen the dependence of African countries on foreign currencies like the US dollar and the euro.
- There is solidarity in the management of countries’ foreign exchange reserves which are partially pooled at the African Monetary Fund level. This is intended to lessen the dependence of African countries facing balance of payment difficulties on IMF loans with their attendant conditionalities, and also to stabilise African exchange rates.
- There are capital and exchange rate controls in respect of the rest of the world.
- There are common policies to ensure energy and food self-sufficiency. In the ECOWAS Zone, energy and food products represent a substantial share of the value of merchandise imports (UNCTAD

2017). Achieving gradual self-sufficiency in these two areas would reinforce financial autonomy and would make large amounts of foreign exchange reserves available for fostering industrialisation.

The advantage of this option of solidary national currencies is that it makes it possible to combine macroeconomic flexibility at the national level – the exchange rate is available as a policy instrument – with solidarity between African countries. It takes into account the differences in levels of development and economic specialisation so that relatively autonomous national policies can proceed at different rhythms, while responding to the imperative for regional and continental monetary coordination and cooperation. It also helps break the Anglophone, Francophone, Arabic and Lusophone divide as well as regional divides because any African country could in principle be part of this framework of monetary integration. However, this is unlikely to emerge because there is resistance from CFA franc advocates, regional African community institutions, and many Pan-Africanists for whom economic integration necessarily means the unconditional sharing of a single currency.

Conclusion

The CFA franc was established as a colonial currency. As such, its rationale was to transfer economic surpluses from French colonies in Sub-Saharan Africa to the metropolis. Despite formal decolonisation, this currency still performs the same function under the political control of the French government. Even though France is no longer the sole beneficiary of this currency/political arrangement which benefits outside-facing interests in Franc Zone countries (Koddenbrock and Sylla 2019), it is still able to command the loyalty of African political elites. However, this transnational alliance which forms the foundation of so-called ‘*Françafrique*’ is being more and more challenged by African intellectuals and Pan-Africanist movements asking for the abolition of this colonial currency. A successful exit from the CFA system certainly requires the liberation of African countries from the French tutelage. It also requires instituting new monetary arrangements at the service of a sovereign and democratic development project. To that end, African integration is certainly the path to follow. However, as this article argues, a distinction must be made between the neoliberal type of monetary integration, as illustrated by the Eurozone and which the ECOWAS single currency project seems to emulate, and the sovereign type which could take the form, in the current circumstances, of solidary national currencies.

Note

1. This article was written in March 2019 before the French President Emmanuel Macron and his Ivorian counterpart Alassane Ouattara announced on 21 December 2019 the reform of the CFA franc currency used in West Africa. The reform was approved on 10 December 2020 by the French National Assembly. It consists of renaming the CFA franc “Eco”, freeing the BCEAO from the obligation to deposit its foreign exchange reserves with the French Treasury and replacing the formal French representation in the organs of the BCEAO with new mechanisms of financial reporting. In other words, only one of the four pillars of this currency system – the centralisation of the foreign exchange reserves – has been affected by this reform. Such a move is in conformity with what I call in this article “symbolic reformism”. See also Sylla (2020).

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‘The State of the Continent is Good’: African ‘Foreigners’ and Foreign Direct Investment, Seen from Subimperial South Africa

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Abstract

African elites’ perpetual hope for export-led growth based on primary commodity extraction continues to suffer from harsh economic, political and now also climatic and public-health realities. Among the contradictions, COVID-19’s economic lockdown amplified two of the most difficult aspects of South Africa’s regional and inter-ethnic relations: increased working-class desperation as township economies suffered the most from the pandemic, and the inability to send remittances back home. Although new dimensions emerged during 2020 – e.g., mass social-media trolling, Cabinet ministers’ biases translated into legislation, and protests at African countries’ Pretoria embassies – there were indications well before COVID-19 that local hostility to the continent’s people would ratchet up, just as Cyril Ramaphosa took the African Union chair. Xenophobic upsurges regularly witnessed in Johannesburg suggest that this ongoing melting pot of African entrepreneurs suffers some of the continent’s most extreme political-economic contradictions. However, there are antidotes to top-down neoliberalism still emanating from the African Development Bank and World Economic Forum-Africa, some of which are potentially progressive, including unprecedented anti-authoritarian protests in at least 18 countries. But the first step is recognising just how much the official rhetoric, even from organic African elite sources, departs from reality.

Keywords: Export-led growth, primary commodity extraction, COVID-19, xenophobia, foreign direct investment, African Development Bank, World Economic Forum

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Résumé

Le perpétuel espoir des élites africaines d'une croissance portée par les exportations et fondée sur les produits miniers continue de souffrir des dures réalités économiques, politiques et aujourd'hui, climatiques et de santé publique. Dans ces contradictions, le confinement économique dû au COVID-19 a amplifié deux des aspects les plus difficiles des relations régionales et interethniques de l'Afrique du Sud : le désespoir accru de la classe ouvrière, les économies des townships ayant le plus pâti de la pandémie, et l'incapacité d'envoyer des fonds chez eux. De nouvelles dimensions ont émergé en 2020, par exemple, le trolling dans les médias sociaux, la traduction en lois de préjugés de ministres du gouvernement, et les manifestations devant les ambassades de pays africains à Pretoria, étaient, bien avant la COVID-19, des indications de l'exacerbation de l'hostilité locale envers les populations du continent, ce, au moment où Cyril Ramaphosa assumait la présidence de l'Union africaine. Les poussées xénophobes régulièrement observées à Johannesburg suggèrent que ce creuset d'entrepreneurs africains souffre de certaines des contradictions politico-économiques les plus extrêmes du continent. Cependant, contre le néolibéralisme pyramidal, il existe encore des antidotes qui émanent de la Banque africaine de développement et du Forum économique mondial-Afrique, dont certains sont potentiellement progressistes ; parmi eux, les manifestations sans précédent contre l'autoritarisme tenues dans au moins 18 pays. Mais la première étape consiste à reconnaître à quel point la rhétorique officielle, même celle d'élites africaines, s'écarte de la réalité.

Mots-clés : croissance portée par les exportations, matières premières minières, COVID-19, xénophobie, investissements directs étrangers, Banque africaine de développement, Forum économique mondial

Introduction: Myopia and resentment at the World Economic Forum-Africa

In the midst of South Africa's mid-2019 social turmoil – over not only a fresh outbreak of xenophobia but a simultaneous worsening of the country's gender-based violence pandemic – the World Economic Forum (WEF)-Africa's meeting was held in Cape Town from 3 to 5 September. Earlier in the year, agreement was reached on the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). The host president, Cyril Ramaphosa, attempted to put the best possible face on the event: 'The future is great, it looks very bright for the African continent, and if there was ever a time when Africa can definitely be said to be on the rise, this is the time. This is Africa's century, and we want to utilise it to good effect' (*Pomeroy and Bruce-Lockhart 2019*).

Such optimism harked back to ambitions a decade earlier, when the words 'Africa Rising' were often heard, especially during the 2008–14 peak of the global commodity super-cycle. China's massive internal expansion had at the time generated new impetus for African exports in the midst of the world financial meltdown (e.g. Perry 2012).

But even Africa's most optimistic economic news of 2019 – AfCFTA – was another casualty of the xenophobic attacks raging in Johannesburg just as the WEF meeting began. That violence initially targeted Nigerian businesses, including an upscale vehicle showroom where dozens of vehicles were burnt on 2 September. Former World Bank vice president and the co-founder of the #BringBackOurGirls Movement, Obiageli Ezekwesili, was livid:

The South African government looked away while our citizens were maimed, attacked and killed. They refuse to address the problem of xenophobia and allow the myth to continue that migrants are the cause of economic problems in the country. Yet it is a well-documented fact that migration can enhance economic growth in a country – do they know how many 'illegal immigrants' in South Africa are teachers? The mood towards migrants in South Africa threatens the entire free trade agreement; you cannot build a free trade area under those conditions (Planting 2019).¹

Indeed that very point immediately became obvious within the WEF-Africa summit, according to ubiquitous financial commentator Peter Attard Montalto:

So much potential has been offered up from the ratification of the agreement, but absolutely no clarity could be got from the public sector and there were uncertain expectations from the private sector on implementation, factors to watch and time-lines. The issue of AfCFTA was continually mentioned at official and side meetings, but I came away with no real understanding of a path from here that we can define, cross-check and mark as implemented. It seems like a pipe dream (Montalto 2019).

Journalist Sasha Planting is correct that although high hopes are expressed for AfCFTA, the forces continental *dis*integration may be overwhelming:

The UN Economic Commission for Africa estimates that the agreement will boost intra-African trade by 52 percent by 2022. Signing an agreement and implementing the agreement are two different things, however, and navigating a route through the complexities created by trade nationalism and protectionism will not be easy, as SA's experience with xenophobic violence clearly documents. It is also vital that the agreement does not enable the economically stronger at the expense of the vulnerable (Planting 2019).

But that danger looms large, in part because so many local politicians and officials were intent on xenophobia-denialism or even justification. In Cape Town, according to one reporter, ‘the anger among Africans about South Africa’s xenophobia and the government’s refusal to address it is palpable’ (Planting 2019). And this unrest was followed immediately by thousands of feminists and anti-xenophobic Pan-Africans protesting outside the WEF-Africa, compelling even the normally insensitive elites inside a business gathering to wake up and confront the extreme contradictions in continental political economy that could no longer be brushed aside.

Partly as a result, the WEF-Africa Cape Town event also lacked the business frisson of prior summits in Durban in 2017 or Kigali in 2015–16, when ‘Fourth Industrial Revolution’ (4IR) rhetoric was unveiled by the Swiss WEF sponsors. There was an underwhelming response from the host, in part because South Africa’s business confidence level had just fallen to the lowest level in 20 years (Mjo 2019). In spite of Ramaphosa’s rhetoric, both South Africa’s and the continent’s stagnation was obvious, and as a result, the audience was subjected to ‘vague generalities and platitudes’ according to Montalto:

WEF is a show, a choreographed stunt of corporate leadership, third-sector worthies and governments coming together... This plays into South Africa’s hands – South Africa is excellent at putting on such shows and with the weather and vista of Cape Town can deliver the vibe to attendees glad of the holiday. The government takes WEF extremely seriously, with pre-meetings and agendas and press releases and most of the Cabinet there. The business has been happy to come along in previous years and play the best ‘TeamSA’ role (yes, with scarves and all) – choreographed into the action. But the business was having none of it this year and there was no sense of TeamSA (Montalto 2019).

Another major problem for WEF-Africa publicists was a series of large, militant protests outside the Cape Town convention centre on each of the conference days, by feminists (mainly), anti-xenophobia activists and other country-specific human rights advocacy lobbyists. Ramaphosa’s inaction was the main target, as he had to cancel one WEF keynote speech so as to deal with the critique of patriarchy. All of this shook up the gathering. In the words of Montalto:

The xenophobic violence in recent weeks caused a number of withdrawals (including from a Nigerian co-chair of the forum), but even before this, there was a lack of many names planning on attending. As a result, many sessions seemed poorly attended and applause was muted even in the more full sessions. A breach on the number one rule of WEF – which is security and the cordon around events – by protesters was perhaps part of the issue,

but even then most attendees I spoke to understood a protest about sexual violence is a very different and more worthy issue than the usual anti-capitalist protests at such events (Montalto 2019).

Those 'usual' protests, e.g. as arranged by several hundred activists in the People's Economic Forum at the mid-2017 WEF-Africa in Durban (Bond 2017b), did not transpire in Cape Town, but it is worth recalling the extent to which dissent also marred the event two years earlier. Demonstrators targeted WEF-Africa 2017 heads of state who were generally considered tyrants: Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe (removed in a November 2017 violent coup), Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, King Mswati of Eswatini and Edgar Lungu of Zambia. The main host was Jacob Zuma, who was tossed out of power in a February 2018 palace coup due to extreme levels of fraud during what his successor Ramaphosa later termed – at the WEF-Davos event in 2019 – 'nine lost years'.

A central figure during those years was 2017 WEF-Africa co-chair Siyabonga Gama, against whom his employer Transnet (South Africa's rail and road transport parastatal) commissioned a 200-page report in 2010, declaring him guilty of helping the communications minister commit multi-million dollar fraud. Zuma ensured Gama was rehired, where he was central to the corruption nexus, before he was finally fired for good in late 2018. South Africa's corruption-riddled state firms Telkom (phones) and Eskom (electricity) were also WEF-Africa fixtures, along with the Japanese company Hitachi. That firm had in 2015 paid a \$19 million fine to the American government after confessing illegal collusion with a fundraising arm of South Africa's ruling party. Hitachi was hired to build boilers at Eskom's \$15 billion Medupi Power Plant – but 7,000 welds needed redoing at the world's largest coal-fired power plant under construction (with the World Bank's largest-ever loan), a project still a decade behind schedule. Many WEF 'partner' corporations are implicated in Africa's state and parastatal corruption pandemics.²

Whereas in 2019 there was no WEF-Africa headliner from the 'international community' to give the event weight, the main non-African guest in 2017 was a man considered to be the most economically powerful in Europe, German finance minister Wolfgang Schäuble. It is worth considering his agenda in 2017, for his own notorious corruption incident (Langguth 2009) and dogmatic imposition of neoliberalism (Varoufakis 2017) were not remarked upon, given his status. So Schäuble used the Durban WEF-Africa to sell a plan – the G20 Compact for Africa, which he co-chaired with the South African finance minister Malusi Gigaba (who resigned in late 2018 due to his alleged role in widespread parastatal corruption) – for reviving multinational corporate investment in selected African countries

with pro-business leadership.³ The Compact was a priority, said Schäuble, because ‘In Europe, we have come to understand that Africa represents one of the most important issues for the growth and stability of the global economy’ (Heide et al. 2017).

Africa as an ‘issue’ for global economic ‘growth’ dates to an earlier Berlin project: the ‘Scramble for Africa’ in 1884–85 (Phimister 1993). The continent’s dysfunctional borders were drawn then, with nary an African in sight, in order to facilitate property rights for colonial extractive industries, all the better to ensure infrastructure investment. Roads, railways, bridges and ports needed to withdraw resources have been cemented into place ever since, and now require refurbishing and expansion, for further extraction.

But another explanation for the Compact can be offered: Germany’s 2017 national election, in which president Angela Merkel needed a rhetorical device to explain to voters how the million African refugees who entered Germany over the prior dozen years could be kept at bay in future. At the WEF-Africa, Schäuble not only sidelined the more generous ‘Marshall Plan’ strategy advanced by Merkel’s development ministry, he also insisted that African governments provide more public subsidies – and take on much more risk – for ‘Public Private Partnership’ infrastructure. This typically amount to profits, pilfering and – for consumers of commercialised infrastructure – pain (Bond 2017b).

A tough critique of Schäuble’s strategy was offered by a ‘C20’ group of civil society critics, not only about the top-down process, but about:

higher costs for the citizens, worse service, secrecy, loss of democratic influence and financial risks for the public... and the multinational corporations involved demand that their profits be repatriated in hard currency – even though the typical services contract entails local-currency expenditures and revenues – and that often raises African foreign debt levels, which are now at all-time highs again in many countries (Henn 2017).

There are many ways to seek foreign direct investment for Africa, but the WEF-Africa route is often the most dangerous in part because it is so misleading and overoptimistic. Whether based on Compact with Africa philosophy imposed from the G20 or 4IR deregulatory strategies para-chuted from Davos, seeking foreign direct investment (FDI) can be a blinding pursuit. In 2019, WEF-Africa leader Elsie Kanza made this claim, ostensibly from the *World Investment Report* of the United Nations (UN) Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD 2019b): ‘FDI has increased on the continent at a time in the past three years when there’s been a decline globally. There has been an increase of 100 percent between 2017 and 2018 with most of the deals happening here in South Africa’ (Menon 2019).

Behind UNCTAD's fictitious FDI data

The reality is worth reflecting on. Kanza was not only incorrect, factually, since for the continent as a whole, UNCTAD had recently reported on an 11 per cent rise (UNCTAD 2019b). But the South African case was indeed phenomenal, according to UNCTAD's (2019a) January 2019 *Investment Trends Monitor*. As proudly repeated by Ramaphosa at WEF-Davos a few days later,

Last year, we launched an ambitious drive to raise \$100 billion in new investment over five years. At the inaugural South Africa Investment Conference in October last year, both local and international companies announced around \$20 billion of investments in new projects or to expand existing ones. According to a report released by UNCTAD on Monday, direct foreign investment into South Africa increased by more than 440% between 2017 and 2018, from \$1.3 billion to \$7.1 billion (Ram).

Soon afterwards, Ramaphosa used the news of the dramatic FDI rise in his State of the Nation Address ('SONA'), to great fanfare. However, a major problem for this line of argument emerged in June 2019 with the release of UNCTAD's (2019b) *World Investment Report*, i.e., that the new South African FDI of \$5.3 billion (not \$7.1 billion) in 2018 – second in Africa only to Egypt's – was not mainly technically greenfield plants, equipment and machinery that create jobs.

FDI flows to *South Africa* more than doubled to \$5.3 billion in 2018, contributing to progress in the Government's campaign to attract \$100 billion of FDI by 2023. The surge in inflows was largely due to intracompany loans, but equity inflows also recorded a sizeable increase (UNCTAD 2019b: 38).⁴

There are two problems with the categorisation of intracompany loans as FDI. First, corporate treasuries typically treat such credit as a vehicle for illicit financial flows. In such a scenario, the 'FDI' would not translate into real investment that results in employment creation, but represents a renewed multinational corporate squeeze of South Africa through its balance of payments outflows on the income account (profits, dividends and interest). Such transfers are easily facilitated by the lax capital and current flow supervision and regulation in South Africa. There are only rare prosecutions for base erosion and profit shifting, misinvoicing, transfer pricing and other tax dodges (Bond and Malikane 2019). Ramaphosa himself was regularly implicated in billions of dollars' worth of financial offshoring to zero-tax havens including Bermuda and Mauritius when he was chair or the lead executive of the firms MTN, Lonmin and Shanduka (Bond and Malikane 2019). Yet in spite of the growing evidence of South African illicit financial dealings found in the Paradise Papers, Panama Papers

and the HSBC leaks between 2015 and 2017, Pretoria's Treasury and the South African Reserve Bank appear to have no interest or ability to monitor what kinds of international banking activities are underway, judging by the prevalence of illegal currency manipulation.⁵

This problem of state treasuries and central banks treating FDI statistics in a lackadaisical manner is a more general one, especially if the intracompany loans are recorded as FDI. According to the *Financial Times*,

A large proportion of the world's stock of foreign direct investment is 'phantom' capital, designed to minimise companies' tax liabilities rather than financing productive activity, according to research. Nearly 40 per cent of worldwide FDI – worth a total of \$15 trillion – 'passes through empty corporate shells' with 'no real business activities' ... they are a vehicle for financial engineering, 'often to minimise multinationals' global tax bill' ...

As late as 2010, phantom FDI made up 31 percent of the total FDI stock; by 2017 it had reached 38 percent. Behind the global number, countries differ widely. The UK's share of phantom inward FDI jumped from just 3 per cent in 2009 to 18 per cent in 2017, the estimates show. In Belgium and Sweden, the share fell from about 30 per cent to single digits in the same period (Sandbu 2019).

The research above was conducted by International Monetary Fund (IMF) staff, who observed that when it comes to hosting such FDI, 'Luxembourg and the Netherlands host nearly half. And when you add Hong Kong SAR, the British Virgin Islands, Bermuda, Singapore, the Cayman Islands, Switzerland, Ireland, and Mauritius to the list, these 10 economies host more than 85 percent of all phantom investments' (Damgaard et al. 2019). It is notable that not only is Mauritius a favourite of most South African multinational corporations, but that the Netherlands was the site chosen in September 2019 to relocate the single biggest firm on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE): the local shares ('Prosus') in the Chinese tech firm Tencent, whose value is estimated at \$130 billion, more than a fifth of the entire JSE.

The second problem with the UNCTAD revelation about FDI being 'largely' intracompany credit, is that the obvious rationale to make loans in South Africa is to have a relatively low-risk investment that carries a high rate of return. Among the fifty largest countries issuing bonds, the standard 10-year rate Pretoria paid was, in 2018–19, either fourth or fifth highest (South Africa and Venezuela would typically trade places from week to week), behind just junk-rated Turkey, Pakistan and Argentina (Table 1).

Table 1: Highest Annual Interest Rates Paid by Governments Issuing 10-year Bonds, September 2019

Turkey	15.0
Pakistan	12.0
Argentina	11.0
Venezuela	8.24
South Africa	8.10
Indonesia	7.22
Mexico	7.19
Russia	7.12
India	6.66
Colombia	5.85

Source: *The Economist* 2019b.

As for UNCTAD's reporting on FDI 'equity,' the term is meant to include not just portfolio flows into a local stock market, but real investment. According to UNCTAD, South Africa's high FDI in 2018 mainly reflected its burgeoning auto industry: 'In 2018, China-based automaker Beijing Automotive Industry Holding opened a \$750 million plant in the Coega Industrial Development Zone, while automakers BMW (Germany) and Nissan (Japan) expanded their existing facilities in the country' (UNCTAD 2019b:38)

But the reason for these large equity investments is simple: massive subsidisation of the Motor Industry Development Programme (MIDP) by Pretoria. As even Deputy Finance Minister David Masondo (2018: 203) explained, 'Instead of building a developmental state, the post-apartheid state elite has built a nanny state which simply provides handouts to transnational companies.' The annual handouts were around \$2 billion in tax losses, plus additional costs to consumers of \$1 billion. In return, admitted David Kaplan (2019:3), in spite of his 'post-Fordist' colleagues' strong support (Barnes, Kaplinsky and Morris 2003), the MIDP failed to meet its own three main objectives:

The first objective was an increase in production. In 2008, South Africa produced 563,000 vehicles. The declared objective was to double production to 1 to 1.2 million vehicles by 2020. In 2018, 610,854 vehicles were produced; an increase of a little over 8% in a decade. The figure for 2019 is likely to be lower.

The second objective was to ‘deepen’ local content. However, local content levels have been declining and are now below 40%.

The third objective was, on the back of rising output and increasing local content, an increase in employment. However, aggregate employment levels have declined. In the period 2004–2006, employment in motor vehicles and parts and accessories was 116,416; a decade later, in the period 2014–2016, employment had declined to 92,213.

The major investment UNCTAD (2019b:38) observed in a plant by the Chinese firm BAIC is revealing, because more than a third of the plant is owned by the parastatal Industrial Development Corporation, lowering BAIC’s risk. With an anticipated 100,000 vehicles per year capacity, BAIC advertised that it would be responsible for creating more than 10,000 jobs along the automotive value chain. However, BAIC suffered labour disputes that halted construction, and ultimately only 120 workers were hired to assemble vehicles in the first phase. Just as the plant was opened in mid-2018, the press reported on the extent of the ‘semi-knocked down’ character of the sports utility vehicles being made:

Serious doubts have been expressed in motor industry circles about the claims that the vehicle was manufactured in South Africa... Last September, the local media reported that the construction had been moving at a snail’s pace and all small, medium and micro enterprises had vacated the premises due to non-payment (Cokayne 2018).

A few subsidised, capital-intensive exceptions aside, the reluctance to invest is not unusual, for local South African businesses remain on a capital strike. Since 2010, gross fixed capital formation in South Africa remained in the weak 18–21 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) range, always below the 20–22 percent rate of Sub-Saharan Africa (‘SSA,’ which includes South Africa but not North Africa) (Figure 1). In the 1964–84 period, by contrast, South Africa’s rate was in the range of 25 to 34 per cent, prior to the 1980s crisis of ‘overaccumulation’ of fixed capital (Bond and Malikane 2019).

But the critical *annual growth rate* of gross fixed capital formation, indicating the momentum of capital accumulation, was on a strong downward trajectory after 2007, reaching negative rates in 2015–18 (Figure 2). The weakening of Africa’s fixed capital investment – whether FDI or local – is even more explicit in the manufacturing sector (Figure 3). From an early 1980s peak of 23 per cent share of manufacturing within GDP in South Africa and 17 per cent in SSA, the shares have fallen for both to below 12 per cent.

Aside from tiny Eswatini's industrial zone and Ethiopia's surge in light manufacturing, the rapid deindustrialisation process during the Africa Rising era was not an anomaly. It reflected the insertion of the continent more fully into a world economy with very little scope for higher-value production opportunities.⁶ One result is that even *toothpicks* are found in the continent's capital cities in small plastic containers, 'made in China'.

And yet in spite of the uncompetitive character of South Africa's industries, fantasies continue within the Treasury, whose August 2019 economic revival strategy fails to factor in the 'deglobalisation' problem as well as Africa's low growth prospects and high debt levels (Toussaint et al. 2019). According to Treasury (2019), 'South Africa needs to promote export competitiveness and actively pursue regional growth opportunities in order to leverage global and regional value chains for export growth. Exports have been identified as a key driver of economic growth.' But this is easier said than done, for in 2018, South Africa's 'real net exports' within the national income account category were described as follows: 'Contributions of expenditure components to growth in real gross domestic product' shrunk GDP by 0.2 percent; and in the first half of 2019, the impact of real net exports was negative 6.1 percent (South African Reserve Bank 2019:16).

The dragging role of exports should not be surprising, given that the deglobalisation process is fully underway. Like the 1880s–90s and 1930s–40s, during which dramatic reversals in trade/GDP occurred, the current round began with a major crash, in 2008. Globalisation in the form of cross-border capital flows peaked in 2007: as a share of world GDP, FDI was 5.3 per cent, portfolio debt and equity investments in bond and stock markets were 5.6 per cent, and bank lending was 10.5 per cent. In 2018, capital flows continued to fall: FDI down to just 2 per cent of GDP, portfolio debt and equity investments to 1.9 per cent, and bank loans to 2 per cent (UNCTAD 2019b:11). The recent 'slowbalisation' (*The Economist* 2019a) was partly due to Chinese overaccumulation (with lower growth and imports) and partly due to the Trump trade wars (which affected South Africa in 2018 due to Washington's steel and aluminium tariff hikes). Together these deglobalisation processes – anticipated to worsen considerably with the next global recession – will make Treasury's (2019) strategy futile (Toussaint et al. 2019).

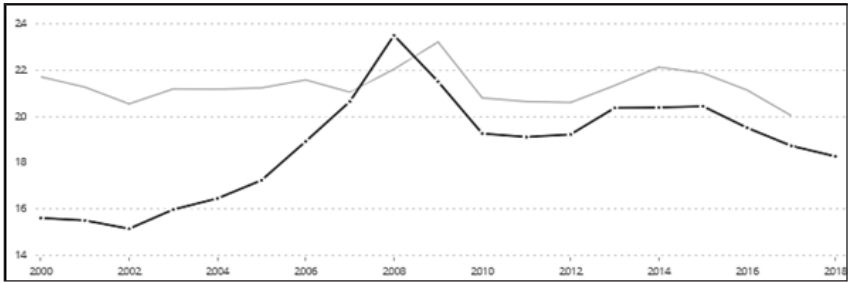


Figure 1: Gross fixed capital formation, percent of GDP: SA (dark), SSA (light), 2000–18

Source: World Bank 2017.



Figure 2: Gross fixed capital formation, annual growth: SA (dark), SSA (light), 2000–18

Source: World Bank 2017.



Figure 3: Manufacturing as a share of GDP: SA (top), SSA (bottom), 1980–2018

Source: World Bank 2017.

The myopia of rising African GDP

It is important to consider all these adverse trends from the opposite standpoint, however, that of the neoclassical economist. The African Development Bank (AfDB) was notorious for over-optimism, even allowing its chief economist Mthuli Ncube (2013) to claim an unprecedented discovery: an 'African middle class' of one-third of the continent's billion-person population. This was possible only because Ncube (2013) counted this 'class' as spending between \$2 and \$20/day. In the same spirit, the AfDB (2019:5) views African capital accumulation very positively, based upon the most obvious measure adopted by economists: 'The state of the continent is good. Africa's general economic performance continues to improve, with GDP growth reaching an estimated 3.5 percent in 2018, about the same as in 2017 and up 1.4 percentage points from the 2.1 percent in 2016.'

Even putting aside the old question of data integrity (Jerven 2013), GDP ignores too many factors to be taken seriously in Africa (or anywhere), and the dubious data collection methods embodied in AfDB analysis further discredit a conclusion like 'The state of the continent is good'. First, an absolutely critical aspect of social welfare ignored in the GDP variable is the unpaid role of women in family and community reproduction.

Second, of profound concern is that GDP ignores the value of depleted non-renewable resources. To accurately assess the change in *wealth* that occurs in Africa from year to year requires setting a 'debit' of resource extraction against the 'natural capital' that declines in the process (i.e., the 'credit' of mineral/ oil/ gas sales that contribute so much to Africa's GDP). To do so, as the World Bank (Lange et al. 2018) found, leaves the continent unique in the world for failing to replace the lost natural capital with both 'productive capital' and 'human capital' (Figure 4).

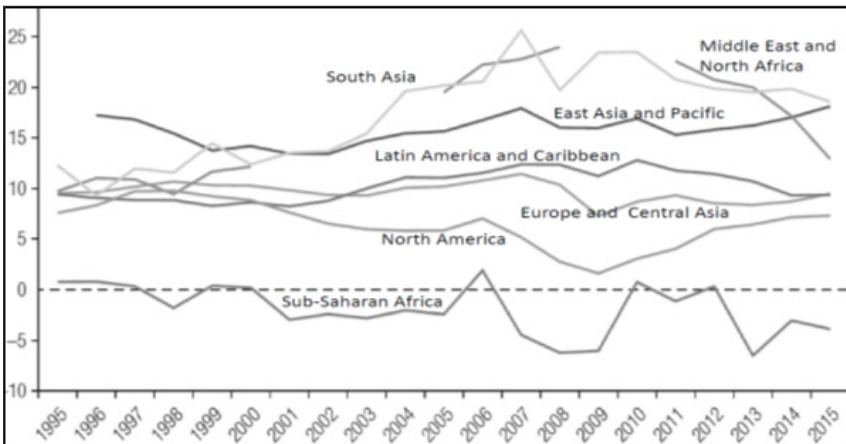


Figure 4: Adjusted net saving by region, 1995–2015 (share of gross national income)
Source: Lange et al. 2018: 64.

This loss is at least a net \$100 billion per year, but including oil-rich North Africa and some minerals the Bank has not yet begun to count properly, that figure is more likely to be closer to \$150 billion (Bond 2018). And on top of that is more general environmental destruction due to the ‘externality’ of pollution. In what may be one of the worst cases in Africa, CO₂ harm is estimated in one country alone, South Africa, at 4.6 per cent of that country’s GDP (World Bank 2017, Bond 2020a).

Economists who believe ‘the state of the continent is good’ fall into the trap that Samir Amin warned of in one of his last analyses, when asking Africa’s *leftist political economists* not to ignore ecological destruction:

Capitalist accumulation is founded on the destruction of the bases of all wealth: human beings and their natural environment... historical Marxisms had largely passed an eraser over the analyses advanced by Marx on this subject and taken the point of view of the bourgeoisie – equated to an atemporal ‘rational’ point of view – in regard to the exploitation of natural resources (Amin 2018:159, 86).

Thus ‘correcting’ Africa’s GDP so as to reflect myriad exploitations – not just technically but conceptually and politically – is a necessary ideological struggle (Fioramonti 2014). Winning it will assist African political economists to advance a more explicit understanding of the ways patriarchal capitalism (e.g. the migrant labour system) and extractive-industry FDI together *underdevelop* Africa.

In turn, that heightened understanding would aid in providing more strategic support to both women’s struggles for justice (e.g. against gender-based violence) and the micro-economic social movements rising against mining and oil, as well as to the broader movements of resistance that have emerged especially since Africans began rising up against Africa Rising in 2011. South Africa’s own lamentable role would also become clearer, if the perpetual abuse of GDP and the relentless propaganda about FDI could be put into proper context.

The subimperial condition

In 2020, Ramaphosa assumes the chair of the African Union. Since South African companies have been regularly criticised – and often formally attacked by other Africans – for their role in looting the continent, it is vital to nourish the upsurge of anti-xenophobia activism and to identify where it can solve root-cause problems, aside from the relatively easy rhetorical strategy of urgent ethical reassertion of Pan-African *ubuntu*.

South Africans increasingly recognise root causes of poor and working-class people's terrible alienation in the structural inequalities and extreme internecine competition faced by ordinary people trying to survive. Nearly all South African commentaries have remarked on unemployment, housing crises, and frenetic informal sector competition in townships as the set of underlying factors associated with xenophobia. To this one might add South Africa's disruptive geopolitical role in the region (Amisi et al. 2011). But while many are increasingly aware of how the African continent is stressed over economic and environmental crises, the resulting migration borne of such desperation remains beyond the consciousness of working-class South African xenophobes. That pressure extends into South Africa, where the Treasury is cutting major holes in the already-shrunken social safety net, given that the country's \$176 billion foreign debt gives greater leverage to New York's austerity-minded ratings agencies.

In September 2019, anti-xenophobia activism in many countries was aimed at Johannesburg companies and South African High Commissions, an entirely appropriate response. In South Africa, those protests were covered with a degree of respect and even fear, as were similar events in April–May 2015. After being attacked by angry Nigerians, MTN and Multichoice in turn put unprecedented pressure on South Africa's police minister to provide immigrants to South Africa with better local security, and make more arrests of those committing xenophobic acts (Mahlaka 2019).

But rather than simply identifying 'South Africa' in terms of state and corporate representatives across the continent, the most profound political challenge across Africa is uniting activists at the base to challenge rising corporate power associated with the continent's adverse insertion in the world economy. That power includes neoliberal ideological and power relations regularly facilitated by Pretoria and felt in various ways up-continent, in:

- the *Pretoria government's pro-Western role within the World Trade Organization* during the late 1990s, albeit a subordinate relationship spectacularly challenged by other African negotiators at the Seattle summit (Bond 2006);
- the *New Partnership for Africa's Development*, termed 'philosophically spot on' by the George W. Bush regime (Bond 2005);
- Pretoria's sole claim to *represent Africa within the G20*, which in 2017 led one seasoned commentator to remark on how South Africa was again 'obsequiously behaving like a neo-colony' of multinational corporate interests (Tandon 2018);

- the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa – *BRICS* – *bloc's reassertion of corporate privilege to extract natural resources from Africa*, in part thanks to the BRICS Durban and Johannesburg Summits' 'gateway' functions in 2013 and 2018, respectively (Van der Merwe et al. 2019); and
- BRICS leaders' attempts to *shift multilateral financial power in their own interests*, which in 2015 led to an IMF vote restructuring that advantaged the four most wealthy BRICS countries at the expense of African countries (e.g. China gained a 37 per cent increased voting share, while Nigeria lost 41 per cent of its power and South Africa also lost 21 per cent) (Bond 2019a).

These are economic reflections of subimperial power, but other incidents are just as disturbing in geopolitical respects. The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has carried out unjustifiable military interventions – with significant casualties – in the Central African Republic (2013) and Lesotho (1998), while the Johannesburg mercenary firm Executive Outcomes and arms dealers like Denel and Ivor Ichikowitz's Paramount Group operate relatively unhindered from Johannesburg. Other incidents reflect South African subservience to Western geopolitical power, such as the unpunished Mark Thatcher's infamous 'splodge of wonga' paid to arrange a 2004 Equatorial Guinea coup d'état attempt while based in Cape Town, or Pretoria's approval of two early-2000s extraordinary renditions associated with Central Intelligence Agency anti-terrorist torture (Bond 2019b).

So too were Jacob Zuma's corrupt deal-making with Moscow's Rosatom for \$100 billion in nuclear energy (foiled by environmental activists), or his repeated compliance with Beijing's insistence that the Dalai Lama not receive a visa to visit South Africa, even just to attend Archbishop Desmond Tutu's 80th birthday party. As for Pretoria's own most brazen political intervention in Africa, the way Zuma inserted his ex-wife Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma into the African Union (AU) chair in 2012 – replete with alleged bribery – received powerful critiques from competing large African countries who had pledged to allow smaller states the privilege of putting forward AU leadership candidates without such rivalries coming into play (Bond 2019c).

But, looking to the future, perhaps the most important instance in which a stronger anti-*subimperial* politics may emerge is the growing criticism of South Africa's environmental stewardship (Bond 2017a). In addition to chairing the AU in 2020, Pretoria also leads the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, but completely failed its local residents and regional neighbours in the first step towards climate consciousness

and reparations. On the planet, there are only two countries of substance (with more than 10 million residents) whose CO₂-equivalent emissions per unit of per capita annual output exceed South Africa's (Kazakhstan and the Czech Republic). There are only ten countries with higher per capita emissions than South Africa's nine tons (Table 2).

Table 2: Leading Greenhouse Gas Emitters per Person (tons CO₂-equivalent, 2014)

Saudi Arabia	19.5
United States	16.5
Australia	15.4
Canada	15.1
Kazakhstan	14.4
Russia	11.9
South Korea	11.6
Netherlands	9.9
Japan	9.5
Czech Republic	9.2
South Africa	9.0

Source: World Bank data, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/en.atm.co2e.pc>.

The 'climate debt' South Africa owes to the rest of the continent is vast, and would depend on whether the starting point for measurement is the historical contribution (South Africa's coal addiction became substantial during the 1920s, as energy became necessary for deep-level mining), or a more recent date at which future climate change was recognised as a crisis (e.g., 1990). One immediate official barrier to claiming this liability, is the UN's 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, which prohibits claims by signatories for wealthy-country climate debt payment. This was due in part to rich Western countries led by the United States State Department's Todd Stern during the half-dozen years before the Paris deal, who declared at the 2009 Copenhagen climate summit, 'The sense of guilt or culpability or reparations – I just categorically reject that' (Brkic 2009). But Stern also helped Barack Obama assemble a group in Copenhagen that included four BRICS countries, one accurately described by Bill McKibbin (2009) as a '*league of super-polluters, and would-be super-polluters*' – *very much including South Africa* (Bond 2012).

African resistance

As a final brief note, however, social resistance is vital, and has been rising in fits and starts – often with heartbreaking reversals – across Africa since late 2010 when Mohamed Bouazizi’s self-immolation sparked the North African uprisings. The University of Sussex ‘Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project’ (ACLED) records the protests as well as repression using media-based data. ACLED data (Figures 5 and 6) reveal that, in at least a third of Africa’s countries, the peak of either category – top-down repression or bottom-up resistance – occurred more than 50 times within a single month. Alphabetically, the 18 countries are Algeria, Burundi, Central African Republic, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Eight of them witnessed extremely high social-dissent peaks in the period 1998–2018, in which at least 100 riots or protests occurred in the course of a single month: Egypt: 250 in early 2013; Burundi: 180 in mid-2015; Tunisia: 175 in early 2011; South Africa: 170 in early 2017; Ethiopia: 160 in early 2016; Kenya: 140 in late 2017; Nigeria: 110 in early 2015; and Algeria: 100 in early 2011 (Bond 2019b).

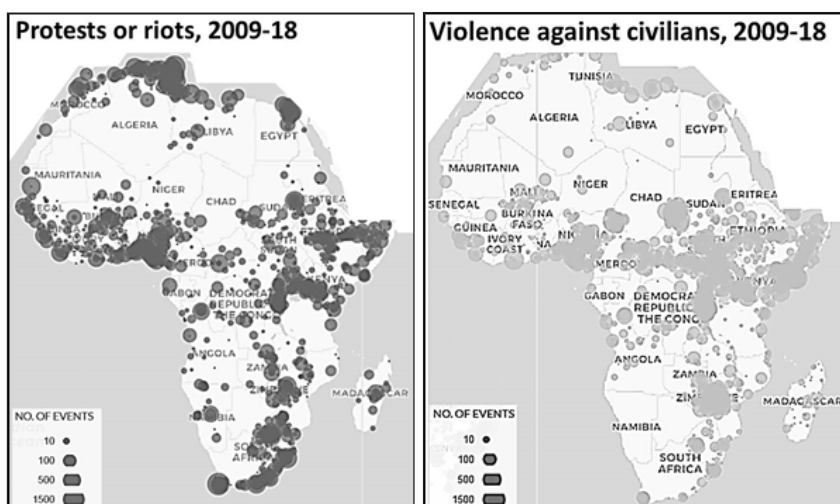


Figure 5: African protests and repression, 2009–2018

Source: Armed Conflict Location & Event Project (ACLED) 2019; www.acleddata.com.

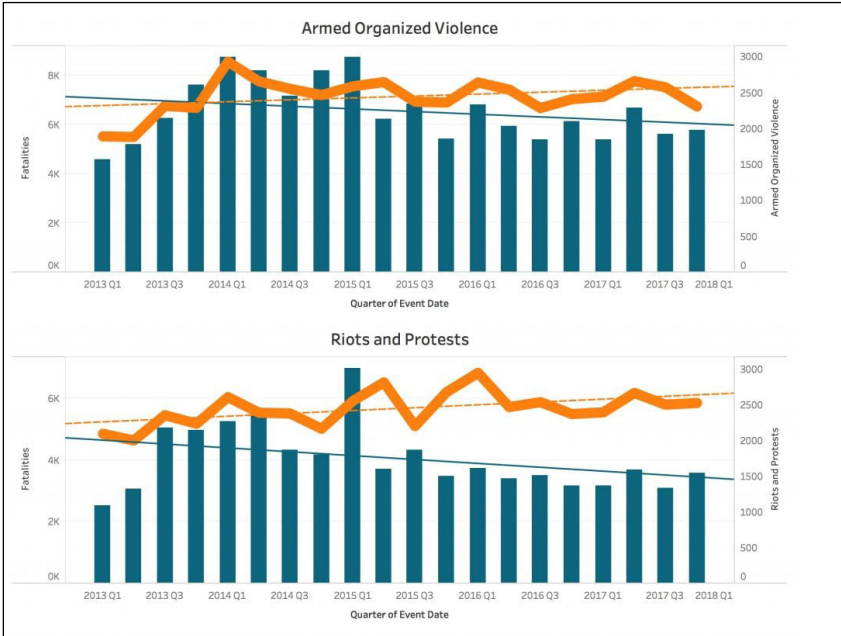


Figure 6: Africa’s incidents of fatalities, repression and protest, 2013–18

Source: Armed Conflict Location & Event Project (ACLED) 2019; www.acleddata.com.

In some countries, there were such strong protest mobilisations in part because labour movements were also relatively militant. There was unevenness across and within the continent’s trade unions, to be sure, but the WEF’s annual *Global Competitiveness Reports* – an annual survey of 14,000 business executives in 138 countries – continue to rank Africa’s workers as the most confrontational of any continent, led by those from South Africa, Chad, Tunisia, Liberia, Mozambique, Morocco, Lesotho, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Algeria and Burundi (WEF, 2016).

This is the most important of all the political processes now underway in Africa: the uprisings of angry citizens and workers. One dilemma is that these remain country-specific, even though a ‘contagion’ of protest is evident once one movement’s uprising is successful (Bond 2019b). But more tragic yet is that the logic of regional class formation so evident in post-apartheid South Africa as a result of uneven development is not sufficiently powerful to overcome class fragmentation along national lines, as was again witnessed in central Johannesburg in mid-2019.

These, then, are some of the reasons the state of the continent is *not* good. But within these failures are seeds of future successes, surely?

Postscript: Resurgent official and citizen xenophobia during COVID-19

Updating the concerns above for late 2020 would require more nuanced arguments than there is available space, about the COVID-19 pandemic's catastrophic impact in Africa (especially South Africa which, at one point in August, had the world's fifth-highest number of infections and which entered a formal depression, felt acutely in townships); the March 2020 commodity and financial-market price crash and partial recovery; the dance between those offering partial relief on foreign loan repayments and African leaders (like Ramaphosa) prone to accept a bad deal that simply defers (not cancels) unpayable debt; and the continuing upsurge of resistance across the continent (e.g., in Mali where an unpopular regime was overthrown in August) albeit under more restrictive conditions.

The xenophobic conditions in South Africa continued to evolve, in several ways that made immigrants' existence in the country acutely difficult in 2020. First, the lockdown dramatically limited – and most cases prevented – circular migration, new immigration and emigration from late March through to September 2020. The massive increase in South African unemployment, which was measured at three million formal jobs lost in April–May and 1.5 million informal workers' livelihoods threatened – curtailed remittances. In countries like Zimbabwe, the lack of foreign exchange that resulted was a major factor in tipping the local currency into dramatic decline, with inflation surging to the world's second highest level. To add insult to injury, the COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress grant (about \$20/month from May to October) was specifically made available by the South African Treasury to citizens and permanent residents, with other immigrants deemed not eligible (Charles 2020), although this was reversed for special permit holders and asylum seekers in June after a successful lawsuit.

The reversal in the courts did not deter other government leaders from repeated encouragement of xenophobia. Some members of Ramaphosa's Cabinet engaged in advocacy for openly discriminatory, anti-foreigner legislation. This was not new, because the watchdog Right2Know social movement had already complained in September 2009 of

a dangerous emerging trend of xenophobic populism that leads to attacks on foreign nationals. In 2015, Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini's speech, President Cyril Ramaphosa's 2019 election campaign pronouncements, the Minister of Health's comments on the strain placed on health services by foreign migrants, and the xenophobic blaming for Johannesburg's ill[s] by Mayor

Herman Mashaba have been followed by xenophobic attacks in different localities. In all these instances, even when not responding to a direct call, political populism is used as justification by instigators and perpetrators who would have been waiting for an opportunity to strike for their own reasons (Molosankwe 2019).

In 2020, the trend was amplified, starting in mid-April when a government communications website (uncritically) confirmed Finance Minister Tito Mboweni's absurd claim, 'Today, almost 100 percent [of restaurant workers] are non-South African. The new economy that we are getting into after the lifting of the lockdown must answer that question' (*Vukuzenzele* 2020). Soon, official discrimination creeping into labour regulation became so obvious that it was openly opposed by *Business Day* newspaper editorialists as follows:

Employment and labour minister Thulas Nxesi recently gave notice in parliament of these plans, which he said were necessary because of the number of foreign nationals employed in certain sectors such as agriculture, restaurants and the private security and hospitality industries. In terms of the plan being drawn up by his department, the minister could have the right to set sectoral targets or quotas for foreign nationals in certain sectors. The minister said it was well known that employers preferred to hire foreign nationals. In some cases, this had to do with skills, but in other cases it was a matter of exploiting cheap labour. Finance minister Tito Mboweni has also remarked on the number of foreign nationals employed in restaurants and urged that South Africans be employed instead.

We are not talking here about illegal workers. There are clear laws to deal with those cases. We are talking about people who have been granted the right to live and work in the country; and once this right has been granted, they should not be deprived of it (*Business Day* 2020).

The next stage of formal discriminatory legislation began in September 2020. In the wealthiest province, Gauteng, Premier David Makhura 'will only assist township-based enterprises in agriculture, construction, manufacturing, transport, communications, tourism and services if they are owned by South African citizens or holders of permanent residency status' (Sidimba 2020). Others from Cabinet who openly spoke out against immigrants working in townships or using state services included Minister of Small Business Development Khumbudzo Ntshavheni, Minister of Home Affairs Pakishe Aaron Motsoaledi, Minister of Justice and Correctional Services Ronald Lamola, and Minister of Police Bheki Cele.

Yet there was pervasive denialism, dating to Thabo Mbeki's claim 2007 that the African Peer Review Mechanism's warning about xenophobia was

incorrect, just five months before hundreds of thousands of immigrants were displaced in anti-foreigner pogroms. In mid-2020, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Naledi Pandor claimed,

I think it is SA media that is depicting SA as xenophobic because SA media is very keen to keep this impression alive. I note the resistance of the media, even when respected actors in matters of human rights have said it is wrong to call SA xenophobic. The events that have happened are of concern, but maintaining this notion, which the media seems intent to do, is a problem for us (Mvumvu 2019).

Explained Human Rights Watch,

Denial of xenophobia pervades different levels of government and is articulated when discussing both the intentions of perpetrators of xenophobic attacks and the impacts felt by their victims. The tendency to label incidents as “criminal” but not xenophobic creates a false dichotomy as though criminality and xenophobia are mutually exclusive (Human Rights Watch 2020).

Immigrant criminality, however, was inevitably what the citizenry claimed to justify their own xenophobia. So finally, consider the turn towards social media regarding immigrants’ alleged threat to working-class South Africa, including outlandish claims of human trafficking. On 23 September, the #PutSouthAfricansFirst movement (including a political party by the same name) mobilised scores of disgruntled citizens under the demand #ForeignersMustGo with the meme #23SeptemberCleanSA, in what might have been the first expression of xenophobia explicitly directed at a Pretoria embassy: the Nigerian High Commission. For journalist Blaise Atabong,

It shows how social media in South Africa is now being more explicitly manipulated to stir already existing bitter sentiments and long-held prejudices particularly among poor and working class Black South Africans against migrants and refugees from other African countries, a phenomenon sometimes called “Afrophobia.” As in the previous protests, the demonstrators were complaining about irregular migrants whom they claim deprive locals of jobs (Atabong 2020).

In this particular case, a feature of South African subimperialism is worth flagging. According to a Digital Forensic Research Lab study of the hashtags and Twitter account holders (Le Roux 2020), there was a key individual promoting the xenophobia through widespread trolling (especially “@ulerato_pillay”). Sifiso Jeffrey Gwala had served in the SANDF during its Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) peacekeeping mission that began in 2013. The area surrounding the DRC deployment included oil fields at Lake Albert and some of the world’s most valuable minerals in fields across northeastern DRC, where several notorious South Africans had

major stakes: Khulubuse Zuma, Tokyo Sexwale, Mark Willcox and Andrea Brown (Bond 2020b). There were, as a result, a great many DRC refugees – for many millions were killed in the resource wars the SANDF mission was meant to quell – who migrated to South Africa, especially KwaZulu-Natal province where Gwala lived.

This is the boomerang effect of South African subimperialism, just as with jingoistic Western imperialisms which create flows of Central American refugees into the United States, or Balkan, North African and Middle East refugees into Europe: the poison abroad that it generates returns home like chickens to roost, reaching deep into the grassroots psyche.

Notes

1. Ezekwisili was not alone. In Nigeria, South African cellphone company MTN (Mahlaka 2019) and major retailers Shoprite and Pep were the subject of protests, and in Lubumbashi, the South African consulate was attacked along with retail companies Mr Price and Chicken Inn. Other protests were recorded in Zambia and Malawi (Capron and O'Brien 2019). There was a strong rebuttal by South African politicians that Nigerians in particular were targets (Tau 2019). For a structural analysis of power relations and economic crisis conditions as factors in South African xenophobia, see Amisi et al. 2011.
2. From the private sector, WEF-Africa 2017 partner corporations accused of serious corruption include bankers from Barclays, Citi (which to its credit in 2017 paid the first fine – \$5.4 million – for manipulating the South African currency together with 16 other banks), Credit Suisse, HSBC, Investec, Morgan Stanley, Standard Bank, and Standard Chartered Bank. Other WEF-Africa financiers with dubious ethical reputations include the Development Bank of Southern Africa, Old Mutual and Swiss Reinsurance corporations. In the construction industry, WEF-Africa hosted firms accused of corruption including the Swiss-Swedish ABB and Nigeria's Dangote Group, joining controversial local mining houses African Rainbow Minerals and AngloGold Ashanti. WEF-Africa's partners in the business services, media and high tech fields also had records of alleged fraud: Accenture, Baker & McKenzie, Boston Consulting, Cisco, Ericsson, Ernst & Young, Google, Microsoft, McKinsey, MTN, Naspers, PwC and Toshiba. And others of WEF-Africa's multinational corporate sponsors which stand accused of bribing politicians across the world include Dow Chemical, Honeywell, Mitsubishi, Pfizer, Procter & Gamble, and Royal Philips (Bond 2017b).
3. By 2019, the dozen Compact countries (in addition to G20 member South Africa) were Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo and Tunisia. Although the member countries' FDI inflows shrunk in 2018, according to the Compact with Africa secretariat, 'from \$30.7 billion in 2018 down from \$54.4 billion in 2017 (the number of projects recorded remained about the same: 304 in 2018 and 303 the prior year)', this was due to very large once-off energy projects in Egypt and Ghana in 2017'.

According to the main IMF official for Africa, 'Compact countries have deepened their commitment to structural reforms that improve the business climate. In the past few years, nearly all the Compact countries have featured in the group of top ten reformers in the [International Finance Corporation] Doing Business survey results' (Selassie 2019). This was the pull factor, but he also acknowledged a push force behind capital:

The Compact would serve to contribute, albeit in a limited way, as an outlet for the increasing amounts of savings in advanced economies unable to secure any returns. In one corner of the global economy, we have a significant shortfall in demand. In another, there is much unmet investment demand and projects with incredibly high rates of return. To an extent, this has always been true.

But the juxtaposition, I don't think, has ever been this stark (Selassie 2019).

- 4 Raising such concerns about South African data quality with UNCTAD officials generally did not help, because, their economists argue, 'the Reserve Bank, unfortunately, report FDI data based on asset/liability basis rather than directional basis and this might create some confusion to the readers' (Sulstarova pers. comm. 2019).
5. The 17 major international banks involved were identified by Pretoria's Competition Commission and overseas police agencies, *not by South Africa's formal financial regulators*. As *Business Day* reported, 'Standard Chartered recently reached an agreement with the New York state department of financial services after admitting to manipulating currencies, including the rand, between 2007 and 2013,' paying a \$40 million fine (Phakathi 2019). The *laissez-faire* finance minister, Tito Mboweni, openly confirmed to Parliament in mid-2019 that Treasury had not investigated the matter, and he did 'not have any evidence that any bank has taken part in currency manipulation', even though in addition to Standard Chartered, Citi had also already admitted to doing so (Phakathi 2019). The excuse he gave for not investigating inadvertently included a confession that Treasury would not protect firms against bankers:

It is important for members to differentiate between the impact of any transaction on consumers and the impact on the value of the rand – the investigation before the Competition Commission appears to be related more to the conduct of bank traders towards clients, rather than providing evidence of their affecting the actual value of the rand (Phakathi 2019).

6. Exceptions do not contradict the general trend. First, Eswatini's extremely high manufacturing/GDP ratio (usually over 30 percent) reflects a half-century of tax breaks and dictatorial-monarchic rule that benefit a few major employers (especially Coca Cola, and clothing and textiles firms) nearly entirely in its Matsapha industrial estate, an island of production in a sea of peasant poverty. Second, the rise of an Ethiopian sweat-shop sector takes advantage of a massive reserve army of workers, repressive labour relations, tax breaks and Chinese-supported export-oriented rail infrastructure.

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Sociopolitical Representations in African Cinema: Paulin S. Vieyra, Djibril Diop Mambéty, Eddie Ugbomah and Ola Balogun in the Footsteps of Ousmane Sembène

Samba Diop*

Abstract

This article discusses the innovative ways in which African filmmakers Ousmane Sembène, Paulin S. Vieyra, Djibril Diop Mambéty Eddie Ugbomah and Ola Balogun offer sociological insights into, and cultural representations of, African contemporary postcolonial societies. These filmmakers are able to highlight the breadth and depth of the undercurrents of hopes and impediments in Africa. Their themes include social justice, slavery, alienation, the advent of Islam and Christianity (upsetting the traditional beliefs and cosmogony in the process), military rule, tradition and modernity, Pan-Africanist ideals, the importation and imposition of the Western political system into Africa, and loaded concepts such as democracy, just to name a few. Ugbomah underscores the many travails that obtain in postcolonial Nigeria, the most salient being the ruthless corruption in the natural resources sector, primarily crude oil. These filmmakers try to offer a solid foundation on which modern Africa can, firstly, midwife the revival of a genuine indigenous model of economic development. Secondly, these filmmakers, each in his own peculiar style, provide artistic tools which can continue to support the development of a socially conscious and intellectually robust cinematic tradition in Africa.

Keywords: Ousmane Sembène, Paulin S. Vieyra, Djibril Diop Mambéty; Eddie Ugbomah, Ola Balogun, African cinema, Nollywood

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Résumé

Cet article examine les manières novatrices par lesquelles les cinéastes africains Ousmane Sembène, Paulin S. Vieyra, Djibril Diop Mambéty Eddie Ogbomah et Ola Balogun offrent des perspectives sociologiques et des représentations culturelles des sociétés postcoloniales africaines contemporaines. Ces cinéastes sont capables de mettre en évidence l'ampleur et la profondeur des courants sous-jacents d'espoirs et d'obstacles en Afrique. Leurs thèmes sont la justice sociale, l'esclavage, l'aliénation, l'avènement de l'islam et du christianisme (bouleversant, ce faisant, les croyances traditionnelles et la cosmogonie), les régimes militaires, la tradition et la modernité, les idéaux panafricanistes, l'importation et l'imposition de systèmes politiques occidentaux en Afrique, et des concepts chargés comme la démocratie, pour n'en nommer que quelques-uns. Ogbomah pointe les nombreuses difficultés que connaît le Nigéria postcolonial, la plus importante étant l'impitoyable corruption dans le secteur des ressources naturelles, principalement celui du pétrole brut. Ces cinéastes tentent de proposer une base solide sur laquelle l'Afrique moderne pourrait, dans un premier temps, donner corps à la renaissance d'un véritable modèle indigène de développement économique. Deuxièmement, ces cinéastes, chacun dans son propre style, apportent des outils artistiques qui favoriseraient le développement d'une tradition cinématographique socialement consciente et intellectuellement robuste en Afrique.

Mots-clés : Ousmane Sembène, Paulin S. Vieyra, Djibril Diop Mambéty; Eddie Ogbomah, Ola Balogun, cinéma africain, Nollywood

Introduction

The purpose of the study of sociology is the understanding of how human action and consciousness both shape and are shaped by surrounding cultural and social structures. The social sciences reputedly analyse the activities of humans in society, but they do so macroscopically and in generalities.

In the mid-nineteenth-century, French literary scene, realism – inserting the real – was born out of a trendy opposition to romanticism and to the fantastic. While sociological research speaks in descriptive and quantitative generalities, sociology in the form of film offers a vivid and instantiated snapshot in time of what it describes through image, music, and dialogue.

Some films are revered for the periods that they describe, historically or sociologically. It is for this reason that the American film *Gone with the Wind* (1939) is ranked by viewers as the most viewed film of all time. The film offers a realist sociological description of antebellum life in the U. S. South during its era of the enslavement of Africans just before the American Civil War and the Post-Bellum period, but all in personal and lived terms.

The same could be said for the epochal film *Birth of a Nation* (1915) that, in sociological terms, was a watershed period in American history. These are examples of the old saying that a 'picture is worth a thousand words' – even in so-called advanced literate societies.

This article seeks to explore the link between sociology (a very recent modern discipline) and literature (an ancient form of artistic expression) as it is expressed in the work of five eminent African filmmakers. It begins by discussing the contribution of Africa's most distinguished filmmaker Ousmane Sembène. Having set the stage, the author goes on to examine the cinematographic works of Paulin S. Vierya, Djibril Diop Mambéty, Eddie Ugbomah and Ola Balogun.

The contribution of Ousmane Sembène in the 1950s, Ousmane Sembène went to live in Marseille where he was a dock worker. He joined the Leftist workers' unions and the French Communist Party and, at the same time, started writing novels. His next move was to travel to the former Soviet Union to study film at the Kiev Film Institute.

The films of Sembène, undoubtedly Africa's most distinguished cineaste, offer sociological insights into the malaise of corruption that has plagued Africa from the dawn of formal independence to contemporary times.

Consider, for example, his film *Xala* (1975). The central figure El Hadji Beye is a metaphor for the economic and political impotence of the newly independent nations of Africa. A celebration of newly acquired 'resources' – in the form of a third wife – quickly turns into disaster. Traditional modes of seeking solutions are totally futile and comical. The same use of film as an effective expression of a sociological concern is also evidenced in Sembène's *Black Girl* (1966). This film highlights and underscores the psychic pathologies that encompass the traumas of cultural dislocation, coupled with oppression – a metaphor for the unequal and subaltern position of Africa following its contact with Europe.

For a fuller understanding of Africa's subaltern position in post-Medieval times, no film as social science symbolises this condition better than *Ceddo* (1976). Here, Sembène shows how Africa has been subordinated spiritually and psychically to the twin impositions of Islam and Christianity. Africa has been robbed of its spiritual agency in the same way that it was robbed of its physical agency by slavery. Under the circumstances of this triple assault, Africa's indigenous religions have shown themselves to be wholly ineffective against the power of the written words of Islam and Christianity. The same could be said about the profundities of Sembène's other films such as *Emitaï* (1971) and *Mandabi* (1968). Sembène effectively established a model for other African cineastes to emulate and build on.

Comparing Paulin S. Vieyra and Djibril Diop Mambéty

The works of Paulin S. Vieyra and Djibril Diop Mambéty have many similarities, and are also very different. Vieyra can be considered an organic intellectual and a writer (in the traditional sense of the word), having attended formal graduate training in Paris and having written scholarly books. By contrast, Mambéty liked to quip that he had attended '*l'université de la rue*' (the university of the street). He was a bohemian type, an anti-conformist to the core, as well as being an adept of the Baudelaire school of thought and behaviour ('*le poète maudit*', 'the cursed poet'). However, he introduced innovation, imagination, and experimentation into African cinema, thereby presenting alternatives to the traditional linear modes of narration of that cinema tradition.

Both of these filmmakers experienced the era of cultural agitation, i.e., the drive of Africans to put an end to European colonialism in Africa through cultural means. But, as Buchsbaum (1988:42) says, 'during that period of cultural agitation, there was little film production whereas more attention was paid to literature and theatre'.

Paulin S. Vieyra

Vieyra was one of the founding fathers of African cinema along with Sembène; however, Vieyra is one of the least acclaimed. He made the film *Afrique-sur-Seine* with Mamadou Sarr in 1955. Born in 1925 in the French colonial territory of Dahomey (present-day Benin), Vieyra completed his training at the Institut des hautes études cinématographiques in Paris in the 1950s, and then went on to live in Senegal until his death in 1987.

What is noteworthy about Vieyra is that he was an eclectic man, combining the art of filmmaking with an intense intellectual life. Apart from his numerous fictional and documentary films, Vieyra is the author of the acclaimed books titled *Le cinéma et l'Afrique* (1969), *Le cinéma africain des origines à 1973* (1975), and *Sembène Ousmane cinéaste* (1972), all published by Présence Africaine in Paris. In his films and writings, Vieyra focuses on many themes, mixing culture, political protest, aesthetics, Marxist ideology, and art; African political unity and Pan-Africanism; political satire; postcolonial Africa and the disillusion caused by independence in various African countries in the 1960s; the lives of African students in France in the 1950s; traditional wrestling in Senegal; traditional healers and soothsayers; African history; and material about the African masses, including workers, peasants, fisherfolk, and crafters.

Vieyra is considered to have been a committed filmmaker and writer who, all his life, has fought for the total liberation of the African masses in his films and books, in particular the downtrodden, the underprivileged, and

the disenfranchised. According to Gandal (2007:3), 'we are used to thinking of the underclass as inhabiting a separate culture, a "culture of poverty"'. Vieyra posits the opposite because, for him, defending and fighting for the underclass is a worthy cause.

His film *En résidence surveillée* (1981, also known as *Under House Arrest*) is generally considered to be a socio-political statement that denounces the neo-colonial condition in Africa where many countries are supposedly free but, in reality, they are still dependent on former colonial powers such as France. It is important to note that this film was made during the heyday of the Cold War dominated by fierce East-West rivalry at a time when the majority of African countries belonged to the Non-Aligned Movement and were classified as 'Third World'. The plot is based on a fictional book by Zé Akoulo titled *Structures du pouvoir politique traditionnel* (structures of traditional political power).

Akoulo's book featured controversial themes such as the encounter between tradition and modernity, and the religious stratum that undergirds African society and which is composed of Islam, Christianity, and traditional religions. Vieyra uses Akoulo's book to discuss certain Western ideas that have been transplanted into Africa, such as democracy. He highlights the oddness of the concept of 'African democracy', because this suggests there is a specific type of democracy that prevails only in Africa. The alternative expression 'democracy in Africa' implies that democracy is a universal concept that has the potential to be applied almost anywhere.

By playing with the terms 'African democracy' and 'democracy in Africa', Vieyra wants to show the limitations of Western democracy in Africa. In the same breath, he seems to question African state structures themselves, chiefly, the concept of the nation-state. The paper *Concept postcolonial et idée de nation en Afrique francophone* (Diop 2017) discusses that concept and the fact that the idea of the nation was inherited from French colonialism and, thus, adopted by (imposed on?) the newly independent African countries in the 1960s. Taken together, the idea of the nation and the concept of the nation-state find their roots in French history, social movements, and culture, and therefore to very specific conditions. Needless to say, African countries have a different cultural and social trajectory. It is no wonder that amalgamating the ideas of the nation-state and democracy did not succeed.

Africans should go back to their past and retrieve structures which are relevant to their worldviews, cultures, and cosmology. This is the only way to respond to the challenges posed by modern Western structures which are imposed upon Africans. However, there is a rivalry between the two systems, namely the African traditional political structure, on the one hand, and the European modern democratic system, on the other. The problematic point

here, though, is the fact that there are palpable differences between African traditional modes of governance. There were feudal structures such as those found in the larger state complexes such as those of the Ghana Empire, Old Mali, Songhay, Abyssynia, the Sokoto Caliphate, and quasi-acephalous societies such as those of the Igbo and Somali.

Vieyra uses satire to parody the new African man. In attempting a synthesis between Africa and the West, the African puts more emphasis on form rather than on content, thus producing a malformed type of synthesis which, on the one hand, emphasises the folkloric and exterior aspects of tradition (e.g., garbs and costumes), and the difficulty of assimilating the social, economic, political, cultural, and intellectual codes of the West, on the other. In other words, when one borrows from others, one must take the best of what the Other has to offer and refuse the negative elements that come with the package.

En résidence surveillée highlights the dialectical nature of engagement with postcolonial society, a dialectic that translates itself into, first, searching for one's own way, and secondly, examining foreign values. In the film, both East and West are castigated and dismissed. The emphasis is put on Africanness as an identity marker. Akoulo, as an ardent advocate of a Third Way, seeks an original path that will midwife the rebirth of African society and culture. Was a Third Way possible at the time Vieyra made his film? It is important to place the film within its historical context, namely the 1980s at the height of the Cold War. Is a Third Way still possible in the age of globalisation? According to Hedetoft (2000:278), 'contemporary cinema is increasingly embedded in discourses of globalization'.

Djibril Diop Mambéty

Djibril Diop Mambéty was born in Dakar in 1945 and died in 1998 in the populous and impoverished neighbourhood of Colobane. Thus, he grew up in an urban context and in a colonial city considered at the time to be the Paris of Africa. His films include *Contras'city* (1968), *Badou Boy* (1970), *Touki Bouki* (1973), and *Hyènes* (1992). Mambéty was so concerned with singularity, specificity, innovation, and experimentation in his films that Spaas (2000:182) says that 'Mambéty had found a cinematic language hitherto unknown to African cinema. One that was indisputably his own'.

At a very young age, he started going to the movie houses to watch Italian 'spaghetti Westerns', as well as French films, and American cowboy films. It is fair to say that Mambéty discovered the modern art of film through Western and European cinema. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, I met and got to personally know Mambéty at a famous watering hole called Chez Samuel in the Plateau, the centre of downtown Dakar. He

narrated the following famous anecdote: as an adolescent, he watched a movie in which an actor is killed; however, the same character reappeared, alive and kicking, in the next movie! How was that possible? Of course, for a young adolescent African who had never left his country, it was difficult to imagine the diverse cinematic techniques which enabled a filmmaker to create magic and wonders.

The plot of *Le Franc* (1994) is pretty straightforward. Marigo, a poverty-stricken musician, buys a lottery ticket after his landlady confiscates his saxophone because he has not paid his rent. Marigo glues the ticket to his door, hoping to show the landlady that he will have money soon. It is a winning ticket, but Marigo cannot get the ticket off the door, so he has to remove the door and carry it for miles to claim his winnings. One of the main sub-themes of the film is Islam. At the beginning of the film, a subversive element is evident – a Muslim muezzin chants the call to prayer as Marigo plays his saxophone, pitting the sacred against the profane.

In his quest for social justice, Mambéty introduces a well-known figure in Senegalese urban lore called Yadikon, an African version of Robin Hood. Yadikon defends the poor against the rich, always siding with the weak against the strong, and fighting for the downtrodden. However, Yadikon does not appear as a character in the film, rather he appears as an image on a poster on Marigo's wall. Thus, Mambéty transfers Yadikon's positive traits onto the central character. Marigo is not a practising Muslim, he does not believe in *marabouts*, and he is in continual danger of being evicted by his landlady. *Le Franc* carries a message of dissent and affirms the individual. Marigo can be considered to be a critical person, someone who thinks and does not believe whatever he is told, in short, a doubting Thomas.

In *Le Franc*, Diop Mambéty adroitly brings out the transitory aspects of African urban life in which modernity has not yet firmly taken hold and traditional ways of life still survive. Marigo, with his careless and care-free demeanour, epitomises the confusing nature of the new African. The sting of Mambéty lies in the way he provides alternative modes of thought and behaviour which respond better to urban and modern life as well as to the current age. In the rural setting, social and economic inequities are less visible and there is a more or less homogenous communitarian lifestyle. People have similar farms, animals, farming tools, etc. However, in the city, it is a completely different story. The gap between poor and rich is so wide that a Robin Hood type such as Yadikon can emerge from the underworld and the underclass in order to hoist the flag of revolution, change, justice, and subversion.

Le Franc is about social justice, and this is apparent in the transformative and multi-layered qualities that are embedded in the main character. Marigo is the archetypal first-generation urban man born in the city, with parents from the countryside. The sense of roots and sentimental attachment to the village of origin are still strong for his parents, but not for Marigo. People who flee the wretched living conditions of the village find worse in the city where they tend to live in ghettos and shantytowns. In addition, these people are caught in a maelstrom of conflicting rural and urban values, to which one must add the religious dimension. All in all, the manifestation of the Western-type modernity in Africa is a complex web of contradictions.

Other issues that are highlighted in *Le Franc* are intimately tied to the concepts of economic and social development, the latter often being equated with modernity. Here he is referring to the Western-type, standardised universal modernity tied to the Western intellectual tradition and its arcane metaphysics.

Latouche (2000:6) argues that the concept of development is linked:

to a certain number of 'values' such as progress, universalism, the taming of nature, and the quantification of rationality. These values, and more specifically the concept of progress, do not correspond at all to deep universal aspirations. These values are linked to the history of the West, with little derived from other societies. Animist societies for instance do not believe in the taming of nature'.

Latouche seems to forget, however, that in the days of the Gauls, Vandals, Picts, and Goths, Europe was conservatively animist until the interventions of Greco-Roman culture and ideas.

Even though he was in search of universalism, Mambéty was a free-wheeling and free-spirited filmmaker who was also in search of a usable African pagan past. He had absolute love for artistic freedom and always sided with the poor, the underprivileged, and the marginalised. Mambéty had concern for human (not just African) drama; all of the above help to have a better reading and appreciation of his films (*Le Franc* in the current discussion). According to Brahimi (1997:87), Mambéty was known for 'his taste for paradox and his innovative character'.

In a premonitory fashion, Mambéty had shown, albeit in a subterranean way, that the CFA franc is not viable. Nowadays, there is a vigorous debate about that currency. The CFA franc is considered by many as a colonial currency created way back in the 1940s by France for its territories in West and Central Africa. Almost eighty years later, many people wonder why these supposedly free and independent African countries (Côte d'Ivoire,

Cameroon, Togo, Senegal, Gabon, Benin, Niger, Chad and others) are still using that currency. It is better that these countries aim for monetary sovereignty and cut this umbilical dependency with France. It is time, many argue, for these African countries to mature and be independent and sovereign.

Nigerian film

At this point, the discussion turns to cinema and the film industry in Nigeria to provide a comparison with Vieyra, Sembène and Mambéty.

Festac '77, also known as the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (the first Festac was held in Dakar in 1966), is a major landmark in the history of film in Nigeria. However, the advent of film in that country came at least a decade before that cultural event in 1977.

The late 1970s was the heyday of military rule in Nigeria. The ruling junta with its 'oil-jacked triumphalism' – an apt expression borrowed from Bloom and Poplak (2016) – captured Festac 1977 in order to showcase its grandeur and know-how; an event where almost all African countries were present as well as Blacks in the Diaspora, particularly the Americas, thus emphasising Pan-Africanist ideals and black solidarity. Films in the format of the time (16 mm celluloid) were shown at the festival.

Two Nigerian filmmakers dominated the celluloid cinema industry at that time – Eddie Ugbomah aka Chief Eddie, and Ola Balogun. The two have in common the fact that they wanted to provoke a socially conscious and intellectually robust cinematic tradition, just like some of their African Francophone counterparts had already done. A few themes both filmmakers treated include: the chronicle of Nigeria's postcolonial condition, military rule, corruption (in particular in the oil sector), and the recapturing by Africans of their historical perspective.

Eddie Ugbomah

Eddie Ugbomah returned to Nigeria after studying journalism, drama, and film in London in the 1960s and 1970s. His films address contemporary social and political issues.

One example is *The Mask* (1979), a harbinger of and precursor to the current movement to return the stolen African arts pieces and artefacts held in European museums and private collections. The narrative line of the film is about the looting of African arts by the European coloniser. In the film, the main protagonist Obi (played by Ugbomah) tries to break into the British Museum and steal a Benin kingdom ivory mask and return it to

Nigeria. His next film *Oil Doom* (1981) focuses on the curse that oil was to become for the country, with the title being a comment on the expression 'oil boom'.

Ola Balogun

Ola Balogun studied at the Institut des hautes études cinématographiques in Paris in the 1960s before returning to Nigeria in 1968. He produced a few documentary films and, just like Ugbomah, appealed a lot in his work to theatre. Balogun worked with Hubert Ogundé's theatre group. *Nollywood: Indigenous Culture, Intraculturality, and the Transplantation of American Popular Culture onto Postcolonial Nigerian Film and Screen* (Diop 2020) is a more detailed discussion of the links between drama and film in Nigeria.

The subject of one of Balogun's earliest films, *Amadi* (1975) is African tradition and culture and its safekeeping. Of particular interest is that the film was shot in Igbo, the first feature-length movie in that language. It is worth noting that Balogun had mastered Igbo even though he was a Yoruba man. He was born and grew up in Abba, eastern Nigeria, in the heart of Igbo country before moving to Lagos in his teen years. *Amadi* is the story of an Igbo man who leaves his village and went to the Lagos metropolis in search of economic opportunities and a better life. He does not succeed, and returns to his village to promote agriculture.

Cry Freedom (1981) is about a guerrilla uprising in a fictional African country; a film inspired by the novel *Carcase for Hounds* by the Kenyan writer Meja Mwangi (1974) who chronicles the Mau Mau liberation struggle against British colonisation and occupation in the 1950s. The film was successful among Nigerian intellectuals, but it did not appeal to a mass audience.

The elite aesthetic and the Nollywood aesthetic

Something that Ugbomah, Balogun, Sembène, Souleymane Cissé, Vieyra, Mambéty, Idrissa Ouedraogo, and a few other pioneering African filmmakers have in common is that they all attended film institutes (mostly in Europe) to learn about filmmaking.

These filmmakers aimed to make films which educate, encourage critique, and raise the awareness of the audience, i.e., the African masses who are mostly not literate in European languages. Of course, these films are also meant to entertain. The main reason that Sembène turned to filmmaking was that the masses could not read his novels in French, and it is important to note that most of his films are shot in Wolof.

There is a stark difference between the ethos embodied by the filmmakers discussed immediately above and the ethos of the Nollywood movie industry. Generally speaking, Nollywood filmmakers do not attend film schools; they are trained on the job. Their main aim is to make films which make people laugh and relax after a long day of hard work and drudgery.

Nollywood filmmakers deride the work of filmmakers who seek to make their audiences think and develop a critical mind as ‘embassy cinema’. Their main aim is to reflect ordinary society with its daily joys and sufferings, modest triumphs, and travails. They seek to chronicle daily life events and happenings and turn them into entertainment rather than a tool for raising awareness.

The celluloid film camp considers Nollywood productions to be soap operas bordering on trash, with weak production, artistic and aesthetic qualities. This has been compared to the Onitsha mass market literature of questionable aesthetic quality made famous in the book of the same name by Obiechina (1972). Bloom and Poplak (2016) discuss this topic in detail in the chapter entitled ‘Things Fall Together: Nollywood’s Simple Secret’.

Proponents of the Nollywood aesthetic maintain that, firstly, their productions are intended to be pure entertainment, and secondly, they are producing for their market – non-intellectual and non-Western-educated African populations which are majority of people in Africa. Western-educated intellectuals are a tiny minority.

It is beyond the scope of this article to try to resolve the debate between “elite” filmmakers and “popular” filmmakers.

Conclusion

Modernity is the main hallmark of Paulin S. Vieyra and Djibril Diop Mambéty. Both are also *engagé*, each in his own way. Vieyra poses trenchant political questions linked to the independence of Africa in an intellectual fashion. By contrast, Mambéty captures the moods, travails, dreams, and hopes of the urban masses in an artistic manner. Both have greatly contributed to the birth of a genuine African cinematic tradition in which Africa rediscovers and transforms its values and then opens up, with confidence, to a true universalism. In this regard, film production plays an important role for Africa’s future as a continent whose populations have been able to survive a punishing procrustean European colonialism. Survival is one thing, but revival needs a *telos* for progress on all fronts – in the forms of morality, technology, political expression, and an African humanity. Africa’s *cinéastes*, as social scientists, have an important role to play.

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Globalisation and Industrialisation in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC): Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract

Over thirty years after most countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) attained political independence, the region still has a high level of commodity dependence and a low level of industrialisation. This article uses secondary data sources to explore the effect of globalisation on industrialisation in SADC. It concludes that globalisation has been instrumental in creating an international division of labour that shaped SADC as a commodity producer and exporter and an importer of manufactured goods. Because globalisation has imposed an industrialisation model on SADC that is not consistent with inclusivity, equity, broad-based participation and social transformation, it has not succeeded in reducing poverty and inequality in the region. Globalisation has perpetuated this structure through a neoliberal international financial and trading architecture whose policies have, until recently, been accepted and implemented by many states in the region. Paradoxically, globalisation offers immense opportunities that SADC can harness to accelerate production of high value-added goods for domestic consumption, intra-African trade, and international markets. Through regional trade agreements (RTAs), bilateral and multilateral arrangements, and partnerships with emerging economies, SADC can facilitate the implementation of the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap, as well as national industrial policies and strategies.

Keywords: Globalisation, industrialisation, global shift, global value chains, accumulation

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Résumé

Plus de trente ans après l'accèsion à l'indépendance politique de la plupart des pays de la Communauté de développement de l'Afrique australe (SADC), la région est toujours grandement dépendante des matières premières de base et est en proie à un faible niveau d'industrialisation. Cet article utilise des données secondaires pour explorer l'effet de la mondialisation sur l'industrialisation dans la SADC. Il conclut que la mondialisation a joué un rôle déterminant dans la création d'une division internationale du travail qui a érigé la SADC en producteur/exportateur de matières premières et en importateur de produits manufacturés. Parce que la mondialisation a imposé à la SADC un modèle d'industrialisation incompatible avec l'inclusion, l'équité, une large participation et la transformation sociale, celle-ci n'a pas réussi à réduire la pauvreté et les inégalités dans la région. La mondialisation a perpétué cette structuration à travers une architecture financière et commerciale internationale néolibérale dont les politiques ont, jusqu'à récemment, été acceptées et mises en œuvre par de nombreux États de la région. Paradoxalement, la mondialisation offre d'immenses opportunités que la SADC pourrait exploiter pour accélérer la production de biens à haute valeur ajoutée pour la consommation intérieure, le commerce intra-africain et les marchés internationaux. Par le biais d'accords commerciaux régionaux (ACR), d'arrangements bilatéraux et multilatéraux et de partenariats avec les économies émergentes, la SADC peut faciliter la mise en œuvre de sa stratégie et de la feuille de route de l'industrialisation de la SADC, ainsi que des politiques et stratégies industrielles nationales.

Mots-clés : mondialisation, industrialisation, changement mondial, chaînes de valeur mondiales, accumulation

Introduction

Industrialisation has resurfaced as a priority development issue in Africa, particularly in view of Agenda 2063 (the African Union's long-term development vision for the continent), the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap 2015–2063 (SADC 2015).

Industrialisation is a high priority for SADC because the region has a low and declining manufacturing value added (MVA), as market liberalisation has led to deindustrialisation, while the region continues to be dependent on primary commodity exports. Volatile commodity prices increase the economic vulnerability of the SADC region, and any downturn has a disproportionate impact on public revenues and growth. While member countries previously benefited from the 'commodity super cycle' with the boom in prices of

commodities largely arising from a surge in demand from countries such as China, that phase has passed and, once again, the region is negatively affected by a downward spiral in commodity prices.

SADC itself acknowledges that ‘there are deep structural fault-lines in the economies of the SADC countries that remain entrenched, characterised by resource-dependence, low value-addition and low levels of exports of knowledge-intensive products’(SADC 2017:3). This is reflected in low levels of private sector investment in the manufacturing sector of the economy.

The main objective of this article is to assess how globalisation has affected industrialisation in the SADC region and to identify opportunities that it may offer. It adopts a qualitative research design which is based on an analysis of secondary data from a variety of sources. These include SADC statistics, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) data on inflows and outflows of foreign direct investment (FDI), United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) Competitive Industrial Performance (CIP) Reports, the World Bank Development Indicators (WBI), and a number of scholarly publications on globalisation and industrialisation.

Overview of the SADC Region

The Southern African Development Community was established under the SADC Treaty in 1992 (SADC 2012a). It aims to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development in the region. It seeks to achieve that goal by supporting the development of efficient productive systems, deeper cooperation and integration, good governance and durable peace and security (SADC 2012b). SADC is made up of 16 member states: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Eswatini (formerly known as Swaziland), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (SADC 2012c).

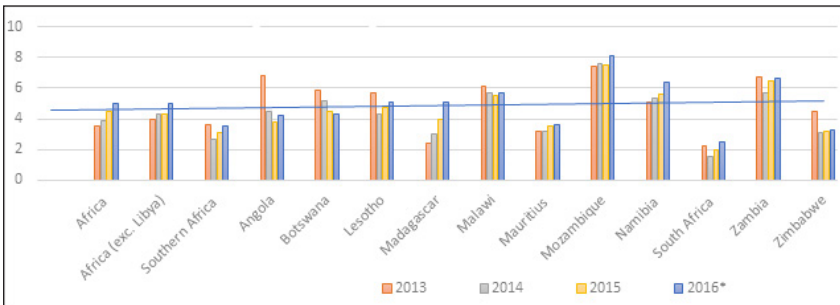


Figure 1: Growth trends in GDP (2013–2016)

Source: Author computation based on data from AfDB/ OECD/ UNDP 2015.

As indicated in Figure 1, several SADC countries grew by over 4 per cent in 2013 largely due to a commodity boom. Angola, Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi and Lesotho had growth rates of above 5 per cent as a result of a boom on commodity prices. While growth has declined for some of them as prices started to decline, SADC remains a region with potential for growth.

SADC economies are richly endowed with natural resources, for example, oil in Angola, diamonds and platinum in Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe; copper and cobalt in Zambia and the DRC; and natural gas and forests in Mozambique. Most of the region also has abundant land resources. The economies are also integrated into the global economy, though not on a large scale, except for countries like Mauritius and South Africa.

SADC economies are also participating in global value chains (GVCs), though on a small scale compared to Asian countries. The biggest challenge is that their integration into these chains is at the lower end (UNECA 2015:65). Furthermore, industry is not well developed, except in South Africa, Mauritius, Seychelles and Namibia.

Conceptual Framework and Review of Literature

Heike (1994:227) defines industrialisation as a process of economic and social transformation during which there is disproportionate growth in the industrial sector and, in favourable cases, a rationalisation of production processes in general.

There are different perspectives on the phenomenon of globalisation, and also on its potential impact on the industrialisation of a region. One of the perspectives is the neoliberal approach which is based on the notion of supremacy of markets. This perspective views globalisation merely as a phenomenon in which capital moves across the globe in search of new markets for expansion and in a quest for greater profits. It is a phenomenon which has existed since the beginning of mercantilist exploration from as far back as the eighth century. However, the scale of globalisation has greatly expanded over time, and its shape and forms have changed.

Dicken (1998) presents a comprehensive analysis of globalisation as an evolutionary, dynamic and complex process involving the movement of capital and investments across the globe and beyond national boundaries. He notes the different phases that globalisation has passed through, but focuses on contemporary globalisation which has a much larger scale than all previous forms of this phenomenon. A major characteristic of current globalisation, in his view, is what he calls a 'global shift'. He argues that the development of new technologies has resulting in 'shrinking time and space and that the scale and complexity of production and consumption has changed'. The shift is

characterised by 'a configuration and re-configuration of production chains across the globe'. Dicken analyses globalisation in terms of the dynamic interaction between states and transnational corporations and argues that:

through a complex and dynamic set of interactions, these constitute the primary generators of global economic transformation. Transnational corporations, through their geographically extensive operations and states, through their trade, foreign investment and industry policies, shape and reshape the global economic map (Dicken 1998:xiv).

Dicken's central thesis is that globalisation has resulted in the 'internationalization and globalisation of production of both manufactured goods and services'. This 'global shift' or a new 'geo-economy' has resulted in intense competition as multinational companies from the developed and emerging economies search for lower cost production centres. He also contends that the world economy is being 'buffeted' by 'extremely volatile forces' (Dicken 1998:1).

The 'global shift' of capital represents massive geographical shifts in the location of manufacturing and service activities, and these also transform employment. Countries in which multinational companies are 'shifting' offshore have experienced job losses, job cuts, factory closures and the receiving countries are said to have benefited from incoming capital flows through new factories opening up and job creation (Dicken 1998:1).

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2019) confirms these observations. It argues that firms generally aim to optimise the production process by locating their various production stages to a variety of production centres based on the notion of comparative advantage. The process results in a restructuring of production activities across countries.

Dicken acknowledges the downside of the globalisation phenomenon. One of the major challenges is the weakening of the power of states:

Nation states are no longer significant actors or meaningful economic units. Consumer tastes and cultures are homogenized and satisfied through provision of standardized global products created by global corporations with no allegiance to a place or community (Dicken 1998:3).

Dicken's analysis has its limitations. The analysis appears to treat the globalisation phenomenon as a 'neutral' and 'natural' force: capital merely seeking better opportunities around the globe. Critics point out however, that this 'global shift' in production networks is not necessarily benign. Globalisation can lead to serious challenges, for example, de-industrialisation, a process by which local industry may be forced to close

down in the face of competition from lower cost producers. Coucke (2007) explains how some multinational firms previously operating in Belgium have relocated to lower cost production centres. This was made possible through improvements in communication technologies which lowered the cost of governing and operating a multinational network around the globe.

Van der Lugt *et al.* (2011) dispel popular claims that foreign direct investment (FDI) flows in almost automatically in response to economic development. They point out that, in reality, Africa is not a key destination for global FDI. In essence, globalisation creates disparities between nations and regions and those that best meet the interests of the global corporations are more likely to benefit than those that do not.

Marxist perspectives are highly critical of the neoliberal perspective on globalisation. They offer a more radical view of globalisation as a reflection of the growing complexity of capitalist accumulation whose scale has grown as capitalism faces a variety of crises in the North. Samir Amin's works best represents one of the Marxist schools of thought in his critique of neoliberal and market-based analyses of globalisation. Amin argues that the global system is 'imperialist'; that:

it shares with other previous imperialist systems which always commanded the expansion of global capitalism, that it offers to the people of the periphery – the South... no chance to catch up and benefit, for better or for worse, the 'advantages' of the level of material consumption reserved for the majority of the people in the centres; it only produces, and reproduces, the deepening of the North-South gap (Amin n.d.:12).

In essence, this perspective sees no opportunity at all in the current form of globalisation. Amin argues that, unfortunately, 'the current success of emerging countries in terms of accelerated growth within globalized capitalism and with capitalist means reinforces the illusion that catching-up is possible' (Amin n.d.:12).

He is sceptical of any prospect for 'advancing within the system' (Amin n.d.: 13) because what he describes as 'the imploding' capitalist system is bound to collapse. Amin's posits a radical view in favour of self-determination. He advances the perspective that delinking promotes the reconstruction of a globalisation based on negotiation rather than submission to vested interests (Amin, n.d.:28–30).

Giddens' analysis (2000) is useful in terms of explaining the shifts in global production patterns. However, it seems to assume, albeit implicitly, that globalisation as a benign or neutral force that works to the benefit of both foreign firms and host countries, an assumption which does not hold. Amin's argument is more plausible because it is based on a historical analysis

of inequality between the centre and periphery, the unequal power relations that shape an international division of labour and the lived experiences of countries in the 'Global South'. It therefore provides a more objective and realistic conceptual framework for an analysis of the effect of globalisation on industrialisation in a given region. This article drew on his insights in determining possible channels through which globalisation can affect a region or country.

One of the mechanisms through which globalisation affected some SADC economies was the imposition of economic structural adjustment programmes (ESAPs) by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD – World Bank) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). According to Heike (1994:226), these programmes were designed for the purpose of 'liberalizing the economies of those African countries that were facing challenges of persistent balance of payments deficits and high and unsustainable external debts'. ESAPs were a package of macroeconomic and trade policies and they included market liberalisation of commodity, finance, labour, and trade markets.

Mlambo argues that ESAP had a negative impact on Zimbabwe. He observes that:

Under growing economic stress, the manufacturing sector struggled, leading to some companies either downsizing or closing down. Particularly hard hit was the textile industry, which found itself having to compete with cheaper imports at a time when the economic climate was not particularly conducive (Mlambo 2017:104–5).

Kanyenze's research on the impact of ESAP on the textile industry concludes that the programme resulted in a decline in the sector's contribution to manufacturing output from 11.3 per cent in 1985 to 7.9 per cent in 1995 (Kanyenze 2006). It also led to the closure of 87 companies in the sector by 1994.

Saunders (1996:8) concludes that 'whereas ESAP was meant to herald a new era of modernised, competitive, export-led industrialisation, the reality was that Zimbabwe's high-performing economy of the 1980s was severely damaged'. The city of Bulawayo, the second largest in Zimbabwe, used to be the industrial hub of the country for many years until the onset of ESAP.

A study by Mbira found that globalisation through ESAP policies led to the de-industrialisation of the manufacturing industry in that city (Mbira 2015).

Heike (1994:225) reports that ESAPs implemented in Zambia in the early 1990s led to a decline in production largely because of inefficiency in the industrial sector.

The Evidence: Globalisation and Industrialisation in the SADC Region

An extensive review of secondary data sources revealed that, in the main, globalisation has had a negative effect on industrialisation in the SADC region. Some of the channels of impact were through the global financial and economic crisis, the creation of an economic model based on a high level of commodity dependence, low and declining MVA, a sectoral and uneven pattern of FDI, and the nature of China's investment partnerships with African countries. Each of these channels of impact are discussed in turn.

The Global Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact

In a study on the impact of the global financial and economic crisis (2007–2008) on the automotive and textile and clothing industry in South Africa, Moyo (2013) showed how globalisation led to de-industrialisation in these sectors. These included a decline in capital expenditure by original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) by 25 per cent between 2008 and 2009; a fall in the total number of units of vehicles produced from 562,965 in 2008 to 373,923 in 2009; a decline in total vehicle sales from 533,387 (2008) to 395,222 in 2009; and a fall in the total number of vehicles exported, from 284,211 in 2008 to 174,947 units in 2009. Productivity per employee also fell from 18 to 13.2 over the 2008 to 2009 period as production fell. The net impact was that the contribution of the auto sector to gross domestic product (GDP) declined from 7.3 per cent in 2008 to 5.9 per cent in 2009, although it picked up in 2010. These statistics clearly indicate the negative impact of the crisis on South Africa's automotive sector.

High Levels of Commodity Dependence in the Region

As discussed in the literature review, dependency theorists like Amin have argued extensively about unequal power relations between the advanced/industrialised countries (the core) and those in the periphery (developing countries); and how, from the colonial era, this inequality led to an international division of labour where the periphery specialised in and exported primary commodities and imported manufactured goods, while the core specialised in the production of high-value goods.

All SADC countries experienced colonisation and their trajectory of development was shaped by the colonial powers: for example, the British in the case of Botswana, Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania; the Portuguese in the case of Angola and Mozambique; the French in the case of the DRC, Madagascar, Seychelles and to some extent, Mauritius; and the Dutch in

South Africa and Namibia. The interest of colonial powers was resource extraction for supply to the parent countries. A consequence of all this is that SADC, as is the case in much of Africa, has been dominated by commodity production and exports, a pattern of specialisation which has been widely criticised in the literature. Figure 2 shows how, decades after attaining political independence, SADC countries continue to be characterised by a high level of dependence on commodities. With the exceptions of Mauritius and South Africa, commodity dependence in the region ranged from 80 to 90 per cent, a very high level indeed.

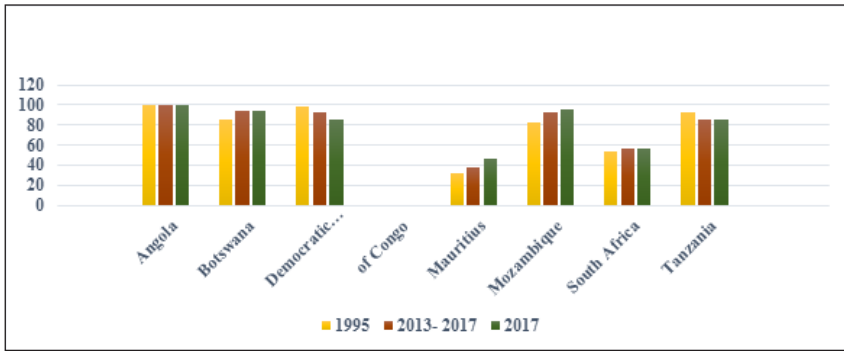


Figure 2: Southern Africa: Commodity exports (as a % share of total merchandise exports) in selected countries

Source: Author’s construction based on data from UNCTAD 2019

Manufacturing value added as a share of GDP is still small for most SADC countries. Except for Eswatini which had an MVA/GDP ratio of 32 per cent, the rest of the region shows, on average, 16 per cent or less (Figure 3). Eswatini and the DRC were the only countries where the ratio increased over the period.

According to Davies (2015), China’s huge demand for commodities such as oil, iron ore and copper to sustain its own resource-intensive economy has partly contributed to continued reliance on commodities in SADC and Africa generally. Although the region benefited from the commodity boom in prices during the periods 2002–2007 and 2009–2013 when GDP growth increased (the period popularly referred to as the commodity supercycle), this was unfortunately short-lived. The subsequent fall in prices and the contraction of growth in the region demonstrated the economic vulnerability of the region due to its excessive dependence on commodities.

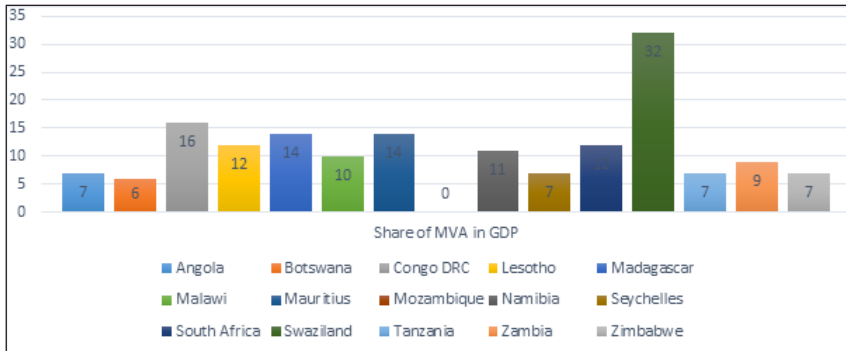


Figure 3: Share of MVA in GDP (per cent) in SADC countries 2015 (2010 constant prices in US\$)

Source: Author’s computation based on data from UNIDO, 2016.

Low and Declining Levels of MVA

Not only are relative shares of MVA low, they have also been in decline as indicated in Figure 4. Over the period 2000 and 2015, the manufacturing sector has declined in most SADC countries.

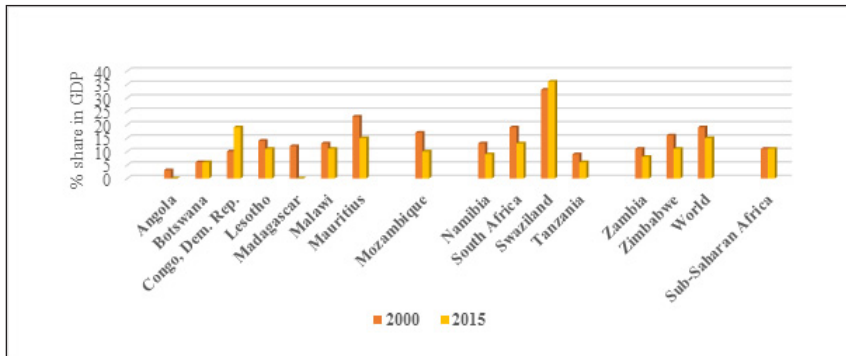


Figure 4: SADC Manufacturing Sector Share of GDP (%) 2000 and 2015

Source: Author’s own computation based on data from World Bank World Development Indicators.

This pattern denotes what is generally referred to as ‘de-industrialisation’. The underlying reasons include commodity price fluctuations, logistics challenges, and the increase in external competition as most of the economies liberalised their trade regimes. In countries like Zambia and Zimbabwe, ESAPs contributed to the decline of the sector. Table 1 presents MVA per capita for the period 2010 to 2017 to compare the picture in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with that of the rest of the world, and with also that of the least developed countries (LDCs).

Based on 2010 constant US\$, SSA had the lowest values between 2010 to 2017, ranging from US\$141 in 2010 to US\$159 in 2017. This is below the world average of US\$1,486 to US\$1,729 for the same period. A comparator region, Asia, was also much higher than SSA, with MVA per capita ranging from an average of US\$1,073 in 2010 to US\$1,463 in 2017. The performance of SSA however, was above that of LDCs which had a much lower value of US\$89 in 2010 and US\$120 in 2017. What these figures show is that the state of industrialisation in SSA generally is still low and, to a large extent, this is a reflection of the effects of globalisation from the colonial era to the present. Of course, this has been compounded by a multiplicity of internal factors such as the failure of countries to implement policies that could have broken the cycle of commodity dependence.

Table 1: Manufacturing Value Added (MVA) per capita for selected regions (2010 constant US dollars)

Region	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
World	1,486	1,532	1,549	1,581	1,607	1,653	1,680	1,729
Asia	1,073	1,129	1,185	1,236	1,292	1,346	1,400	1,463
Least Developed Countries	89	93	98	101	103	108	114	120
Africa	196	195	198	204	208	207	205	205
Sub-Saharan Africa	141	147	153	160	163	162	160	159

Source: UNSTATS 2018

Figure 5 shows the disparities in MVA per capita in across different sub-regions in Africa. But it should be noted that the figures are much lower than the world average and comparator regions like Asia as explained above.

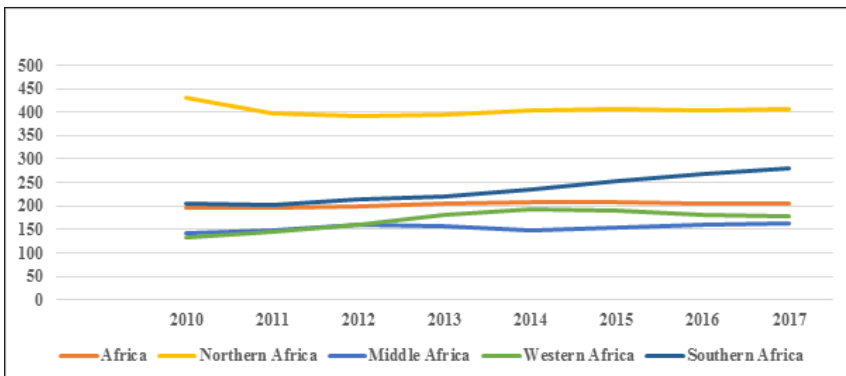


Figure 5: MVA per capita for sub-regions in Africa 2010-2017

Source: Author construction based on UNSTATS 2018.

Although performance has been declining, North Africa had the highest per capita MVA compared to other regions, followed by Southern Africa which has experienced some growth in MVA per capita since 2011. Both regions performed above the African average. Even though growth in MVA per capita has been lower in West Africa than North Africa and Southern Africa, the region has experienced a sharp growth over the period 2010 to 2014. However, this declined slightly for the period 2014 to 2017.

What is clear from the above is that, notwithstanding periods of growth in MVA per capita in all regions, generally, SSA and Southern Africa are among the least industrialised regions in the world.

The industrialisation model itself is problematic in that, first, it has tended to exclude or marginalise local participation (although there are signs of improvement as reflected by the growing role of small and medium-sized enterprises – SMEs – in the sector). Secondly, it consists largely of light manufacturing. The proportion of medium- to high-technology manufacturing is still low in Southern Africa. Thirdly, although an important strategy for industrialisation, integration of most SADC countries into GVCs has tended to be on the low-value end of the chain, thus limiting the gains to local economies. In South Africa, for example, while the automotive sector has contributed to GDP growth and job creation, most of the producers are foreign vehicle conglomerates, with limited participation by local firms.

A Sectoral and Uneven Pattern of FDI

The impact of globalisation can be seen in inflows and outflows of FDI, and also in terms of stock ownership. Data from the World Investment Report (UNCTAD 2018) indicate that FDI inflows to Africa are the lowest in the world, a reflection of the investor perceptions regarding the lack of competitiveness of the continent. Developed economies receive the bulk of FDI inflows and are also the major source of outflows to the globe. Only South Africa is among the top ten investor economies (by FDI stock). Zambia was the only country in 2018 to register an increase in FDI inflows (by 65 per cent), the actual value was US\$1.1 billion, and these were mainly investments in copper. Table 2 presents data on FDI inflows for selected years.

Table 2: FDI Inflows into SADC relative to other regions (Selected years between 2005-2017) (US\$ billions)

	2005	2008	2012	2015	2017
SADC	6.8	14	7.3	19	3.8
South Africa	6.6	9.2	4.6	1.7	1.3
Mozambique	0.1	0.6	5.6	3.9	2.3
United Republic of Tanzania	0.9	1.4	1.8	1.6	1.2
Asia	224	378.5	405.8	516	475.8
Developed economies	586.8	789.8	858.2	1,141	712.3
Europe	475.8	337	542	595	333.7
World	948.9	1,485	1,574	1,867	1,429

Source: UNCTAD 2017.

It is evident that inflows into the SADC region are a very small proportion of the global or world FDI inflows, and also in relation to Asia, developed economies and Europe. South Africa was the largest recipient of FDI inflows between 2005 to 2012 and initially constituted over 90 per cent of the SADC total. However, it also experienced a decline in 2017, as part of the global decline at that time.

Over the period 2007 to 2008, there was a rapid increase in FDI inflows into SADC from US\$8.9 billion to US\$14 billion during the global financial and economic crisis. A plausible explanation could be that capital was searching for more stable environments during the economic crisis in developed countries at that time. It is also interesting to note that South Africa was the largest recipient during this period, with inflows rising from US\$6.5 billion in 2007 to US\$9.2 billion in 2008. Angola was another large recipient, registering an increase from US\$893 million in 2007 to US\$1.7 billion in 2008. These developments suggest that a region can indeed benefit from globalisation. However, the volatility of the global economy means that these flows are also erratic, as is clearly evidenced by the subsequent outflows after the crisis.

Only a few countries within SADC benefited significantly from FDI inflows, showing that such investments can accentuate disparities and perpetuate uneven development. South Africa has a more advanced infrastructure compared to the rest of the region and that contributes to its attractiveness.

South Africa is one of the few countries in the region that has any significant investments in other SADC countries. For example, according to UNCTAD (2018), South Africa has increased its investments in countries like Lesotho and Namibia as part of its expansion of automotive industry value chains. Lesotho is manufacturing car seats, and Botswana is producing ignition wiring sets for automotive manufacturers in South Africa. South African retailers have opened shop in Namibia and a number of other SADC countries, for example, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania and Malawi. It would appear that South African FDI that is going directly into manufacturing is limited to members of the South African Customs Union (SACU), namely, Lesotho, Namibia and Botswana (but not Eswatini). Clearly the rest of SADC do not appear to be beneficiaries of value-adding activities from the FDI flows (UNCTAD 2018:68). Angola and Tanzania are said to have experienced a decline in FDI in 2018. In the case of Tanzania, the report explains that investors were cautious because of the policies of President John Mugarfuli's administration regarding renegotiating mining contracts. This goes to show the challenges that globalisation poses in terms of autonomy in making policy choices in the best interests of a country.

FDI flows into the region have created a model of industrialisation which has failed to bridge the inequality between foreign investors and multinational firms who have been the drivers of the industrialisation path, and local enterprises. Writing about the experience of eSwatini, Levin (1986) writes about the uneven development in the sugar production sector which was dominated by the Royal conglomerate Tibiyo Takangwane and foreign firms. He points out that the country's economy at the time was characterised by large manufacturing and agro-processing firms. While recognising the benefits to the country in terms of export earnings, he observed a wide disparity between the sector and rural development in the country. He points out that 'poverty and inequality are pervasive in the country, with poverty concentrated in rural areas where 80 per cent of the population lives' (Levin 1986:33).

Throughout SADC, industrialisation has tended to exclude local people from participation, and particularly rural populations. So, when SADC intensifies its efforts to industrialise, issues of equity and inclusiveness and broad-based participation have to be integrated into its policies and strategies.

Chinese Investment in African Countries

China is one of the SADC region's top trading partners. China is using state policies to support both large and SMEs to participate in global trade and investments (United States Department of State 2014). António and Ma

(2015) explain that the shift is from an aid and trade-oriented approach towards a resource-based investment approach. This is popularly referred to as the “going-out” (zuo-chu-qu) strategy (António and Ma 2015:83).

The demand for natural resources such as oil and minerals has been a motivating factor for China’s FDI into Southern Africa where, for example, the country has a heavy presence in oil-rich Angola, copper-rich Zambia and diamond-rich DRC. Edinger and Pistorius (2011) show that Africa’s exports to China are mainly commodities, mainly petroleum and metal products and that China’s top African trading partners have been mineral-endowed economies. They also show that by 2010 the top exporters to China included Angola (US\$22.8 billion in exports, dominated by oil). According to Åberg (2010:1), Angola is currently China’s biggest supplier of oil, exporting 688,000 barrels a day, surpassing both Saudi-Arabia and Iran. Data from UNCTAD (2018) shows that Angola is one of a few recipients of Chinese FDI in Africa, with the others being South Africa (US\$11.4 billion), Sudan (US\$6.7 billion), Libya (US\$4.5 billion), and the Republic of the Congo (US\$3.2 billion). These five countries accounted for 76.46 per cent of the continent’s exports to China in 2010 (Edinger and Pistorius 2011:502). These exports are mainly commodities, not manufactured goods.

Citing Chen et al (2008:42), Åberg states that, in the case of Angola, China’s strategy has been that of ‘oil-for-infrastructure’ strategy, or the ‘Angola mode’, a term which denotes oil-backed loans in which repayment for infrastructure development is made in natural resources. Angola has received US\$7.4 billion through these arrangements. The funds have been channelled into infrastructure development.

Edinger and Pistorius (2011:506) say that China’s investments in Botswana and South Africa were mainly in natural resource extraction. In Botswana, China invested in the Morupule B project, a US\$1.6 billion expansion of a coal-fired power station. In South Africa, the investments were: a platinum mining venture of the Wesizwe Platinum Frischgewaagd-Ledig deposit (US\$877 million consisting of a US\$227.5 million equity injection and US\$650 million through debt from China Development Bank-Jinchuan Group Co. together with the China-Africa Development Fund – CADF – which owns 51 per cent); a US\$435 million solar energy renewable energy farm investment; a US\$100 million investment in an automotive assembly plant; and itical of this pattern which Africa seems to be continuing with new investors:

Africa sells raw materials to China and China sells manufactured products to Africa. This is a dangerous equation that reproduces Africa’s old relationship with colonial powers. This equation is not sustainable for a number of reasons.

First, Africa needs to preserve its natural resources to use in the future for its own industrialization. Secondly, China's export strategy is contributing to the de-industrialization of some middle-income countries (quoted in António and Ma 2015:84).

Recently, China has been setting up special economic zones (SEZs) in Africa to attract firms involved in manufacturing (Brätigam and Xiayang 2011). Kim (2013) explains that these SEZs were part of the pledges of the Chinese government at the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) summit held in Beijing in November 2006. China has set up SEZs in Egypt, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Nigeria and Zambia. While there are SEZs in only two SADC countries, there are plans to expand the initiative.

The anchor investment for China's SEZ in Zambia was a US\$250 million copper smelter for local beneficiation, focusing on copper and cobalt processing. The purpose of setting up the zone was to guarantee copper supplies to China Nonferrous Metals Mining Group (CNMG). Although the master plan for the zone was designed to accommodate 50 to 60 companies, it is reported that as of May 2014, there were only four enterprises registered in the zone with an actual investment of US\$38.31 million (António and Ma, 2015:98). Most of the companies are subsidiaries of or companies affiliated with CNMG. Although this is an important initiative, the impact of this investment is small.

In Mauritius, the Chinese set up the Jinfei Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone in 2007 for manufacturing. The value of investments was estimated at US\$500 million in products processing, logistics and storage, business and trade, training and education, real estate, and tourism. The zone would house 40 Chinese businesses and create 5,000 jobs for locals and 8,000 for Chinese contractors. This was reputed to be the largest single FDI project in Mauritius.

These findings suggest FDI from China has had a limited impact on the industrialisation process in SADC as the investments have been quite small and they were partly channelled into resource extraction.

An empirical study by Edwards and Jenkins (2015) analysed the impact of Chinese trade on production and employment in South Africa in the period 1992 to 2010. Results showed a decline of manufacturing growth by between 5 to 8 per cent. Employment fell particularly in labour-intensive industries because of the increase in productivity that resulted from a rise in imports from China.

Zezeza (2014) highlights some of the challenges with China's investments in Africa. These include low wages paid to local workers, violations of labour rights and standards, and de-industrialisation as a result of influx of

cheap Chinese goods, particularly in smaller economies. However, he argues that China offers opportunities for the development of the continent. He recommends that African countries engage with China to influence the design of investment deals in line with the continent's development priorities. China's role in financing infrastructure and its support in terms of aid, concessional loans and technical assistance, among others, can contribute to the continent's development.

His argument is supported by Davies (2015) who argues that, in response to rising wages that have fuelled production costs, China is shifting its manufacturing sector from low-value toward higher-value output. There is a rising trend of offshoring its low-value labour-intensive manufacturing to developing countries including African economies. State-owned enterprises and private companies have been moving to Africa. This shift is likely to have a positive impact on SADC industry. SADC countries therefore should consider how best to position themselves to compete for those investments and particularly to negotiate for deals that advance their industrialisation agenda.

Conclusion and recommendations

The main objective of this article was to analyse how globalisation has affected industrialisation in the SADC region. It is clear that while globalisation presents certain opportunities, it has not advanced industrialisation in the region. This is reflected in the high level of commodity dependence, a problem that is a product of a historically determined international division of labour that has created Africa as a continent of commodity producers and one that is perpetually dependent on manufactured goods from industrialised countries. The article argues that globalisation has promoted a model of industrialisation that has integrated SADC into global value chains, one that has also tended to exclude the majority of the local populations of the region. Even though GVCs are an opportunity to industrialise, the main problem is that countries have participated at the lower value end of these chains and, for that reason, SADC countries will continue to derive less than optimal value for their natural resources.

SADC states participate in various regional trade agreements, for example, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and European Union economic partnership agreements (EPAs) which gives them duty-free access to the European market, larger markets, and opportunities to industrialise. However, the asymmetrical trading relationships that currently exist between the advanced and developing countries are well known. The situation is compounded by the many structural obstacles within Southern Africa which have prevented the region

from taking advantage of those opportunities (weak infrastructure, high costs of production, and brain drain which has created a shortage of skills on the continent, among others).

Although globalisation has opened up opportunities for SADC countries to access markets outside the continent, the multilateral trading system has failed to create a level playing field for developing regions. Much has been written about how protectionist policies of industrialised countries have constrained market access for developing countries while industrialised countries insist on restricting the use of industrial policies in developing countries and demand that developing countries liberalise their trade regimes.

SADC countries have other partnerships that they could strengthen to boost value addition and diversification. Every country is a member of at least one RTA. Some are members of European Union EPAs that grant them duty-free access to the European market. The few studies on the impact of EPAs on SADC suggest that, while the partnership has been welfare-enhancing, particularly because of the growth of agriculture and agro-processing sectors, the impact on manufacturing has been minimal (Keck and Piermartini, 2008). All SADC countries have also signed the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), a response to the marginalisation of the continent from global trade. The European Union-Africa Alliance is a platform for the continent, including SADC member states, to negotiate for mutually beneficial agreements that can also advance Africa's industrialisation agenda. As Ocampo (2010:14) argues, 'the solution lies in managing interdependence'.

They have also partnered with China and the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa). However, it was observed that while SADC has benefited in terms of infrastructure investments from China, this has been limited to a few resource-rich countries such as South Africa, Angola and Zambia. The investments are said to have targeted extraction of natural resources. SADC countries therefore need to continue to engage partners such as China, particularly in the context of the FOCAC, with a view to entering into agreements that can promote their industrialisation agenda.

It is quite clear from the foregoing that SADC has to drive its industrialisation agenda because while globalisation presents opportunities, there are inherent conflicting interests, such as for example, the interests of potential investors who may be seeking to gain access to the region's resources versus a country's preference for value addition. Actually, the SADC region has made significant progress in terms of developing policy and strategic frameworks. The challenge is their slow implementation. SADC has in place the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan

(RISDP) (SADC 2001) which commits member states to diversify their economies through industrial development and value addition. The SADC Protocol on Trade (SADC 1996) also integrates value addition as one of its key strategies. SADC has also developed the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap (SADC 2015) which has identified key areas, such as mineral beneficiation, agro-processing, pharmaceuticals, wood, basic metals as pillars for regional value chains (RVCs) and value addition.

At national level, SADC countries have also developed frameworks to guide the industrialisation process. For example, South Africa, one of the most industrialised in the region, has over the years implemented policies to support industry. The Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) 2018/19 –2020/21 is a comprehensive framework to foster the growth of industry in South Africa. It has identified key sectors for support and development and these include the automotive, clothing, textiles, leather and footwear, agro-processing, metal fabrication, rail transport, steel manufacturing, plastics and cosmetics, marine manufacturing, aerospace and defence and electro-technical sector (Republic of South Africa, Department of Trade and Industry, 2018).

Botswana also has elaborate policies and programmes to support value addition and diversification. The Botswana Diamond Hub is an example of what can be accomplished when the state works hand in hand with private investors. For years, the country exported raw diamonds. In partnership with De Beers, the government has succeeded in establishing a local diamond processing industry for cutting, polishing, and jewellery manufacture and marketing.

Clearly, the foundation to deepen industrial development in the SADC has been laid. Member states therefore need to intensify efforts to mobilise financial, technical and human resources and also harness what opportunities globalisation has to offer through South-South, South-North partnerships, for speedier implementation of these strategies. SADC countries need to harness the opportunities that are likely to be created as China's production pattern shifts from low-technology to medium to high-technology manufacturing. Ultimately, they need to strengthen their negotiating capacity as well as productive capacity to be able to attract investments from Chinese state-owned enterprises and private firms. They will need to re-think their model of engagement not only with China but with other investors, domestic or external, in order to advance an industrialisation agenda that is fundamentally transforms their economies in an equitable and inclusive way than has been the case with historical practice.

With the state, in partnership with business and other partners, at national and regional level driving the agenda, the region can indeed overcome the challenges of globalisation and transform the region into one of Africa's manufacturing hubs.

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Social Protection Policymaking in Kenya: Power and Resistance in a Globalised World

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Abstract

Policymaking is no longer exclusively a national affair. Due to globalisation, global agendas easily influence and permeate national plans through policy transfer, diffusion and learning. One such recent global agenda is social protection policies in the form of cash transfers. Studies examining the process of adoption and making of such policies portray a benign learning approach. However, these approaches represent an incomplete view of the dynamics that characterise the adoption of policies. Social protection policymaking arenas are sites of power and resistance which are mutually constituted and exhibited through various forms. Drawing from the nexus of policy transfer and power, this article investigates the forms of power and resistance in the social protection policymaking space by examining the Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OVC) and the Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) in Kenya. The findings indicate that, as international actors attempted to impose their agendas, political elites resisted in two ways: firstly, by suppressing the action of other actors, and secondly, by asserting alternatives in the policy process. The findings suggest that even in enduring asymmetrical social relations, 'subordinate' actors in policy development arenas find space to exercise power through resistance, and exhibit the capacity to influence processes.

Keywords: resistance, power, transnational actors, social protection, policymaking, politics, Kenya

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Résumé

L'élaboration de politiques n'est plus une affaire exclusivement nationale. En raison de la mondialisation, les agendas mondiaux influencent et imprègnent facilement les plans nationaux grâce au transfert, à la diffusion et à l'apprentissage de politiques. L'un de ces récents programmes mondiaux concerne les politiques de protection sociale dans la forme de transferts monétaires. Les études examinant le processus d'adoption et d'élaboration de telles politiques décrivent une approche d'apprentissage bénigne. Cependant, ces approches présentent une vision incomplète de la dynamique qui caractérise l'adoption de politiques. Les lieux d'élaboration des politiques de protection sociale sont des sites de pouvoir et de résistance qui se renforcent mutuellement et se manifestent sous diverses formes. S'appuyant sur le lien transfert de politique/pouvoir, cet article examine les formes de pouvoir et de résistance dans l'espace d'élaboration des politiques de protection sociale en examinant le transfert d'argent au profit d'orphelins et d'enfants vulnérables (CT-OVC) et le programme de protection sociale contre la faim (HSNP) au Kenya. Les résultats indiquent que, alors que les acteurs internationaux tentent d'imposer leurs agendas, les élites politiques résistent de deux manières : premièrement, en supprimant l'action des autres acteurs, et deuxièmement, en affirmant des alternatives dans le processus politique. Ces résultats suggèrent que même dans de persistantes relations sociales asymétriques, les acteurs « subordonnés » dans les lieux de développement de politiques continuent de trouver, par la résistance, un espace d'exercice de leur pouvoir, et ainsi démontrent leur capacité à influencer les processus.

Mots-clés : résistance, pouvoir, acteurs transnationaux, protection sociale, élaboration de politiques, politique, Kenya

Introduction

Policymaking is no longer exclusively a national affair. Due to globalisation, global agendas easily influence and permeate national plans through policy transfer, diffusion and policy learning. Moreover, countries actively borrow and seek to learn from outside their jurisdictions from frontrunners and adopt policies that have worked. In other instances, other actors and agencies, particularly those with great influence, may directly influence policymaking processes through voluntary or coercive mechanisms. While globalisation and its effects have mostly been evident in the financial and the economic sectors through such processes as trade and liberalisation, and movement of goods and people, social policymaking is increasingly becoming an arena of global focus and interest. International actors and bodies of epistemic communities are increasingly playing a major role in

social policymaking processes. Global and transnational actors have become involved in policymaking, including social protection and cash transfer policies. Couched as global social policies whose governance comprises international organisations like United Nations bodies, the Bretton Woods group, and European multilateral organisations (Gough 2013; Kaasch 2013), cash transfers and social protection are now considered to be the new frontier in the global search for solutions to poverty (Peck 2011).

Social protection is a component of social policy. Social policy is defined as ‘collective public efforts aimed at affecting and protecting the social wellbeing of people in a given territory’ (Adésínà 2009:38). Social policy plays a wide range of roles in development, ranging from poverty reduction and redistribution to enhancement of national cohesion and building solidarity (Aina 2004; Mkandawire 2004; Adésínà 2007). Social policy therefore comprises policies related to housing, health care, employment policies, income maintenance and social security. Cash transfers are part of social protection programmes which include financial payments made to older persons, persons with disability, or children deemed vulnerable, to enable individuals and household meet their basic needs and cope with social risks. International organisations have been in the forefront of promoting cash transfer as the new development paradigm in Africa, leading to a proliferation of such schemes across the continent.

Following vigorous promotion by international actors over the past two decades, almost all countries in Africa have some sort of cash transfer under implementation (World Bank 2018). Borrowed from Latin American countries like Mexico and Brazil, the current wave of cash transfer programmes was developed through home-grown responses to growing poverty and inequality. Coupled with labour reforms, cash transfers became tools for tackling social ills and attempts to improve welfare. The same concept, albeit without significant aspects like labour reforms, have been transferred to African countries through a top-down approach. International forces, working together with a growing body of epistemic communities made up of consultancies and academics, comprise the key drivers of the promotion and adoption process, both at global and national level.

Recent research on the study of social protection goes beyond the impact of the programmes and pays attention to the politics and processes of the adoption of such policies in developing countries. Explanatory variables to the adoption process vary from political settlement to ideational approaches with emphasis on national politics and social learning processes (Foli 2015; Chinyoka and Seekings 2016; Hickey and Bukenya 2016; Siachiwena 2016; Hickey and Seekings 2018). However, these approaches represent an incomplete view

of the dynamics that characterise the adoption of policies. Social protection policymaking arenas are sites of power and resistance which are mutually constituted and exhibited through various forms. Policymaking processes of global nature often involve asymmetrical social relations laden with power. In policymaking processes involving policy transfer, transfer agents are often the most powerful actors, deriving dominance from the knowledge they bring to the policy site. Transfer agents use other resources including finance as incentives to motivate policy uptake in resource-scarce countries.

Drawing from the nexus of policy transfer and power as the theoretical framework, this article discusses the forms of power and resistance within the social protection policymaking space. To do this, the article examines the process of transfer and adoption of social protection policies and programmes in Kenya as a case study. The study specifically focuses on two cash transfer programmes: the Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children, and the Hunger Safety Net Programme. The methodology comprises a qualitative research design based on in-depth interviews conducted in Kenya between January to August 2016, a review of relevant documents, and participant observation.

The next section discusses the theoretical perspective on which the article draws. The section which follows then provides a brief overview of social protection policies in Kenya. This is followed by an illustration and discussion on influences of globalisation on policymaking in Africa, and a discussion on resistance to coercion. The overall findings of the article are consolidated before the conclusion.

Policy Transfer and Power

The article draws from policy transfer as the theoretical framework. In their seminal work, Dolowitz and Marsh (2000:5) define policy transfer as the

... process by which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political system (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political system.

Policy transfer encompasses ideas of policy diffusion, lesson drawing and policy learning, with forms of transfer ranging from voluntary transfer to direct coercion (Evans 2009; Benson and Jordan 2011). Policy transfer is multi-sited and multi-actor, making the already dynamic social policymaking environment even more complex (Marsh and Sharman 2009). The transfer of social protection to Africa has opened the policymaking process to an array of actors, both domestic and international. Peck and Theodore (2020:170) describe the

policymaking environment as ‘associated with the anointment of favoured “models” ...entailing the enrolment of advocates and followers, the construction of pro-policy movements and the consolidation of norms and paradigms’.

In the process of transfer of a policy, there are borrowers and lenders; however, this relationship hardly changes (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000). The article adopts a policy transfer and power analysis as the theoretical approach. Following a review of existing literature on the subject under study, policy transfer alone was insufficient in explaining policy change, and therefore a power analysis approach was incorporated to bring about an empirically grounded analysis.

Different scholars conceptualise power differently. On one end of the spectrum, power is conceived as ‘domination over’ – a situation in which power is exercised through structures of authority arising out of economic strength and control (Dahl 1957; Weber 1986). Power is conceived as an imposition through which one’s actions cause the action of another. However, policy processes, even when they involve powerful players, are often devoid of such direct control. Yet there is still domination in policy transfer mechanisms. For example, in the 1980s and 1990s, governments in developing countries were compelled by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to adopt structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) to secure grants and loans (Mkandawire and Soludo 2002). The recent financial bailout of Greece suggests that international organisations continue to be high-handed in policymaking processes. In the context of Kenya’s uptake of social protection programmes, social relations between international and national actors were not egalitarian, and they were asymmetrical. International agents were able to strategically exercise control and dominance over the transfer process through the knowledge and resources they brought to the policy arena.

Social Protection in Kenya

Kenya is one of the early adopters of cash transfer schemes in Africa, having adopted four cash transfer schemes since 2003 through influence from donors, primarily the World Bank, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF). The four cash transfers are the Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OVC), the Older Persons Cash Transfer (OPCT), the Persons with Severe Disability Cash Transfer Programme (PWSD-CT) and the Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP). For coordination purposes, the four cash transfer schemes fall under one umbrella, the National Safety Net Programme (NSNP) to improve and enhance these interventions.

Set out as a coordination body, the NSNP aims to harmonise and bring coherence to the programmes to 'increase efficiency and effectiveness of the programmes under one common framework' (Government of Kenya 2016:iii). Except for the HSNP, whose transfer amount is indexed on drought-related indicators, the programmes each provide KES2,000 per month per household with payments made bi-monthly. The current reach of the programmes is estimated at 1.2 million households across the country.

The HSNP and the CT-OVC were initiated with financial support of DFID, UNICEF and the World Bank. The CT-OVC aims at providing financial support to households with orphaned children. The programme was initiated following the pandemic brought about by HIV and AIDS and aims to provide income support to enable the families to cope with the loss of breadwinners (Bosworth et al. 2016). Government of Kenya financing comprises the largest portion of the CT-CVC, with financing from international organisations now reserved for technical support. The HSNP is implemented in four counties: Mandera, Marsabit, Wajir and Turkana, and aims to provide income support to households the arid and semi-arid parts of the country to cushion individuals from hunger resulting from cyclic and perennial drought in the area (Government of Kenya 2012). Since the inception of the HSNP in 2012, DFID has been the primary financier, with government financing an increasing proportion of the cost over the years.

Policymaking in Africa in a Globalised World

Globalisation has enabled the easy movement of policies, values, principles and norms across regions and continents. Nation-states are no longer insulated from influence from other jurisdictions and policymaking sites are spaces of greater participation, interference and infusion of ideas by multiple actors and agencies.

Due to advances in travel and communication, policies, programmes and norms are able to move with speed and ease from country to another by travelling groups of international organisations, consultants and various epistemic communities (Peck 2011). Policies are therefore easily diffused into national programmes. Policymaking sites therefore inhere multiple interests and ideas with national and international actors seeking to advance their preferences by influencing others. Relationships between international and national actors continue to be asymmetrically inclined towards international organisations, since they possess the necessary material resources to advance their interests. Policymaking is an important aspect of sovereignty, but something which the state in Africa has had little control

of in the face of powerful international actors (Shivji 2009). Owing to a powerful international presence in policymaking, Africa has been left with little choice but to integrate into the globalised world.

The recent history of policymaking processes in Africa has shed light on the role of globalised forces in shaping national agendas. Studies on SAPs imposed by international agencies like the IMF and World Bank show policymaking processes as spaces of asymmetrical power relations. Through SAPs, governments were coerced into cost-cutting measures and adopting stringent financial constraints, particularly in the area of social spending (Adésinà 2014). These cutbacks in social spending resulted in a rollback of post-independence social policy gains with the adoption of user fees at points of service and the introduction of school fees.

The catastrophic failure of these measures prompted an outcry, and even the World Bank and the IMF reluctantly acknowledged the negative impacts of SAP austerity measures on the lives of ordinary citizens. Social safety nets were then recommended as measures to provide relief from the impact of SAPs. In promoting SAPs, international organisations perpetuated a discourse that African states and bureaucracies were corrupt, incapable and unable of learning; a discourse which endured in legitimising the need for globalised foreign advisors and consultants in national policymaking processes (Adésinà 2009).

Global policymaking process involves the adoption of internationally determined agendas and policies. Like other development models before it, social protection policies as global social policy models have always come from outside.

A major irony of Africa's development history is that the theories and models employed have largely come from outside the continent. No other region of the world has been so dominated by external idea and models (Mkandawire and Soludo 2001:vi).

Policies of this sort often fail to take cognisance of the African context and the specific national context, and may flop, or easily be abandoned after the funding runs out (Deacon and Stubbs 2013; Preece 2013). Moreover, at times, globalised policymaking processes exclude the participation of citizens, local community leaders and politicians, thus undermining national democracy. Such exclusion is sometimes deliberate or it may be the result of neglecting to include powerful veto actors like national politicians in the policymaking process until after the policies have been formulated or when budgetary allocations are needed to scale up programmes. While acknowledging that global social policy has been mainly shaped by scholars and practitioners in the North, Deacon and Stubbs 2013 dispute that has been based entirely on a top-down paternalistic model.

In those African countries that still depend on donor funding for the implementation of development programmes, foreign countries and donor agencies play a great role in policymaking. In those environments, international organisations define what development is, and the policy choices needed to get there. Emboldened by their increasing domination of policymaking, transnational organisations not only finance programmes, but increasingly act as implementers, excluding bureaucrats from direct programme implementation. This form of interference undermines national states' ownership of programmes as the process often professes to define countries' development agendas. A lack of ownership can be reflected in the poor quality of what is undertaken and delays in government implementation (Tambulasi 2013), which can be construed as forms of covert resistance.

The exercise of power in national and global policymaking spaces has been discussed elsewhere, especially when it involves asymmetrical relations (Abdulai 2019; Ouma and Adésinà 2019). Policy resistance on the other hand is not well theorised and explained. Even in spaces of coercion by powerful actors in the policymaking space, subordinate actors often have avenues through which to express their agency. In policymaking networks, actors who are able to resist the action of others often derive their power from their legitimacy in the policy process.

The three forms of resistance identified in literature are modification, rejection or outward refusal by actors (Prior and Barnes 2011). Politicians derive their power as veto players who have been elected as representatives of the people. Resistance may be expressed covertly or openly (Scott 1992). In the case of powerful actors like members of parliament (MPs) who vote for budget allocation toward programmes, their acts of resistance and agency is often open and clearly demonstrated, unlike those of the bureaucracy. Resistance can be shown by bureaucrats in covert and subtle ways, and may manifest in reluctance or slowness in the implementation of a policy (Tambulasi 2013).

Even within asymmetrical relations of policymaking, Africa and its national states have often exercised resistance to policies that have been imposed by others. Resistance is often a way in which societies seek to maintain their independence and identity. Julius Nyerere, one of Africa's leading nationalists is quoted by Shivji (2005) as follows:

Africa's history is not only one of slavery, exploitation and colonialism; it is also a story of struggle against these evil, and of battles won after many setbacks and much suffering (Nyerere in Adedeji 1993:xv)

It is clear that Africans have not blindly taken on solutions prescribed by others without resistance. African scholars were in the forefront of bringing criticisms to SAPs – (see Mkandawire and Soludo 2001). States and

bureaucracies also levelled criticisms of the imposition of SAPs. Other areas of resistance have included attempts to provide alternative frameworks, plans and programmes which take on a broader holistic approach to Africa's development and are sensitive to national and continental context like the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (Shivji 2009).

When pressure from globalised forces imposes change, sometimes it may seem that a policy has been adopted, but it may not necessarily be implemented, as was the case of health reforms in Malawi (Tambulasi 2015). International organisations view national resistance against social protection prescriptions as a lack of political will. Compliance with donor prescriptions is achieved through threats to withdraw funds, or actual withdrawal of funds (Hickey and Bukenya 2016).

Findings: Power and Political Resistance in Social Policymaking in Kenya

Due to conflicting interests, and as an attempt to push for cash transfer schemes, transfer agents sought to limit the influence of the political elite in the policymaking arena in Kenya. This exclusion and depoliticisation process and the ensuing resistance can be viewed in two phases: the agenda-setting phase at the beginning of the policy transfer process between 2004 to 2010, and the phase after 2010, when government provided an increased proportion of financing for the scheme.

Political Rejection and Agency as Resistance

Bache and Taylor (2003) suggest there is the possibility of a two-stage game in the policymaking arena. In the first phase, the process of policy transfer is a largely coercive expression of hegemony as recipients accept donor conditions in order to receive benefits. In the second phase, the process is more voluntaristic, as recipient nations can decide whether to accept, resist or subvert the conditions agreed to in the first phase. In the case of Kenya, the second phase also involved the modification of programmes and conditions to fit into the political economy.

The first phase involved selling the idea of cash transfers to the Government of Kenya, and the role of politicians was limited as international organisations sought to set the policy agenda. Meanwhile, other domestic actors, specifically bureaucrats from government ministries and civil society organisations, resisted the actions of international organisations.

Using their expertise, ideas and knowledge, international organisations had control over the policy space and enough leeway to leverage the idea of cash transfers as 'the solution'. Knowledge regarding the design and

implementation of cash transfers was limited to international agents. However, policy transfer agents' expertise and resources are not enough to bring about policy change, so they require the cooperation of the bureaucratic class and civil society organisations, and they are heavily reliant on such cooperation (Adésínà et al. 2020). As domestic actors had little knowledge of cash transfer programmes, international organisations deployed their expertise in the policymaking process with little resistance.

To keep the attention of politicians away from the policymaking process, international organisations often invoked the need to prevent political interference. This strategy is not new as international organisations often invoke neopatrimonialism to depoliticise policy processes, thereby legitimising their participation in what they consider to be a technical process (Mkandawire 2015). Policy transfer agents feared that politics and politicians would derail the policymaking process and believed it was therefore imperative to keep them out of the arena. This refrain was echoed by domestic actors, particularly government officials who formed the first points of contact with international organisations. Depoliticising the policy space also depoliticised the policy problem, rendering the policymaking process a technical rather than a political one.

Depoliticisation is an anti-statist mechanism which legitimises direct intervention by international organisations in policymaking but, as Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015) affirms, this takes away African peoples' control over policy. Politicians also stayed away from the programme because they had no knowledge of social protection. In addition, the programmes were small and, at this stage, donor funds comprised the major proportion of funding with minimal amounts from the government exchequer. This gave international organisations and a small group of government bureaucrats a lot of control over the programme

Following increased government funding after 2010, political interest in, and influence over, the programmes rose. In this second phase, politicians became interested in the policy process and in social protection in general. Furthermore, due to political activity, especially following the 2007 elections, each political party had included social protection in its manifestos (Wanyama and McCord 2017), thereby elevating social protection and cash transfers to a political agenda item.

Political agency increased as MPs progressively brought more questions related to welfare, social protection and, inadvertently, cash transfers for discussion in Parliament. In this way, political agency restructured power within the policy process as members of Parliament reclaimed a significant role in the policy process.

With increased political interest in the cash transfers schemes and drawing on their veto power, politicians overtly resisted attempts at imposition of a poverty targeting model for the HSNP. Donor agencies funding the HSNP – DFID, the World Bank and others – prescribed a poverty targeting model for selecting beneficiaries in the four counties. Previously, in the first phase of the programme (2007–2012), a mixed targeting method comprising proxy means testing, community-based targeting, and pension targeting had been employed. Attempts at adopting a poverty targeted model which would favour Turkana County, the poorest county in Kenya, were rejected by legislators.

MPs threatened to refuse to vote for increased funding to the programme in Parliament. Their argument was that the proposed method of selection, based on poverty levels only, would undermine national cohesion as it favoured one part of the country over others. International organisations construed this resistance as efforts by politicians to protect their political terrain. International organisations' insistence on poverty targeting points to the narrow vision of social policy that has been promoted by globalised actors. Poverty reduction is not the only purpose of social policy. A properly designed social policy instrument can play other roles, including promoting social cohesion and nation-building. Moreover, attempts at poverty targeting that may undermine social cohesion indicates how cash transfer are born out of neoliberal ideas that advance the notion of liberating individuals rather than promoting the broader social good.

The overt form of resistance that politicians displayed was only possible because they have veto power and are considered to be powerful actors in policymaking spaces. Facing this threat to defund their pet projects, international organisations re-evaluated the targeting model and a different agreement was reached. The new agreed formula provided an almost equal number of beneficiaries from the four counties.

In their resistance, politicians exploited the ideological competition among international organisations working on the promotion of social protection. While the World Bank was in the lead in promoting poverty-targeted cash transfers, other organisations, particularly DFID and UNICEF, based their advocacy on a rights discourse. Through their acts of resistance, politicians wanted to reconcile national interests, political interests and that of donors who were funding the programme. Unlike national bureaucrats, politicians can easily find space for resistance in asymmetrical relationships involving other powerful actors based on their political power. In addition, they easily adopt overt expressions of resistance as they derive their power from being elected representatives of people and are less dependent on international organisations for resources.

Asserting Alternatives in Political Spaces

In 2006, the Ministry of Social Development convened a multi-stakeholder consultative process for the development of the Kenya National Social Protection Policy with actors and agencies working on, and interested in, social protection. The multiplicity of actors, both international and domestic, complicated the policymaking process and slowed it down. Competing organisational interests and ideological differences played out openly in the design and development of the document. The political class was deliberately excluded, as mentioned above, and initially politicians lacked interest. However, as the proportion of programme funding from government increased, interest politicians became more interested. There was contestation between the Ministry of Social Development, supported by DFID, UNICEF and the World Bank, and the Ministry of Labour, supported by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Competition between the two ministries centred on the ownership of social protection. National leadership of social protection was domiciled at the Ministry of Social Development. Having signed the ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation (ILO 2012) in 2012 on behalf of the Government of Kenya, the Ministry of Labour claimed 'ownership and leadership' over social protection. Another area of contention was the perceived lack of clout of the Ministry of Social Development in undertaking what was considered to be an important national process.

Officials in the Ministry of Labour considered their ministry to be more powerful than Social Development, owing to its financial and institutional resources. In an interview, one participant expressed the view that the Ministry of Social Development could not extend its mandate and oversight role over a much more powerful ministry. The Ministry of Social Development resisted attempts at limiting its control over the social protection mandate.

Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA), a caucus of women MPs, broke the deadlock by sponsoring a private members' bill in Parliament in December 2012. The timing of this event, just before the dissolution of Parliament for general elections in 2013, ensured the Bill passed quickly through Parliament.

Other actors in the policy process, including bureaucrats, were not aware of the Bill until it had been passed by Parliament. The hurried process culminated in the Social Assistance Act of 2013. The Social Protection Policy was under discussion in Parliament at the same time. Though the Social Protection Policy was approved by Cabinet in the same year, the two

documents are not synchronised with regard to an institutional framework for implementing and managing the social protection programme. The Social Assistance Act provides for universal social welfare for all citizens, but certain actors say this is unachievable, and have proposed that the Act be repealed.

Politicians, especially MPs, found space within their mandate and in Parliament to participate in the policy process. In the first phase of the process, through excluding politicians and trying to depoliticise the policymaking space, bureaucrats and international organisations sought to reduce the influence of politicians. However as key agents of policymaking, the political elite resisted, based on their veto power. This finding resonates with sentiments by Tambulasi (2015) in Malawi where politicians were able to influence policymaking processes to a greater degree because they are veto players. Through sponsoring a private members' Bill to Parliament, MPs in Kenya restructured the power dynamics within the social relations of the policy space, thereby asserting their authority. Politicians expressed their agency by subverting the actions of others and, acting within their mandate, forced a reconsideration of the prescriptions and processes of others.

Conclusion

Policy resistance has not previously been discussed at length in relation to social protection, particularly in respect of cash transfers in Africa and in Kenya. This empirical account of events in Kenya demonstrates political resistance even in the face of powerful actors with control over knowledge and financial resources. Within this set of social relations, MPs exercised their agency and showed resistance to policy prescriptions by other agents. Their resistance and agency rested on rational political and national interests.

Resistance can often arise as the 'actions of individuals are shaped by the encounters between agent and of reflections on those relations in context of various structural factors that bear upon the policy situation' (Prior and Barnes 2011:275). As is demonstrated in this article, even in top-down policy arenas, there is a need for a negotiated perspective where policy is mediated, contested, negotiated and modified during its formulation (Prior and Barnes 2011; Kaasch 2013). Resistance by politicians were not acts of emancipation (Prior and Barnes 2011) but reactions, practices, strategies and everyday routines of policy formulation processes.

In light of the above discussion, there is a need to study and understand the nature and intensity of domestic resistance to globalised policymaking. Globalisation processes in policymaking are facilitated and mediated by

hegemonising, universalising and homogenising intellection institutions and forms of knowledge (Jinadu 2010). As international organisations continue to dominate the discourse on development, there is little room for the theorising and imagination of Africa's development (Mafeje 1992). Globalised policymaking spaces continue to perpetuate a relationship in which northern constructions of the South continue to promote colonisers' viewpoints and claims of the North working on behalf of southern populations to benefit them (Preece 2013). Moreover, it is a relationship that indicates how only certain people are vested with the authority to know (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015). As Fanon (2005) argued, remedies often recommended by international organisations like the World Bank and IMF still have the feel of colonialism.

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The Journey of Wamba dia Wamba and the Struggles for Emancipatory Politics in Africa

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Abstract

This tribute centralises Ernest Wamba dia Wamba's commitment to committed scholarship, including his contributions to the challenges faced in the quest for popular democracy in Africa, in the emancipatory project. Tracing his journey from the village community with the remnants of the palaver and *mbongi* through the Dar es Salaam School, this homage highlights his contribution to the understanding of African philosophy. His immersion in the experiences of the Sovereign National Conference and his foray into the multi-sided struggles for a new mode of politics distinguished Wamba from intellectuals who pontificated about the struggles against militarism from the safety of seminar rooms. This celebration of his life echoes his call for the importance of re-dynamising African cultures in the process of restoring the humanity of Africans.

Keywords: Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, emancipatory politics, Dar es Salaam School of History, African philosophy, committed scholarship, CODESRIA, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Résumé

Cet hommage essentialise l'engagement d'Ernest Wamba dia Wamba en faveur de la recherche engagée, dans ses contributions aux défis rencontrés dans la quête de démocratie populaire en Afrique, dans le projet d'émancipation. Retraçant son parcours depuis la communauté villageoise avec ses vestiges de palabre et de *mbongi* à l'école de Dar es Salaam, cet hommage met en évidence sa contribution à la compréhension de la philosophie africaine. Son immersion dans les expériences de la Conférence nationale souveraine et son incursion dans les luttes multidimensionnelles pour un nouveau modèle de

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politique distinguent Wamba des intellectuels qui pontifiaient sur les luttes contre le militarisme dans la sécurité des salles de séminaires. Cette célébration de sa vie fait écho à son appel à la redynamisation des cultures africaines dans le processus de restauration de l'humanité des africains.

Mots-clés : Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, politique émancipatrice, École d'histoire de Dar es Salaam, philosophie africaine, bourse engagée, CODESRIA, République démocratique du Congo

By way of introduction

Ernest Bazunini Wamba dia Wamba, philosopher, teacher, and activist for peace and social justice, walked this earth in the period 1942–2020. While on this journey, his life encountered the rich and layered spirits of the Congolese people, the genocidal legacies and traditions of colonialism, Mobutuism, racial capitalism in the USA, the ravages of neo-colonial plunder, along with the music and songs of freedom. While studying in the USA he communed with brothers and sisters in the country and married into the USA branch of the struggles of the global African family. His journey also took him into the ranks of the robust scholarly community of the Dar es Salaam School, which he enriched by deepening the understanding of African philosophy. Persecuted by the Zairean state, a Free Wamba Campaign provided the context for the unification of some of the political tendencies at the University of Dar es Salaam. Through the History Department seminars and the Philosophy Club, Wamba held forth to those who opposed the neo-liberal onslaught on the University. Activism with social movements brought him to the centre of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) in Dakar, where he became one of its illustrious presidents. After the sequences of genocidal violence in East and Central Africa, culminating in the 1994 Rwanda pogroms, Wamba worked full-time on the questions of popular democracy in Africa and the elements of emancipatory politics.

Following the Walter Rodney dictum that the committed scholar must get his or her feet wet in the struggles of the people, Wamba was immersed in the struggles for a new mode of politics in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In this tribute we will trace his journey from the colonial Belgian Congo through his new intellectual home at the University of Dar es Salaam to his clarification of the tasks of the progressive African intellectual. From books, papers, interviews, and lectures, we were exposed to Wamba's ideas on emancipatory politics and the importance of the spiritual well-being of the human being. In his quest to unearth African

democratic forms before they were distorted by colonial institutions, he exposed African scholars to the important tradition of the palaver and the centrality of institutions such as the *mbongi* in collective self-rule. Surrounded intellectually by philosophers who were trained in Catholic seminaries and who were wedded to monotheism, Wamba was clear that his audience was not bounded by narrow conceptions of human possibilities. This article proposes that the body of Wamba's work provides a rich library from which one can further develop the tools for the liberation and unification of the peoples of Africa.

Starting the Journey in the Womb of the Congo

When Ernest Bazunini Wamba dia Wamba came to this earth on 16 April 1942, through the issue of Enoc Ngila Bibuasa Wamba and Judith Luezi lua Nzeka, the people of the Congo were dominated by a special type of colonialism that had been initiated under the rule of King Leopold II of Belgium. It was a particularly gruesome and genocidal colonial rule in which 10 million people lost their lives in short order. Catholic missionaries provided the ideological cover of 'civilising' Africans, while the Force Publique carried out the day-to-day repression. In the village where Wamba originated from, it was the Swedish Protestant missionaries who offered formal religious teaching to the peoples of his community. Protestant missionaries offered a gentler form of domination, but one that was nevertheless integrated into the colonial exploitation of the peoples of the Congo.

African resistance to colonialism took numerous forms, but at the time Wamba was born, strikes, armed resistance, and other forms of protests were linked to the opposition to European cultural and religious ideas. The most distinctive anti-colonial force at the time was the religious political movement that was called Kimbanguism, named after Simon Kimbangu, who had fashioned a gospel of anti-colonialism that fused African ideas of spirituality with western Christian beliefs. In the book *Kinship: A Family's Journey in Africa and America*, written by his son Phillippe Wamba (Wamba 1999), we are introduced to the environment and family members who influenced Wamba in his youth, an environment where the 'spiritual and physical realms overlapped'. As Phillippe Wamba explained, 'I learned that the balance between African and Christian beliefs was an important theme of his childhood'. The most important takeaway from reading about his relatives was that though he went to a mission school and his father was a Protestant leader, Wamba spent time to learn the important links between

humans and nature and the traditions of his clan. This book, *Kinship*, introduces the reader to elders who cherished the traditions that afforded the living to remain in communion with their ancestors. Wamba in his later years revelled in the knowledge that he gained with respect to totemage and the era when Africans could move around on continent before the colonial borders of Berlinist states sought to imprison African peoples. In one conversation with this author in 1995, Wamba regaled how one from the Leopard totem could travel throughout the sub-region of Africa and find solace and support from fellow totem holders, regardless of ethnicity.

Wamba attended primary school at Sundi-Lutete and completed formal secondary school in Kimpese, both at Protestant mission schools. His village education provided the foundation for Wamba to escape the alienation of being an *évolué*.¹ This village education enabled Wamba to grasp the reality that the University of Lovanium (Léopoldville/ Kinshasa) had been established by the Belgians to groom alienated *évolués*. After graduating from high school, he spent a short time at the University of Lovanium before receiving, in 1964, a scholarship from the African American Institute. In 1964, when Wamba travelled to the USA, the West under the leadership of Lyndon Johnson and Operation Dragon Rouge were bombing the peoples of the Congo and employing mercenaries to crush the second independence movement. After intense study of English, Wamba enrolled at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan. In that period no section of the US society could escape the ferment of Black liberation. He became immersed in the Black Action Movement (BAM) in the university. During the struggle he met another student activist, Cornelia Elaine Brown. Their relationship blossomed to the point of marriage and having children.

Fredy Perlman was one of Wamba dia Wamba's early teachers at Western Michigan University. Perlman introduced Wamba to historical materialism and Marx's Theory of Value. Wamba dia Wamba and Elaine Wamba developed a lifelong relationship with Perlman and his spouse Lorraine Nybakken. The Black uprisings of Detroit in the summer of 1967 and the May 1968 struggles in Europe were two seminal moments that exposed Wamba to the history of rebellion and political struggle. After Perlman left the University and went to Detroit to set up a left-wing press, Wamba was introduced to the left politics of the Student Democratic Society (SDS) through Perlman and to the vibrant liberation struggles in Detroit via Elaine's family.

After graduation in 1968, he returned to the Congo and worked, from 1968 to 1971, as an advisor and then as director of cabinet for Minister of Social Affairs, Labour and Housing Sophie Lihau Kanza. During this

time, Wamba had a close-up view of the impact of the destructive political culture that was built around the leader Mobutu Sese Seko. To escape being drawn into the inner sanctum of the regime, Wamba refused promotion in the system and returned to the USA in 1971 to pursue graduate work at the Claremont Graduate School in California. Afterwards he taught at Brandeis University, Harvard, and Boston College. After Wamba had concluded his studies, the Zairean government pressured Wamba to return to Kinshasa under the terms of his scholarship and visa which required him to return home. The University of Dar es Salaam rescued Wamba from the Mobutu regime by giving him a job and provided the family an alternative to Zaire.

Wamba and the Dar es Salaam School

The Tanzanian leg of his earthly journey was one of the longest in his life, and after more than twenty-eight years of working at the University of Dar es Salaam, he retired in Tanzania. When Wamba arrived in Tanzania in 1980, he encountered an intellectual culture that had been enriched by the Arusha Declaration of 1967 and the fact that the liberation movements of Africa (Organisation of African Unity Liberation Committee) had their base in Tanzania. Karim Hirji and Mahmood Mamdani were two colleagues who very early embraced the arrival of Wamba to the University of Dar es Salaam. Hirji was not trained as a historian but today his recollections on the radicalism at that time has placed him in the ranks of the historians of that important historical conjuncture. His archive is very important to this period and some of that archival work has already been produced in the book, *Cheche: Reminiscences of a Radical Magazine* (Hirji 2018). The History Department had become one of the central pillars of the University and its publications and activism had fashioned what was to become the Dar es Salaam School of History. Initially, the Department had been dominated by nationalist historiography, but the ferment of the wider society affected its curriculum and outreach. By the time of Wamba's arrival the two important books that came out of the Department were *A History of Tanzania* edited by I. N. Kimambo and A. J. Temu (1969), and *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* by Walter Rodney (1972). The Department supported two journals that became the anchor of the Historical Association of Tanzania (HAT). Several books were written under the auspices of this association and its strength was linked to the teachers of history in secondary schools across Tanzania. The History Department and the School of Law were the two most prolific sections of the Dar es Salaam School.

The senior colleagues of the Department of History who Wamba encountered on this leg of his journey were established scholars who had been labouring for some time and did not share a common starting point in the writing of history. By 1980, Fred J. Kaijage, Isaria Kimambo, Bonaventure Swai, and Abdul Sheriff were internationally well-known as African historians. The junior scholars were Joseph Mbwiliza, Kapepwa Tambila, Nestor Luanda, Josiah Mlahagwa and G. T. Mshambi. There had been a raging debate on 'proletarian history' within the University and Wamba could not escape this debate on the place of historical materialism in the context of an African university. The centrality of the resistance of the African peoples had been chronicled by Professor Gilbert Gwassa, who had undertaken painstaking work on the Maji Maji rebellions in Tanzania and had steered the Maji Maji Research Project. Gwassa had been a real force at that time but, by the time Wamba arrived on the campus, Gwassa had been redeployed to the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). Hence, he was not a regular member of the Department but still active in the history seminars. In that period, the History Department of the University of Dar es Salaam came closest to the Wamba understanding of being an intellectual environment dedicated to cultivating 'a culture of awarding outstanding historians for the purpose of promoting creativity, commitment, and devotion to the discipline'.

By the time Wamba joined this distinguished community in January 1980, the debates on imperialism and nationalism had created cleavages within the Left in Dar es Salaam. The disputations on 'Imperialism and the National Democratic Revolution' had polarised the progressive forces while those who believed in advancing 'proletarian history' took to international platforms to distinguish themselves from what they deemed to be 'nationalist historiography'. One of the more egregious publications of this period was an assault on the scholarship of Walter Rodney that came in the publication, *Utafiti*. The review by one of the junior scholars of the History Department, G. T. Mshambi was entitled, 'The Mystification of African History: A Review of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*' (Mshambi 1977).

Mshambi's view did not reflect the real approach of Walter Rodney's work, something which was very evident in the collaborative research and writing he had undertaken with Kapwepa Tambila and Laurent Sago on 'Migrant Labour in Tanzania During the Colonial Period: Case Studies of Recruitment and Conditions of Labour in the Sisal Industry' (Rodney 1983). For Walter Rodney, the question of the history of the working peoples of Africa was central to his concerns in the recovery of African history. Walter Rodney had met Wamba dia Wamba in Waltham, Massachusetts in 1975,

but the meeting with Wamba in his old office in May 1980 had a very different focus. The debates on history were not the most urgent question. Rodney passed to Wamba the necessity for the committed intellectual to enter the fray of the struggle against imperialism, beyond the seminar room and academic journals.

In entering this maze of disputations, Wamba engaged the residue of the discussion via the seminar series of the History Department. Some of his early forays into this terrain were in papers such as 'Brief Theoretical Comments on the Quest for Materialist History: Concerning the Article "The Object of History"' (Wamba dia Wamba 1980) and 'African History and the Teaching of History in the University of Dar es Salaam' (Wamba dia Wamba 1993a). The 1980 seminar paper expressed his reservation because he did not see how a 'proletarian history' of Africa could be produced outside of an organised proletarian movement. He argued that evidence showed that hardly any of the practising historians of Africa were organically linked with a proletarian movement. For an elaboration of the context, see "Three Decades of Production of Historical Knowledge at Dar es Salaam" (Kimambo 1993).

This climate of scholarly debate within the confines of the University were soon shattered by the arrest of Wamba when he visited the DRC, then called Zaire, in December 1981.

Free Wamba Campaign – Zairean Detainee

Wamba was arrested in Kinshasa in December 1981; his crime was possessing historical notes on Mobutuism. Wamba had gone from Tanzania to the US and then to the Republic of the Congo that December with the plan for his family to join him for Christmas in the Congo. He was accused of possessing subversive documents and detained on 18 December when he landed at Kinshasa's Ngobila Beach after arriving by boat from Brazzaville. The Security services seized a text he had written on 'The Authenticity of Neo-colonialism: Ideology and Class Struggle in the Congo-Kinshasa'. As a Congolese intellectual in correspondence with other intellectuals in exile, the secret police of Mobutu had been keeping tabs on Wamba and arrested him even before he could get to his family in Zaire. His own immediate family learned of the arrest when they reached Kinshasa on 20 December. It was then that a massive international campaign was unleashed to free Wamba. The three forces that came together were organised within the international human rights community and spearheaded by Elaine Wamba, the colleagues of the University of Dar es Salaam under the leadership

of the University of Dar es Salaam Academic Staff Assembly (UDASA), and progressive academics internationally, especially the Association of Concerned Africa Scholars in the USA.

This campaign was effective in saving Wamba's life. A month later, he was released from detention but kept under city arrest in Kinshasa for another nine months, having to report to the government security office regularly. The Free Wamba Campaign had galvanised the newly formed staff assembly of the University. Abdul Sheriff, the Secretary of UDASA anchored the painstaking and dogged work to bring all of the different intellectual and ideological forces of the University of Dar es Salaam together to pressure the Tanzanian state to save Wamba and then to have him returned to Tanzania. This combined pressure from the family and from the University, which contacted President Julius Nyerere, who personally intervened by asking Mobutu Sese Seko to allow Wamba to return to his teaching job.

Wamba returned to Tanzania by the end of 1982 and again immersed himself in the academic life of the University, writing often for the bulletin of UDASA and organising the Philosophy Club. This club held occasional seminars and called for the establishment of a Philosophy Department at the University of Dar es Salaam. Wamba's brand of committed scholarship deepened in this environment where the University came under cost-sharing pressures from the Bretton Woods institutions. By the end of the decade of the 1980s, Wamba worked vigorously with UDASA colleagues to draft the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academics. UDASA members were also involved in later drafting the CODESRIA-led Kampala Declaration on Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility (Kampala Declaration). This Africa-wide statement had a lot in common with the Dar es Salaam document, and laid emphasis on regarding academic freedom and institutional autonomy as embedded in wider popular struggles for democracy and people's rights. The one limitation of Wamba in Tanzania during this period was that he did not take time to become proficient in the Kiswahili language.

The Philosophical Journey and Theorizing Mobutuism

The career of Joseph Désiré Mobutu who became President of the DRC after coming to power in a coup in 1965 was a textbook case of a leader who sought to manipulate the cultural yearnings of the people in the service of imperialism. This manipulation was aided and abetted by social scientists and scholars on both sides of the Atlantic with tracts on 'personal rule' and 'neo-patrimonialism'. Mobutu's ascendancy from being a foot soldier in the colonial army of the Force Publique to becoming the president has been too

well documented elsewhere to bear repetition here. What was significant about his tenure as president was that after complicity in the execution of Patrice Lumumba, Mobutu turned around to both fight the Lumumbists in the country while celebrating Lumumba as a national hero. The United States, France and Belgium supported Mobutu as he bought the country into becoming the regional ally of apartheid and the centre for militarism in the heart of Africa. Larry Devlin, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) station chief when western intelligence services orchestrated the capture, detention and killing of Lumumba, has written his own account of managing Mobutu in the book, *Chief of Station, Congo: Fighting the Cold War in a Hot Zone* (Devlin 2007).

Thus, we had the first characteristic of Mobutuism, an African leader in the service of western imperialism. As the regional militarist, Mobutu was the grand-père in relation to the petty dictators in Rwanda, Burundi, and Central African Republic. Bent on manipulating the deep cultural values of the society in 1971, Mobutu launched the authenticity movement as official policy with a sweeping obliteration of colonial names. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, which became the name of the country at independence, was changed to the Republic of Zaire. The Congo River and the national currency were also designated Zaire. This manipulation was so devoid of a real understanding of African history as much as the word Zaire was the Portuguese distortion of Nzadi, the original Kikongo name of the river. President Mobutu, dropping his Christian names, Joseph Désiré, adopted the ancestral names Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga meaning 'all conquering male in a fearless land'. Mobutuism was based on deformed masculinism. This was the male conqueror who could take any woman in the society, even the wives of ministers so that the wives could inform on their husbands.

Mobutu organised fake nationalisation of Belgian assets as part of the 'Zairensation' of the society and economy. In his recent book *US Foreign Policy Toward Africa*, the former assistant Secretary of State for Africa Herman Cohen boasted that, as a junior diplomatic officer, he acted as a proconsul in Zaire and facilitated the accounting gymnastics that allowed Mobutu to present himself as having nationalised foreign property (Cohen 2020). Herman Cohen and Robert McNamara of the World Bank arranged for the nationalised copper mines owned by Belgian conglomerate Union Minière du Haut-Katanga (UMHK) to continue operating the mines with its managerial personnel. Instead of paying compensation to UMHK, the Zairean government paid massive management fees, which ensured that UMHK continued to operate as before the so-called nationalisation.

Wamba dia Wamba had worked in the administration for three years, from 1968 to 1971, and had observed Mobutuism up close. His paper 'The Authenticity of Neo-colonialism' had landed him in the notorious inhuman and degrading conditions of the Kinshasa penal system.

Wamba was very aware that the authenticity was based on manipulation and European reading of African philosophy. Early in his career as a scholar he had encountered the work of other philosophers from the French-speaking tradition such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Alain Badiou and Sylvain Lazarus. Wamba's approach to this body of work was not to digest it with any kind of alienation or sycophancy, but to interpret the philosophical traditions that served imperialism and distinguish them from those focused on thinking about human freedom. During many sessions at the UDASA club at the University of Dar es Salaam, Wamba recounted the work of academics and journalists in the Congo and their pre-eminent role in the 'Cold War'. The 1982 book by Madeleine Kalb, *The Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa from Eisenhower to Kennedy*, came in for Wamba's assessment. Similarly, attention was drawn to the work of anthropologists in the service of the US military and intelligence agencies. Wamba repeatedly mentioned the US military study on 'Witchcraft, sorcery, magic and other psychological phenomena and their implications on military and paramilitary operations in the Congo'.

This body of work pushed Wamba to write about the differences between good and bad sorcery. Mobutu's authenticity was bad sorcery in this analysis. Jan Vansina, *Introduction à l'ethnographie du Congo* (1966) and Placide Tempels, *La Philosophie bantoue (Bantu Philosophy)* (1945) had provided the intellectual framework and 'evidence' of Zaire's cultural heritage for proponents of authenticity. *Évolué* scholars in the service of Mobutuism had refined and promoted the ideas of Tempels. Wamba's work as a philosopher at the University of Dar es Salaam was to debunk the understanding of African knowledge systems that had been placed in the service of empire. In African universities up to that point, Tempels's book had been demarcated as the starting point for the study of African philosophy. Nationalist scholars all over Africa were clearly aware that the intent of this body of work was to undermine the precolonial ethnic consciousness of indigenous Africans in the service of colonialism. It was well known that Tempels's aim in writing *Bantu Philosophy* was to assist the European 'civilising mission' by exposing and appropriating the intellectual productions of the Bantu/ African in order to better anchor the colonialist project in the consciousness of the colonised.

In his essay 'Philosophy in Africa: Challenges of the African Philosopher' (Wamba dia Wamba 1991c), Wamba maintained that the practice of African philosophy ought to be aimed at reversing Tempels's efforts in the service of the concrete self-emancipation of the peoples of Africa. In his work as a philosopher and by creating a space for independent reflection, Wamba maintained that 'only very rarely does African philosophy concern itself with the struggle against the African people's own weaknesses'. His argument in the essay was that,

ethno-philosophy is a philosophy of and for the dominated Africa. It does not matter whether or not actual ways of thinking of some real Africans fit in this way of viewing things. The fact is that this specificity is discovered, theorised in the face of humanity that dominates it and requires it to be so dominated (Wamba 1991c:10).

Throughout his period at the University of Dar es Salaam and inside African academic circles, Wamba worked hard to put more attention on the relationship between the ideas of ethno-philosophy and the fight against the four ideological illnesses that continue to plague the African continent: fetishism, ethnic chauvinism, religious intolerance, and male chauvinism. These illnesses multiplied in the body politic and exploded from time to time, informing the generalised disillusionment with African politics in what was now termed 'Afro pessimism,' 'state failure', or 'Congo pessimism'. Wamba recognised that the scholarship that reproduced and celebrated these illnesses had to be challenged.

Wamba dia Wamba and the Emancipatory Project

On his journey, Wamba grappled with Mobutuism as a cancer in the heart of Africa and was clear that the removal of Mobutu would not mean the end of Mobutuism. This awareness inspired Wamba to spend time on understanding the role of the African intellectual in transcending Mobutuism. In this regard his work on 'social movements' in Africa and 'emancipatory politics' became the focal point of his scholarship. Wamba turned to the activism and scholarship of Amilcar Cabral and Cheikh Anta Diop to ground his explorations. With the passing of Diop in 1986, Wamba made a presentation in the history seminar series at the University of Dar es Salaam which was later published in *Quest*, 'Homage to the great African Savant, Cheikh Anta Diop' (Wamba dia Wamba 1991a). In this homage, Wamba grasped the contribution of Diop as part of the

new advanced trends in human thought and as such, part of the world cultural revolution unfolding under our eyes. All the philosophies of 'identity'

(including Marxism, Christianity, etc) are being challenged in favour of pluralism (Wamba dia Wamba 1991a).

Wamba's appreciation of Diop's work concludes by saying Diop's theoretical work is a 'protracted research for the Afrocentric subject (maker of history), the history of African emancipation which is also the condition in the emancipation of the whole world' Wamba dia Wamba 1991a).

In summation, Wamba dia Wamba was searching for 'an Afrocentrically informed Marxism'. It was this that inspired the theorisation of what Wamba termed emancipative politics in his essay, 'Democracy, Multipartyism and Emancipative Politics in Africa' (Wamba dia Wamba 1993b).

At the time of the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Birth of Marx in 1983, Wamba submitted an article to the UDASA Bulletin on the 'Crisis of Marxism in Africa'. (Wamba dia Wamba 1991b). In his article in the cyclostyled bulletin, Wamba critiqued the orthodoxy of the idea of the 'vanguard party' and the one-party state.

Gail M. Presbey noted about Wamba's insights,

'even Marxists have played the role of missionaries bringing 'enlightenment' to Africa, and suggest that African Marxists do wrong when they treat Marxism as a technology to be applied to Africa like any other context. Being an intellectual requires avoiding one-sidedness. Instead of kowtowing to the Marxists or the capitalists, he insists that what Africans need is the revitalization of their capacity to think (especially free from the influence of donors) (Presbey 1998:42).

Wamba was clear that to rethink revolutionary politics in Africa, revolutionary politics must be anchored in new communist forms of social consciousness among the masses. For Wamba, revolutionary politics

does not seek to represent the victims – even through a scientifically elaborated programme, by self-styled representatives; it interprets what is said in workers' and people's interventions. Contrary to the two dominant historical forms of politics, now in crisis (parliamentarian and one-party State models), the new politics takes consciousness as thinking and not a simple reflection of antagonism. It asserts that people think and that this fact constitutes the material basis of thought. The old politics tended to start from the belief that people don't think (at best they only reflect/mirror social antagonism) and the masses of people are viewed as a force in revolutionary tactics but not as processes of thinking. The party has often substituted itself in place of people's thinking. (The party thinks for you and defines what is good for society and what is not). Recognition of this thinking implies fundamentally the need to have confidence in the masses of people. (Wamba dia Wamba 1988: 97).

It is from these reflections that Wamba clarified the nine basic conditions of emancipatory politics as elements of emancipatory politics in Africa as follows:

1. African peoples think.
2. Politics must be based on the revitalization of orality and orature in popular participation in politics.
3. Collective Leadership.
4. The Politics of Inclusion.
5. The Management of Diversity.
6. Emancipatory politics and the liberation of African women.
7. Defending the natural and human resources of the Congo.
8. Security of the producers.
9. Regional Cooperation of Democratic States and Societies.

According to Wamba dia Wamba, for emancipatory politics to exist, in the case of the Congo, one has to have a sense of the peoples of the Congo, the conditions of their existence, their cosmos and the quest for a new mode of politics that serves as the basis for emancipatory politics. This requires developing a new profile of the DRC that places emphasis on the people as human beings with a capacity to make history and to change the history of conquest and militarism.

In the words of Wamba dia Wamba:

Without a revitalization of African traditions of solidarity community to deal with the urban-based process of expropriation threatening that community, even the call for democracy will be led by/favour capitalist despotism. Beyond democracy, what? The answer may not be easy to conceptualize without the revitalization of oral traditions, immediate reaffirmation (at the level of the individual and the community) i.e. cult of life process. The African masses think, they are also people and not living machines, they can/do/must self-program and cannot be fed programs by servants of capital, etc. Capitalist despotism is not against African unity; only mass movement beyond political capacities will give a different content to it. The call for democracy, outside of the revitalization of the community, cannot go beyond multipartyism.

In his article 'Democracy, Multipartyism and Emancipative Politics in Africa: The Case of Zaire', Wamba explained that the ideas behind emancipatory politics are both precarious and sequential.

Emancipative Politics does not always exist when it does, it exists under conditions. It is thus precarious and sequential: it unfolds until its conditions of subjective break disappear. When people lose the consciousness of the subjective break by ceasing to be involved in political processes, emancipative

politics disappears. The completion of a sequence of progressive politics does not lead automatically to another. In the absence of emancipative politics, the state problematic or imperialist influence prevails in the treatment of matters of politics. To reduce every political capacity to a state capacity is to abscond from politics (Wamba dia Wamba 1993b:96).

Wamba then goes on to outline five sequences of emancipatory politics in the Congo from 1921–1992 (Wamba dia Wamba 1993b). The first embodied the Kimbangist movement in which the main task was to break with the *évolué* consciousness as well as the traditional consciousness. Wamba calls this ‘historical mode of politics the independence mode. Ngiuzist, meetings, healing-universal meetings and solidarity communities were the sites of that politics’ (Wamba dia Wamba 1993b:99).

The purpose was to develop the capacity for healing and cleansing the society from the barbarism and genocide imposed as salvation under Belgian colonialism.

The second sequence was termed the self-determination sequence, embodied in anti-colonial struggle, and epitomised in Patrice Lumumba’s speech on 30 June 1960. This sequence ended with Mobutu’s coup, external military intervention, the manipulation of the United Nations (UN) and the assassination of Lumumba. It is a sequence that needs more study to grasp its errors, given Lumumba tended to view state apparatuses (parliaments and governments) as the primary sites of politics. The dictum of that period was Kwame Nkrumah’s ‘Seek ye first the political kingdom and all will be added’. Lumumba, therefore, found himself a prisoner in his own government. The mere occupation of colonial state apparatuses proved to be a contradiction with the politics of self-determination. What is of significance for the future unity of Africa is the reality that Africans cannot use the instruments of the colonial state machinery as the basis for the emancipation of the people.

The third independence movement sequence occurred between 1963 and 1968 with Pierre Mulele and several other militants (including Che Guevara). Politics in this period, considered the third sequence, was organised under the conditions of mass *armed insurrection* in constant attachment to the rural masses. This politics had to distinguish various contradictions operating among the people to provide appropriate solutions correctly. The *maquis* or liberated zones, the national liberation councils and the village assemblies and councils became its site of contestation and politics. The glaring omission was the neglect of the cities and the factories as *sites* of politics. This sequence ended with the Mobutu coup of 1965, the massive counter insurgency operations of the French, Belgians and the US, the murder of Mulele, etc.

The fourth sequence beginning from 1969 incarnated a politics under the cultural break with western domination and a reactivation and elaboration of indigenous civilisation. Wamba called this the cultural mode. The sites are called *maziku* and are scattered all over West Africa. It was in this period that to keep pace with this cultural revival that Mobutu declared the policy of *authenticity*.

The last identified sequence is that of the Sovereign National Conference (Conférence Nationale Souverain – CNS). It began with the formation of the civil society coordinating committees and ended with the forced closing of the CNS on 6 December 1992. Wamba referred to this as ‘the democracy mode of politics, politics under the conditions of people’s capacity as a political subject (people’s sovereignty). The whole nation as a universal palavering community’ (Wamba dia Wamba 1993b:100).

The principal thread linking various upsurges of emancipatory politics has been the emphasis on principled subjective break with submissive consciousness (rejection of every form of domination) and people’s capacity as politics subject (people’s sovereignty).

Wamba’s Contribution to the Understanding of Democratic Struggles and the Palavering Principle in Africa

Space does not allow for detailed analyses of all nine elements of the emancipation project, but what is of significance to understand Wamba’s journey is the way in which he attempted to link theory to practice. In the Dar es Salaam School, Wamba had written the important essay, ‘Experiences of Democracy in Africa: Reflections on Practices of Communalist Palaver as a Method of Resolving Contradictions’ (Wamba dia Wamba 1985).

K. Kia Bunseki Fu-Kiau had elaborated on the *mbongi* as the central democratic institution of the village community and helped to shed light on the intricate checks and balances against arbitrary politics that had been developed in the precolonial village community. The palaver is simultaneously a political process as well as a community healing process with its rules, rituals and functions. There are numerous functions of the palaver, but in the case of the kingdom of the Congo the main task was *tunga sani* – self-mutual questioning.

The rules and rituals of the palaver seek to ensure maximum participation by all in the community. In this precolonial form of democratic participation,

the palaver emerges first as a semi-organised or mostly spontaneous form of mass total outrage against experienced restrictive one-sidedness in the community. It asserts the living autonomy of the living humanity, of everyone in the community as well as the cementing organic solidarity of the whole community

in its originality, complexity and living (as opposed to artificial) organizability organisation. It asserts the 'liveness' of life in each individual and of the entire community against all the obstacles to its normal flow. In the palaver, as a social moment, it is important that major, even very serious, conflicts be resolved and not just be rechannelled elsewhere (Wamba dia Wamba 1985).

The palaver takes place in the community with active conciliators or speakers called the *nzonzi*. The *nzonzi* were the village dialecticians who ensured that everyone spoke. In his words, 'The *Nzonzi* are literally "speakers", masters of the clarification of speech. They function as competent handlers of dialectics: they are therefore dialecticians' (Wamba dia Wamba 1985).

This experience of democracy could only take place inside an independent community with independent organs. This essay is one of the most important contributions of Wamba to the study of the struggles for democracy. Wamba outlined in an article in *Quest* that the democratic struggles in Africa have implications for humanity.

Democratisation or re-democratisation has to be conceptualised at the level of the whole planet Earth. It involves world global relations of power and not just those inside a specific territory. It is good to have full democracy in a reservation; the most crucial thing is to democratically abolish the reservation itself. Democracy has also to be grasped from the point of view of its entire history (Wamba dia Wamba 1992).

Lessons of the Sovereign National Conference

The CNS had been convened by the people as a grand palaver to formulate the form of state that was to be developed after Mobutu. The conference was held from May 1991 until the end of 1992. In 1992, Wamba was invited to participate in the Sovereign National Conference of Zaire. He arrived in Kinshasa on 7 July 1992 and joined the political commission. He participated in the sub-commission of internal politics and wrote the basic document on national reconciliation. Wamba was very impressed by the level of popular participation at the CNS and he compared the CNS to a grand palaver.

This attempt at modernising the palaver to bring public discourse to a higher level was the high point of the democratisation process in the DRC in the period of the anti-Mobutu struggle. The palaver brought to the fore the second important principle of emancipatory politics, 'Revitalization of orality and orature in popular participation in politics'.

The community was the repository of different forms of knowledge – scientific, technical, spiritual, and medicinal knowledge, knowledge of society, politics, etc. The colonial state suppressed African knowledge, institutions, and spiritual reflections.

According to Wamba,

Mobutism like colonial politics and the colonial state was made of bad sorcery. The resistance of the people in the fifth sequences of emancipatory politics depended on good sorcery or good politics. Good sorcery is politics that protects the community. The arbitrary exercise of power is bad sorcery, this is the domain of bad politics and dictatorship, lack of transparency, secrecy and attempts to isolate the people. This form of politics is based on intellectual abasement, presenting untruth as truth, denial of the pursuit of truth, spreading of rumours and reinforcing insecurity in society (Wamba dia Wamba 1992).

The Palaver as a Community Effort to Repair Bad Politics, Bad Talk, Bad Sorcery

Wamba believed that the national conference could inspire ‘emancipation’; unfortunately, the process was blocked by the powerful political class who comprised the dominant block in Congolese politics. Wamba had identified three groups of political actors in the struggles for democracy:

1. The camp of those in power around Mobutu giving itself different names at different times. This camp was and is fundamentally opposed to any form of people sovereignty and wanted by any means to reoccupy state positions.
2. The second consisted of the political class in opposition, essentially internal class opposition organized in parties such as the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS), Sacred National Union, front of progressive national parties and Front of Lumumbists. This is the camp of elite politics of democracy. The occupation of state positions, by good people, through fair elections, constitutes the horizons of this camp’s politics.
3. The third group consisted of groups involved in armed uprisings and others scattered around various sites – including parties, churches, civil society organisations, women’s groups, cooperatives, entrepreneurs, trade unions, study groups, organic intellectuals of the producers, patriotic NGOs and the independent mass media.

For Wamba dia Wamba, the three groups had different conceptions of politics. The first group firmly believed in the culture of submission. The second group vacillated, depending on the balance of political forces, and the third always sought openings for articulating a vision of a democratic and independent society. Wamba intensified his work among social scientists in Africa, and in 1992 he was elected President of the CODESRIA. He served in this position from 1992 to 1995.

From Theory to Practice: When the Seminar Was Not Enough

The genocide in Rwanda marked a fundamental turning point in the journey of Wamba dia Wamba. Wamba was a participant at the Seventh Pan African Congress in Kampala in April 1994 as the full horror of the mass slaughter unfolded. He listened intently to the international and African positions on the unfolding genocide. He had noted that US President Clinton announced that what was happening in Rwanda was a massacre, not a genocide. This is despite the explicit content of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. He noted, 'The people with the means to stop it did not. I felt very powerless' (Wamba dia Wamba 2010).

After the genocide, Wamba wrote the Africa Declaration Against Genocide with Jacques Depelchin and Elaine Wamba. Working with Julius Nyerere and the Nyerere Foundation in Dar es Salaam to find solutions to the genocidal violence in Burundi, Wamba became strongly opposed to genocidal thinking and genocidal economics. In a 2010 interview, Wamba pointed out that there came a time when the seminar was not enough. When he became engaged in the struggles in the Congo at the military/political level, he noted,

I believe that even academics have rights and responsibilities as citizens. For me, the Rwandan genocide in 1994 was the turning point, my road to Damascus. Here you are, a social scientist who has been theorizing about social movements, trying to understand how African societies work, how they might be changed for the better. Then you see that genocide is taking place right in front of your face, and you find yourself powerless to do anything. I was in Tanzania, at Dar es Salaam University, in the middle of the semester.

The event was widely reported, even in the Western press. This was the first time that there had been such extensive coverage of an African tragedy. Apparently, there was a massive journalistic presence in South Africa, for the elections. The journalists were not very satisfied – the elections went fine – so they found something that they could report on in Rwanda, just as the genocide was at its height. So, you had all these images on CNN: machetes, bodies in the roads, bodies dumped in the river (Wamba dia Wamba 2010).

Wamba's scholarship at this time moved from academic papers to clear policy guidelines on the struggles for peace and democracy in the Great Lakes Region. One of the most lucid and succinct summations was in his unpublished paper, 'Protracted Political Crisis, Wars and Militarism in the Regions of Central Africa and the Great Lakes' (Wamba dia Wamba n.d.). This paper written during the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (ADFL) campaign headed by Laurent Kabila, which sought to grasp the militarisation of the region and why the removal of

Mobutu had necessitated a regional war. Noting that the conceptual work necessary to grasp the regional dynamics represented a bottleneck, Wamba lamented the short-sighted and partisan scholarship that made it difficult to grasp the unfolding dynamics. Working with Julius Nyerere, Wamba was able to make a clear evaluation of what he considered the weakness of the military removal of Mobutu. He had argued in this presentation that the ADFL removed Mobutu but Mobutuism was still present.

After travelling to the DRC, Wamba arranged for Julius Nyerere to travel to Kinshasa to have discussions with Laurent Kabila and the new government. Kabila had sent emissaries to Tanzania to seek the support of the Tanzanian government and, during the visit, Wamba organised for Nyerere to meet with members of the opposition. In fact, Kabila was very unhappy with the meetings that Wamba arranged, especially the meeting between Julius Nyerere and Etienne Tshisekedi of the UDPS party. Former President Nyerere was offended by the rogue elements surrounding Kabila and the fact that Kabila wanted diplomatic and political support from Tanzania while turning a deaf ear to those elements calling for a new mode of politics.

One of the first decrees of the Kabila government was to place a ban on all political activities. This decree strengthened the former Mobutu political careerists with financial and political resources at the same time as it silenced the internal opposition that had been at the forefront of the civilian opposition to Mobutu. The internal opposition elements had supported the outcome of the Sovereign National Conference and wanted an all-inclusive government to replace the personalist and absolutist traditions of Mobutuism. Within a short space of time, even those who initially supported Kabila inside and outside of the DRC had to distance themselves from the repression, nepotism, and arbitrary rule of his regime. Kabila refused to open dialogue with the internal political forces that had opposed Mobutu, calling many of these elements Mobutuists.

By February 1998 Wamba, who was now working full time as a diplomat for peace and ending genocide, wrote a letter to the leaders of Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Angola. That letter explicitly identified the genocidal language and postures that were being deployed by the Kabila government. Angola, in particular, was very open to the contents of the letter in so far as it exposed elements of the Kabila regime that were previously not quite clear.

The resort to ethnic manipulation and xenophobia by the Kabila regime was compounded using military courts instead of civilian courts to deal with civil cases. In August 1998, a new rebellion broke out in the DRC and Wamba was elected President of the Congolese Rally for Democracy (*Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie – RCD*) and leader of

the rebellion. This new military struggle brought changing alliances. In particular, the Angolan leadership that had been favourable to the diplomatic overtures of Uganda in February changed its position as soon as it became clear that Wamba dia Wamba was at the head of the rebellion. The alliance between Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe with Kabila brought in the government of Sudan under Omar El Bashir.

From the outset, Wamba was caught in a quagmire that could not be resolved with the social forces at play. His own essay on the 'protracted crisis' (Wamba dia Wamba n.d.) had offered clear insights on the limitations of the military option. For Wamba, his visions of collective leadership and the democratic management of diversity were to be tested in the RCD. But this was not to be. Even the original supporters of the rebellion against Kabila – the government of Rwanda and the government of Uganda – squabbled to the point of armed clashes inside the DRC. For the political allies of Wamba, it was the Global Pan African Movement in Kampala that was clearest in terms of the solutions to the militarism in the region. In its statement, the movement noted,

In our view the solution to the crisis is not less democracy but more democracy. The militaristic line had been tried before. While it got rid of Mobutu it failed in getting rid of Mobutism. Therefore, it is time to let the voice of the ordinary Congolese, the workers, peasants, women, the intellectuals, political parties, etc, rise above the ricochet of maxim guns and mortars (Statement of the Global Pan African Movement, Kampala, August 1998).

Wamba's interventions failed to produce the desired result – the democratisation of Congolese politics – an outcome that Rwanda and Uganda wanted to avoid, not least because of the example that a democratic Congo could set for the region. Wamba threw himself in the search for peace and worked hard for a peaceful resolution to the rebellion that had been initiated in August 1998. After the Lusaka Accords of 1999, and later the Sun City agreement in South Africa, the RCD disintegrated as a political military force. For a short period, Wamba operated in the zones of eastern Congo, but his lack of proficiency in the Kiswahili language (the principal language of eastern Congo), severely hindered his ability to develop a strong base among the people. Later Wamba served as a senator in Kinshasa, but the experiences of the armed rebellion and the inability to completely mobilise the political forces continued to be at the centre of the Wamba's concerns. He also faced personal loss when his eldest son, Phillippe Wamba, died in a car accident in Kenya on 11 September 2002. His son Remy had died of leukaemia in Boston in 1979, after spending a year in and out of hospital. For a long time Wamba mourned Remy, and the loss of Phillippe caused another great sorrow in the Wamba family.

Working for the Unification of the Peoples of Africa

In the last eighteen years of his earthly journey, Wamba had many opportunities to reflect on his scholarship, his involvement in the struggles for emancipatory politics, and the role of African scholars. Though there is no one document that sums up his experience in the struggles within the RCD, there are many interviews and short statements that give some indication of this part of his journey. Wamba expressed his disappointment that African intellectuals were not more engaged in the research and discussions about the wars in the Congo.

Journalists in Belgium such as Ludo Martens and Collette Braeckman have written extensive negative histories of the 1998 rebellion and after. Neither Wamba nor his comrades in arms have been able to put out their version of the unresolved problems of imperial domination. Today, US universities have encouraged more than a dozen doctoral dissertations on 'Africa's First World' war, but few of these studies grasp the historical conjuncture within which this war was prosecuted.

When the rebellion broke out, in Tanzania it was Chachage Seithy L. Chachage who came out as a significant voice raising concerns about the role of African intellectuals in the search for peace and democracy (Chachage 1998). Later Walter Bgoya, the publisher, presented a paper urging progressive intellectuals to engage seriously with the struggles against genocidal violence in the DRC. There had been no collective support group within the university in Tanzania like the support group that was organised around progressive intellectuals in the USA. Later in an interview, Wamba expressed his disappointment at the lack of engagement of African scholars, especially his former colleagues at CODESRIA.

I expected CODESRIA to send researchers into the field to conduct investigations on such an involvement and the motivations for that rebellion. This would have helped us. But this was not done and, frankly, I felt like there was some hostility towards me (Wamba dia Wamba 2010).

The hostility was linked to the war and this author saw some of this first-hand in 1998 at the annual Southern Africa Political Economy Series (SAPES) colloquium in Harare. Wamba was taken aback by the public position of some of his former colleagues, especially those who he collaborated with in authoring a book on social movements in Africa. Slowly Wamba became intellectually and politically isolated with a small following on social media. This isolation brought Wamba into communication with acolytes who did not push him to write his version of the struggles inside the RCD. For ten years, Wamba lived and worked in Dar es Salaam and Kinshasa. He threw

himself into the discussion of the people's unification of Africa and repeated the position that he had taken, like that of Cheikh Anta Diop, 'the existence of the states we find in Africa today has no justification in history other than the effect of the arbitrary partition at the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 where only European countries were represented'. In other words, these states are nothing more than a colonial legacy.

His presentations at Rhodes University in South Africa and at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign stressed the importance of re-dynamising African cultures in the process of restoring the humanity of Africans. Wamba loved music, he loved to dance, and his smile was one of the most appealing aspect of his personality. Wamba worked hard for a new sequence of emancipatory politics and in the last two years of his life he inserted himself into a traditional organisation in the hope of gaining knowledge from the traditional intellectuals of Africa. In May 2017, he was appointed the head of the political-religious movement Bundu dia Mayala of Ne Muanda Nsemi. Wamba was spending his last year in Kinshasa when he left his earthly journey to join the ancestors. He left behind a significant body of work to inspire those struggling for a new mode of politics in Africa.

Note

1. Évolué (French: [evɔlye], lit. 'evolved' or 'developed') is a French label used during the colonial era to refer to colonised Africans or Asians who had 'evolved' by becoming Europeanised through education or assimilation and had accepted European values and patterns of behaviour, viz accepted the ideas of white supremacy. It is most commonly used to refer to individuals within the Belgian and French colonial empires. *Évolués* spoke French, followed European laws, and denigrated the remnants of African ideas and social mores. By graduating from high school and being fluent in French, Wamba had passed the test to be an evolved person, but he rejected this orientation and ideology.

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